



Community and Health Services
Public Health

Memorandum

TO: Members of Committee of the Whole
FROM: Dr. Karim Kurji, Medical Officer of Health
DATE: March 5, 2015
RE: **Enhancements to the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act***

On January 1, 2015, enhancements to the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* (the Act) came into effect. As part of the government's commitment to further limit smoking in public places, reduce exposure to smoking, and make it more difficult for young people to buy tobacco, it is now illegal to:

- Smoke on bar and restaurant patios
- Smoke on or within 20 metres of the perimeter of playgrounds or publicly-owned sports field surfaces that host activities such as soccer, baseball, basketball, cricket, skating, swimming, skateboarding and beach volleyball
- Sell tobacco products of any kind on college, university or private school campuses

In York Region, the *Smoke Free Ontario Act* is enforced by Tobacco Control Officers from the Public Health Branch, Health Protection Division. Meetings have been arranged with York Region's nine municipalities to promote these legislative changes and encourage compliance, largely through education, public awareness and signage. Community sports organizations and facility user groups are being advised of the changes through municipal orientation sessions and recreational facility rental agreements.

A media campaign, sponsored by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, is being launched to inform the broader public across the Province. Advertisements will be placed in local recreation guides to help inform residents of York Region. In addition, Tobacco Control Officers are inspecting bars and restaurants with patios to educate owners about the new requirements for smoke-free patios.

All community complaints and inquiries will be followed up by Tobacco Control Officers. Information sharing with municipal partners will ensure positive outcomes to public concerns that are raised in response to the new Act requirements. It is anticipated that

through education, issuing warnings and enforcement when required, a high level of compliance will be attained. It is estimated there are 1,200 playgrounds/sports field areas and 700 patios within York Region.

This legislation compliments the more recent achievements of several local municipalities who have implemented various smoke-free bylaws and policies for outdoor recreational spaces; efforts which make these spaces safer and healthier for all to enjoy.

Dr. Karim Kurji
Medical Officer of Health

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