

The Setonian

Blowing smoke?

Electronic cigarettes subject to same rules as cigarettes

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If an electronic cigarette emits water vapor in a residence hall that evaporates without a trace, does it fall under the same category as tobacco cigarettes in the housing policy? As the popularity of these tobacco-free cigarettes rises, some students aren't aware that they are violating housing policy by smoking them in residence halls.

According to Director of Housing and Residence Life Tara Hart, e-cigarettes are prohibited in residence halls.

In the housing terms and conditions of license agreement, under "The Resident Agrees" rule 19, it states that students are not to smoke in residence halls, or on balconies or fire escapes of apartments or within 25 feet of entrances to any residence hall or apartment building.

"I don't believe that the people who use e-cigs think the standard rules even apply to them," a sophomore Aquinas Hall resident who preferred to remain anonymous said. She also reported that she has seen residents in that hall smoking these devices in their rooms. "I think I would be fine with it (allowing cigarettes in dorms)," sophomore Joey Puleo said. "If the University is adamant about not allowing them, then they should at least make students aware that it is not permitted."

Seton Hall's rules comply with state law. According to the Administrative Office of the Courts State of New Jersey, the Smoke-Free Air Act that signed by Gov. Jon Corzine in January 2010 and became effective in July 2010 includes electronic cigarettes. The act defines these products: "An 'electronic smoking device' is an electronic device that can be used to deliver nicotine or other substances to the person inhaling from the device, including, but not limited to, an electronic cigarette, cigar, cigarillo or pipe." It forbids any use of these products in workplaces or indoor public places, according to <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/legis/182.pdf>.

Another sophomore Aquinas resident who wished to remain anonymous said that she smokes electronic cigarettes in her dorm room and was not aware of the rule. "I'm kind of shocked," she said. "If it's for fire reasons, that's ridiculous because it's battery powered." The Seton Hall Housing and Residence life fire manual states that smoking in or near dorms also violates fire safety regulations.

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