

GLENDALE NEWS-PRESS

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City Council clamps down on tobacco sale to youth

Anti-smoking advocates are thrilled with law requiring a permit to sell cigarettes.

By Jason Wells
News-Press

CITY HALL — Tobacco retailers will soon face tighter controls after the City Council on Tuesday unanimously passed an ordinance requiring sellers of cigarettes, cigars and other related products to hold a city permit.

Anti-smoking advocates have hailed the law as way to cut down on tobacco sales to youth, and said it could provide greater momentum for a report due to the City Council in November outlining a wide range of options for restricting smoking in public places, such as those recently adopted in Burbank and South Pasadena.

"This movement is inspiring so quickly," said Guadulesa Rivera, a community health advocate for Glendale Adventist Medical Center, who helped the city craft the ordinance through community input.

Tobacco retailers in Glendale — who number more than 240 — have until Jan. 1 to obtain a \$225 sales permit with the city, according to city staff reports.

smoking in public places already has strong support for some on the council, including Councilman Dave Weaver, who requested the report.

Any citywide restriction in the form of an ordinance would require the same round of public input as its predecessor, Engel said.

"It has to involve everyone, or you can't legitimately go to the council," he said.

Community support for such a law has already started to coalesce.

A group of residents have formed a nonprofit action group, No Butts Glendale, and have been collecting signatures in support of a citywide ban using an online petition.

Until then, officials with the city's Neighborhood Services Department will help retailers understand the new law and obey it, said Sam Engel, who heads the department.

Permits could be suspended up to two times if retailers are caught selling to minors. After two suspensions, a permit could be revoked, according to the ordinance.

After the January deadline, city officials will begin thorough investigations of 20 tobacco retailers per month to document initial compliance, with enforcement efforts gradually increasing through late January into February to include underage decoy purchasers, according to city staff

QUESTION

How do you think the new smoking ordinance will affect the movement to have smoking banned in public places in Glendale? E-mail gnp@latimes.com or write to News-Press Community Forum, 221 N. Brand Blvd., 2nd Floor, Glendale, CA 91203. Please include your name and hometown and phone number for verification purposes only.



reports.

The new ordinance also gives the City Attorney's Office the authority to prosecute violators, rather than the county District Attorney's Office.

City officials began developing the program last year at the direction of the City Council after a 2006 survey found that 24% of Glendale tobacco retailers were willing to sell tobacco products to minors.

Burbank, Pasadena and Los Angeles have all adopted similar ordinances.

Council members swiftly approved the ordinance as they await a report that will detail steps other cities in the county have taken to restrict smoking citywide.

Some form of a ban on