



Smoking Ban Bylaw in Parks Takes Effect

November 1, 2011- City Council adopted a smoking ban bylaw last night. Amendments to Parks Bylaw No. 7073 will now expand existing City of Nanaimo smoke free zones to include all City managed recreation properties including: trails, plazas, parks, beaches and recreation facilities. To accommodate the diversity of clientele that use public recreation facilities designated smoking areas will be created as required.

Public input was gathered over the course of the past summer by way of a survey available online and at recreation centres. In total 608 responses were gathered and results indicated over 75% of respondents supported a smoking ban within city parks and recreation properties. The intent of the bylaw is to promote healthier lifestyles and increase the quality of the local environment. The medical evidence linking smoking to health issues is well-documented and smoking bans in public places are considered the most effective means of reducing exposure to second-hand smoke.

In British Columbia, regulations for smoke-free spaces began in the early 1980s. The City of Nanaimo and others subsequently introduced bylaws that provided for smoking bans in workplaces and public spaces based on recommendations from Medical Health Officers with community support. Local examples of municipalities that have already taken this approach include: Vancouver; White Rock, Richmond, Whistler, West Vancouver, and Kelowna.

“We understand it is going to take some time for the public to get used to this new bylaw,” explains Mayor John Ruttan, “City staff will be installing and updating signage within our parks over the next few months to help get the word out there”.

Implementation of the bylaw will involve an initial public education/awareness phase. By way of local media, internet sources and signage the public will be made aware of the reason for the changes and the scope of the bylaw and consequences. During this initial period city staff would advise visitors about this change. Ultimately the consequence for noncompliance will be a \$150.00 fine.

For information about this or any City of Nanaimo bylaw please contact Bylaw Services at 250 755 4422. For information about parks and recreation facilities please call 250 756 5200 or visit www.nanaimo.ca

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