

Smoking will be banned on township properties

BY KRISTINA SCALA

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Smoking will soon be prohibited on township owned properties.

On Monday, April 8, the township committee approved an ordinance amending restrictions on public smoking.

Township Manager Larry Spellman said smoking would be banned on all township owned property including parks, playgrounds, recreational facilities, the municipal complex and the department of public works.

Previously it prohibited smoking anywhere on Voorhees Public School property.

The change is expanding the smoking ban, Mayor Michael Mignogna said.

Although he did not attend the meeting, Deputy Mayor Harry Platt said the ordinance would help protect the health and welfare of residence from secondhand smoke.

“It’s something that other township have done around us,” Platt said.

Secondhand smoke can be just as deadly as firsthand smoke.

In nonsmokers, it can cause approximately 46,000 deaths from heart disease, 3,400 deaths to lung cancer and it can worsen asthma related problems in up to 1 million asthmatic children, according to the American Cancer Society.

As a part of the NJ Smoke Free Air Act, which protects residents at work and in public from secondhand smoke, parks and township owned property, Voorhees and Cherry Hill have “smoke free zones,” on township property, Mignogna said.

Camden County Parks also have a “no smoking” policy.

According to county Freeholder Jeff Nash, the county established the park smoking ban last year.

Nash said the county decided to move forward with the ban due of the health risks associated with secondhand smoke.

He said it also eliminated cleaning cigarette butts.

“It’s a common sense good idea. Hopefully all of Camden County will be smoke free in all of the parks,” Nash said.

According to the ordinance, violators would face fines between \$100 to \$150 for the first offense, \$150 to \$250 for the second offense and \$300 to \$500 for more than three offenses.

“The ban will promote the general health and well-being of our residents since studies have shown that breathing second hand smoke is a significant health hazard,” Mignogna said.

<http://sj.sunne.ws/2013/04/11/smoking-will-be-banned-on-township-properties/>