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PRINCETON: New rule requires sellers of e-cigarettes to be licensed

By Philip Sean Curran, Staff Writer Oct 6, 2016

Sellers of e-cigarettes in Princeton must be licensed each year as part of new regulations the municipal board of health approved recently, the first town in Mercer County with such a requirement.

They will have to pay \$1,200 for the license and register with the health department, a move aimed at helping the town enforce local and federal regulations, said board chairman Dr. George DiFerdinando by phone Thursday.

In Princeton, businesses only can sell tobacco and so-called “Vape” products to adults 21 and over, while the federal government requires that the liquid nicotine used in e-cigarette products be in childproof containers. Earlier this year, the town had said there are seven stores in town that sell electronic smoking devices.

The board of health on Sept. 21 adopted the license ordinance, although it will not become “operational” until Jan. 21. Princeton is part of a small number of New Jersey towns that have licensing requirements, with fees varying from as little as \$200 and up.

Through the years, Princeton has sought to take a tough stance on tobacco products, including raising the age of sale and prohibiting smoking in public parks, including the Community Park Pool, and in or near municipal buildings. According to one official, the action on e-cigarettes is the latest move in that direction.

“Smoking is the number one preventable cause of death, so this is another step Princeton is taking to promote the public health. Princeton has always been a leader. So this is the natural next step to make sure we are adequately overseeing e-cigarettes,” said Councilwoman Heather H. Howard and former state health commissioner by phone Thursday.

Karen Blumenfeld, Executive Director of Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy, a New Jersey based organization, has said Princeton is the first town in Mercer County that licenses sellers of e-cigarettes.

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