



MEDIA RELEASE

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Tobacco Enforcement Officers Ensure Compliance with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act Parks, Playgrounds and Beaches: The Air is Shared

A hotspot for tourists and residents alike, parks and beaches throughout the County and City of Peterborough are popular attractions for those seeking relief from hot temperatures or a local option for some family fun. Throughout the summer, Peterborough Public Health (PPH) helps to ensure these spaces are smoke and vapour-free.

Tobacco Enforcement Officers (TEOs) regularly patrol parks, playgrounds, beaches and festivals to ensure compliance with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act (SFOA). Under the SFOA, beaches and other outdoor spaces are designated smoke, vape and cannabis-free, and [violating the law could lead to a \\$305 fine](#).

“The SFOA isn’t a new law – it has protected people in outdoor public spaces since 2015 and indoors since 2006,” said PPH TEO Katrina Ryall. “Most people understand the importance of this legislation and are happy to smoke or vape in designated areas.”

Education is central to Peterborough Public Health’s progressive enforcement approach. Over the first three weeks of the summer, TEOs visited every public sports field, playground, and beach, and attended several special events in the City and County of Peterborough. While compliance has generally been good, Ryall notes that there is room for improvement.

“Our efforts to educate the public are generally well-received, but sometimes we need to remind people that lighting up or vaping around children and families is not permitted in Ontario,” stated Ryall. “As patrols continue throughout the summer, people found smoking or vaping in a restricted public area can expect to receive a fine.”

Outdoor premise where smoking/vaping was observed	Warnings issued
Quarry Bay Beach	1 tobacco warning
Chandos Beach	1 vape warning
Ennismore Waterfront Park	1 vape warning
Beavermead Park and Beach	13 tobacco warnings/1 vape warning
Rogers Cove	3 tobacco warnings
Bowers Park	1 tobacco warning
Maple Leaf Park	2 tobacco warnings

Fairbairn & Poplar Park	1 tobacco warning
Quarry Bay Beach	1 tobacco warning
Chandos Beach	1 tobacco warning
Ennismore Waterfront Park	2 tobacco warnings
Sandy Beach	2 tobacco warning
Peterborough Musicfest	4 tobacco warnings/1 vape warnings/1 cannabis warning
	36 total warnings issued:
	31 tobacco/4 vape/1 cannabis

“Nicotine greatly impacts children and youth’s developing brains,” said Dr. Piggott, Medical Officer of Health. “Nicotine affects learning, memory, and concentration, which is why we need to make sure youth don’t have access to these products. Evidence also shows that youth who vape are more likely to begin smoking cigarettes.”

Peterborough Public Health also works to ensure that youth don’t have retail access to tobacco and vapor products. While current vendor inspection data shows general compliance, there is room for improvement here too. Since January of this year, TEOs have inspected 136 tobacco and vapour product retailers, resulting in 7 charges and 17 warnings.

There are no safe levels of exposure to second-hand smoke, and children and youth are influenced by the behavior of adults around them. This is why keeping outdoor spaces smoke and vape-free is a priority for PPH, and a shared responsibility for everyone.

Councilor Lesley Parnell, Chair of City Council's Arenas, Parks and Recreation Portfolio adds "Thanks to the Smoke Free Ontario Act all citizens are able to enjoy the fresh air in our parks, beaches and at sports fields. It is very much appreciated by so many people when everyone respects our beautiful shared green spaces. Thank you to all who are doing their part."

If you are thinking about quitting smoking or vaping, PPH recommends consulting with your pharmacist or health care provider. For more resources, visit: www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca/quit-smoking-and-tobacco-counselling/

-30-

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