



## Smoking Banned on Beaches in Summer in Long Beach Township

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Smoking is now prohibited on the ocean beaches of Long Beach Township and at Bayview Park from May 20 to Oct. 1 each year. Prohibited acts include “inhaling, exhaling, burning or carrying any lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, weed, plant or other combustible substance in any manner or in any form, including but not limited to tobacco or similar products,” states the ordinance that the township board of commissioners passed on second reading at their recent meeting.

Violations are punishable by a fine up to \$1,000.

Signs indicating “Breathe Easy. This Public Property Is 100% Smoke-Free” have been posted at beach entrances throughout the township. In Bayview Park, across from the municipal complex in Brant Beach, “a conspicuous sign shall be placed at the parking lot entrance ... clearly stating that smoking is prohibited in the park, ordinance and penalty,” the ordinance reads.

According to the ordinance, the township police department is the enforcement agency for the provision of this article.

“It’s a seasonal thing. It’s not for the wintertime,” said Mayor Joseph Mancini

Smoking within the playground area of Bayview Park is prohibited at all times.

Commissioner Joseph Lattanzi added that the municipality is anticipating passage of a statewide law forbidding smoking on New Jersey beaches. A bill recently passed in the Legislature would prohibit smoking at all state beaches and parks, while counties and municipalities would be able to ban smoking on all but 15 percent of their beaches. That legislation is awaiting Gov. Chris Christie’s signature, and would take effect 180 days after the governor signs the measure into law.

“Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the state and the nation, and tobacco smoke constitutes a substantial health hazard to the nonsmoking majority of the public,” said Assemblywoman Valerie Huttie (D-Bergen), who was a prime sponsor of the bill, along with Senators Joseph Vitale (D-Middlesex) and Shirley Turner (D-Mercer). “The prohibition of smoking at public parks and beaches would better preserve the natural assets of this state by reducing litter and increasing fire safety in those areas, while lessening exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke among the public.”

For the state law, a first offense would carry a \$250 fine, followed by \$500 for the second violation and \$1,000 for subsequent infractions.

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