

# Bordentown Township, Mount Holly ban smoking

By Jeannie O'Sullivan and Rose Krebs Staff writers | Posted: Wednesday, July 24, 2013 6:15 am

Smoking is now banned on public properties in Bordentown Township while Mount Holly's Township Council finalized a smoking ban that will prohibit people from lighting up at any township park, playground or recreational area.

"Overall, I think the concept is a very good one," said Bordentown Township Mayor James Cann said Monday night, when the Township Committee unanimously voted to approve the measure.

The Bordentown Township ordinance prohibits smoking in all public buildings, including entrances and exit areas, and on all outdoor public properties, including parks, recreation areas and playgrounds. The ban does not apply to individuals in vehicles, provided that all debris is retained within the vehicle, the ordinance states.

Violations will be treated as disorderly persons offenses and carry a maximum fine of up to \$200. The same penalties apply to those who tamper with, deface or remove any No Smoking signs, plus the cost of replacing the sign. Juveniles will be subject to the same penalties as adults, the ordinance states.

The ordinance allows township officials to designate smoking optional areas, but Mayor James Cann said he had no intention of doing so.

Resident Sid Morginstin said he supports the ban and noted how smoking has impacted community events recently.

"One of the volunteers at a Northern Community Park clean-up found cigarette butts all over the place," said Morginstin, adding that people also were smoking during the Independence Day weekend fireworks display.

The township will be able to get grant-funded No Smoking signs, according to Kimberly Burns, a representative from Tobacco Free for a Healthy New Jersey.

In Mount Holly, the new ban, also approved Monday, will apply in Mill Dam Park, Iron Works Park, Monroe Street Park, Chestnut Street Park, the Ricmer Street tot lot, and township athletic fields and recreation areas.

But the council decided not to have the ban apply to the downtown gazebo on High Street. Police Chief Steve Martin expressed concern that smokers who use the gazebo may be forced to light up on sidewalks.

Mount Holly Mayor Richard Dow was not happy with the ordinance, arguing that he would like to see some areas at parks that are away from crowds of people designated for smokers.

"We're opening a door to anything goes," Dow said, pointed out that the ban could apply to individuals who are fishing or canoeing at township parks, even if they are not near people.

Martin said "common sense" enforcement would be used. Violators would be subject to a fine determined by the municipal court, likely from \$250 to \$1,000.

"I am 100 percent for protecting people from secondhand smoke," Dow said. "I don't smoke and I hate the smoke smell around me ... but (the ordinance goes) too far. I think we have other options here."

The movement toward a smoke-free environment in parks and playgrounds throughout Burlington County is gaining steam. County-owned parks are smoke- and tobacco-free, and Beverly, Burlington Township, Delran, Edgewater Park, Evesham, Mansfield and Palmyra have established bans.

Also, the state Legislature is considering a smoking ban in parks, beaches and wildlife management areas, and

Medford has proposed an ordinance that limits smoking to designated areas at its parks.