

# Cherry Hill to fine smokers on public property

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Smokers now face steep fines for lighting up in Cherry Hill parks and playgrounds and outside township-owned buildings under an ordinance that went into effect Thursday.

The ordinance, passed by the Township Council last month, sets a minimum fine of \$100 for a first offense, with penalties for subsequent offenses escalating as high as \$500. The ban applies to all public property, including Town Hall, the public library, and trails, parks, and playgrounds.

Police will enforce the ordinance mainly by responding to complaints, officials said.

"The police won't be going on cigarette patrols," township spokeswoman Bridget Palmer said. "The point is that if a complaint is filed, then there is enforcement power."

That wasn't the case in 2005, when the council passed a resolution to ban outdoor smoking on township property. Outside the library, a sign informs patrons that smoking and skateboarding are not allowed.

"We just want to kind of avoid that wave of smoke if people are smoking by the door," said Katie Hardesty, director of public relations and special events for the library.

But people have continued to smoke outside. While Hardesty has asked people not to smoke, other employees are not comfortable making that request, she said.

"Now we have a township law behind us to enforce it if we need to," she said.

A warning period will be in effect for 30 days before smokers risk tickets. The township plans to put up signs notifying people that smoking is banned by ordinance, Palmer said.

[http://articles.philly.com/2012-12-22/news/35955413\\_1\\_fine-smokers-township-property-public-library](http://articles.philly.com/2012-12-22/news/35955413_1_fine-smokers-township-property-public-library)