

Communications Office
Peterborough County-City Health Unit
10 Hospital Drive
Peterborough, ON K9J 8M1
(705) 743-1000, ext. 391
www.pcchu.ca



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Smoke-Free Bylaw Extended to All City Sports Fields

Health Unit Commends City Leadership to Reduce Tobacco Use

More than 100 sports fields across Peterborough are now smoke-free thanks to the introduction of phase three of the City's anti-smoking bylaw that took effect May 1, 2011.

"We commend the City's leadership for designating more smoke-free public spaces, especially those where our youth play," said Dr. Rosana Pellizzari, Medical Officer of Health with the Peterborough County-City Health Unit. "By eliminating smoking in outdoor spaces this denormalizes tobacco use and protects our children who are most vulnerable to second-hand smoke."

Phase three of the City's four-phase bylaw bans smoking within a nine-meter perimeter surrounding all municipally-run sports fields, including baseball diamonds, soccer pitches, beach volleyball sand courts and other recreational areas. Phase one was launched in 2009 to ban smoking in Del Crary Park, Riverside Park and East City Bowl, and phase two came into effect last year to extend the ban to all city wading pools, beaches and playgrounds. When phase four takes effect in 2012, all outdoor spaces in the City will be designated smoke-free.

"This bylaw continues to move us forward as leader in the protection of the health of the people of Peterborough," said Mayor Daryl Bennett. "It sends a simple but profound message that City parks and recreational spaces are the lungs of the City, and they deserve as much protection from tobacco smoke as any workplace, bar or restaurant."

The City's Recreation Division has hired two Special Events Monitors to educate the public about the expanded bylaw at events and hand out smoke-free promotional items like sport towels and stickers. Signs designating the smoke-free sports fields will also be installed before the end of May.

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Peterborough is one of 18 municipalities that currently have smoke-free bylaws affecting sport and playing fields.

Fast facts:

- The majority of Peterborough's population is non-smoking. A 2007 Canadian Community Health Survey from Statistics Canada found 79.1% of the residents do not smoke. The amendment to the by-law will benefit the majority of the residents.
- Cigarette butts are the main source of litter in communities, beaches and particularly at Del Cray Park and the Peterborough Marina. Prohibiting smoking is one measure to protect the natural environment of Peterborough's parks and playgrounds.
- There is no known safe level of exposure to second hand smoke, even outdoors. This measure will protect children who are most vulnerable to second-hand smoke.
- Children and youth model their behaviour after the people they look up to – coaches, leaders, family and peers. Prohibiting smoking in parks and playgrounds will reinforce a smoke-free lifestyle.
- Tobacco use goes against the health benefits gained by participating in sport and recreational activities. Peterborough has long been identified as an active living community and this measure will aid in reinforcing that message in the community.
- It is important for youth to receive the same tobacco-free messages at their park-based sport or recreation programs/activities as they experience at school and in the wider community

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For further information, please contact:

Jane Hoffmeyer
Health Promoter, Tobacco Use Prevention Program
(705) 743-1000, ext. 332