

## Oak Park bans smoking on village property

By: Danielle Braff July 22, 2015

Don't even think about lighting up in or around village-owned property in Oak Park.

The village is the first municipality in the state to ban smoking on and around all village-owned properties, effective immediately. Enforcement will begin in October in the form of education escalating to citations.

The ban includes e-cigarettes, vaporizers and chewing tobacco.

"This covers the entire Village Hall block, and encompasses all forms of tobacco," said Oak Park Village Clerk Teresa Powell.

The resolution passed unanimously last month after sitting on the village board's to-do list for ages, said Patrick Rollens, the village's communications coordinator.

"It was a priority at all levels of the government, from the board of health to the village," Rollens said.

Right now the village is not considering a tobacco ban in other areas of the village, such as on neighborhood sidewalks or inside private condos.

"That's not in the cards—we're just going to tackle the part that we can control now," Rollens said.

### ***Condo smoking bans catch fire around Chicago***

Oak Park already had a smoking ban in its public parks since 2002 (more than 1,000 park districts across the country have now also banned smoking in public parks).

The village's recent move is applauded by the Illinois Department of Public Health, which gave Oak Park a \$5,000 grant as part of the Smoke-Free Illinois Act to get the legislation started.

The ban also randomly includes a lone grassy field behind the village hall parking lot that which happens to be owned by the village.

"I am a fan of a smoke-free anything," said J. Martin Konecki, an Oak Park resident who grew up there.

"Smoking is known to cause cancer, and people die from cancer."

But now, the villagers have fewer places to take that risk.

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