

Waldwick plans to ban smoking in parks

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[Waldwick](#) — The Borough Council is considering outlawing smoking at recreational facilities.

On Dec. 11, led by Councilwoman Anita Bozzo, the governing body voted for a "complete prohibition on smoking within the property boundaries of any park," including the [Waldwick Municipal Pool](#). A public hearing on the ban will be held Dec. 27.

If approved, the ban would take effect in January.

Bozzo, who suffers from asthma, said that while she has heard no particular complaints from residents about public smoking, she felt it was time to go the way of other communities and New York City, which enacted a public smoking ban in 2003 and added further restrictions to it in 2011.

"Recreation facilities are for children," Bozzo said prior to the council meeting. "We shouldn't force our children to be subjected to all that smoke."

Bozzo raised the idea three months ago, realizing her time on the council was drawing to an end, in December, as she did not seek reelection.

While the proposed law prohibits smoking at recreational facilities within the borough, it fails to detail enforcement or penalty issues.

"We will enforce it equally as we enforce other ordinances," said Chief Mark Messner.

According to the borough's code, violating an ordinance with unspecified penalties could result in "imprisonment in the county jail for any term not exceeding 90 days; or by a fine of not more than \$2,000, or by a period of community service not exceeding 90 days."

"I know the people of [Waldwick](#)," Bozzo said. "If someone walks up to someone smoking where they shouldn't be, and politely asks them to put it out, I'm sure the person will comply with no incident."

Carol Shepard, [Waldwick's](#) public health nurse, said she was "delighted at anything that curtails smoking."

"There is nothing good about smoking," she said. "Not for the user or the people that have to be around the smoke."

Mahwah, Franklin Lakes and Oakland all prohibit smoking at public recreation facilities, while Wyckoff relies on the state ban of smoking in any public facility.

Ramsey has a smoking ban on the books that applies only to municipal buildings.

New Jersey enacted a no-smoking law, according to the state's Department of Health's website, on April 15, 2006, titled the New Jersey Smoke-Free Air Act. It banned smoking statewide in all enclosed workplaces, including bars and restaurants, strip clubs, hospitals, psychiatric facilities, as well as outside portions of school grounds.

The act exempts city parks, cigar bars, tobacco retail stores, tobacco manufacturing facilities, private residences and private automobiles, off-track betting parlors, and designated hotel/motel smoking rooms.

Under the act, local governments may regulate smoking more strictly.

Violating the act can result in a fine of \$250 and \$1,000.

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- See more at:

http://www.northjersey.com/recreation/events/184217311_Waldwick_plans_to_ban_smoking_in_parks.html?page=all#sthash.3CKJwLGR.dpuf