



Ottawa Council on
Smoking or Health

Conseil d'Ottawa sur le
tabagisme ou la santé

March 19, 2015

Mayor Jim Watson
City of Ottawa
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1

Councillor Diane Deans
Chair, Community and Protective Services Committee
City of Ottawa
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1

Councillor Shad Qadri
Chair, Ottawa Board of Health
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1

Mr. John Manconi
General Manager of Transit Services
1500 St. Laurent Boulevard
Ottawa, ON K1G 0Z8

Dear Mayor Watson, Councillor Deans, Councillor Qadri, and Mr. Manconi:

Re: Use of Electronic Cigarettes on OC Transpo Property and in Municipal Buildings

The Ottawa Council on Smoking or Health (OCSH) is writing in support of the City of Ottawa's plans to amend the *Transit By-Law*, the *Parks and Facilities By-law*, and the *Smoke-Free Workplace Policy* to prohibit the use of electronic cigarettes on OC Transpo property, inside municipal buildings, and on outdoor municipal properties.

Four months ago, the OCSH gave a deputation to the Ottawa Board of Health in support of a ban on the use of electronic cigarettes in all public places and all work places in the City of Ottawa (<http://www.smokefreeottawa.com/whats-new/ocshs-deputation-to-the-ottawa-board-of-health-in-support-of-ottawa-public-healths-update-on-the-city-s-smoke-free-strategy>). We were disappointed that the City of Ottawa stated at that meeting that it could not take action at that time (even though other Canadian provinces and municipalities had already adopted laws and bylaws); and that the Board of Health did not make any recommendations regarding the use of electronic cigarettes in public places and workplaces.

We congratulate the City of Ottawa for announcing, on March 13, 2015, a ban on the use of electronic cigarettes on transit property and in city buses due to public complaints, and a ban inside municipal buildings and on outdoor municipal property.

We hope that the City of Ottawa will consider extending the ban to **all public places and workplaces that are protected by smoke-free bylaws**. Kiosks operating in various shopping centres in Ottawa allow customers to experiment with electronic cigarettes, and people are vaping in restaurants, bars, and other public places. The OCSH is concerned about hospitality workers and the public who are exposed to the chemicals in electronic cigarette vapour, and about modeling vaping behaviour to children and youth.

Preliminary scientific evidence shows that vapour from electronic cigarettes can contain nicotine¹ and other potentially hazardous substances,² and that children may be especially at risk.³ Another scientific study showed that “non-smokers passively exposed to e-cigarettes absorb nicotine.”⁴ Furthermore, prenatal exposure to nicotine can have “potentially devastating effects...on fetal growth and development.”⁵ The same study concluded that “nicotine addiction is also increased in people who were exposed to nicotine in utero.”⁶ The Canadian Paediatric Society issued a position statement on March 6, 2015, stating:

“The use of e-cigarettes in the paediatric age group is on the rise in Canada, as are associated nicotine poisonings. E-devices generate substantial amounts of fine particulate matter, toxins and heavy metals at levels that can exceed those observed for conventional cigarettes. Children and youth are particularly susceptible to these atomized products. Action must be taken before these devices become a more established public health hazard. Policies to denormalize tobacco smoking in society and historic reductions in tobacco consumption may be undermined by this new ‘gateway’ product to nicotine dependency.”⁷

The OCSH wrote to the Province of Ontario in support of a provincial law banning the use of electronic cigarettes in all public places and workplaces (<http://www.smokefreeottawa.com/whats-new/ocsh-submits-recommendations-on-bill-130-and-bill-131-amendments-to-the-smoke-free-ontario-act>). We will also submit our recommendations regarding Bill 45 (*Making Healthier Choices Act, 2015; Schedule 2 (Smoke-Free Ontario Act); and Schedule 3 (Electronic Cigarettes Act)*). However, if Bill 45 passes, the ban may not come into effect for **another two years**.

The City of Ottawa has an opportunity to create a level playing field by protecting **all members of the public and all workers** in Ottawa; to reduce the public’s involuntary exposure to nicotine and to chemicals in electronic cigarette vapour; to reduce children’s and youth’s exposure to vaping behaviour; and to protect the integrity of the city’s indoor and outdoor smoke-free bylaws.

Respectfully submitted,

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The Ottawa Council on Smoking or Health (OCSH) is a local volunteer organization established in 1978. Our goals are to: protect the public from second-hand smoke (SHS); prevent youth from starting to smoke; encourage smokers to quit; and advocate for better smoking cessation resources.

cc: Members, Ottawa City Council
Members, Ottawa Board of Health
Dr. Isra Levy, Medical Officer of Health
Mr. Rick O'Connor, City Solicitor

References

¹ Czogala, J, Goniewicz ML, Fidelus B, et al. Secondhand Exposure to Vapors from Electronic Cigarettes. *Nicotine Tob Res.* December 11, 2013.

<http://ntr.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2013/12/10/ntr.ntt203.abstract.html>

² Williams M, Villareal A, Bozhilov K, et al. Metal and Silicate Particles Including Nanoparticles Are Present in Electronic Cigarette Cartomizer Fluid and Aerosol. *PLoS ONE* 8(3): e57987. March 20, 2013.

<http://www.plosone.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pone.0057987#pone.0057987-Chen1>

³ Schober W, Szendrei K, Matzen W, et al. Use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) impairs indoor air quality and increases FeNO levels of e-cigarette consumers. *International Journal of Hygiene and Environmental Health.* December 6, 2013. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24373737>

⁴ Ballbè M, Martínez-Sánchez JM, Sureda X, et al. Cigarettes vs. e-cigarettes: Passive exposure at home measured by means of airborne marker and biomarkers. *Environmental Research.* Volume 135, November 2014, Pages 76-80. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0013935114003089>

⁵ Blood-Siegfried J, Rende EK. The Long-Term Effects of Perinatal Nicotine Exposure on Neurologic Development. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health.* Volume 55, Issue 2, 2010 Mar-Apr; 55(2): 143-152. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2998347/>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Canadian Paediatric Society. E-cigarettes: Are we renormalizing public smoking? Reversing five decades of tobacco control and revitalizing nicotine dependency in children and youth in Canada. Position Statement. March 6, 2015. <http://www.cps.ca/en/documents/position/e-cigarettes>