

Smoking soon to be banned close to municipal facilities

Smokers had better beware not to light up near municipal offices, effective Aug. 2.

Peel Region, in collaboration with the Town of Caledon, as well as the Cities of Brampton and Mississauga, has enacted an outdoor smoking bylaw, along with roughly 70 other municipalities around the province.

The provisions include a prohibition on smoking outdoors within nine metres (30 feet) of municipally-owned building entrances and exits, and within nine metres of the perimeter of playgrounds and sports/activity areas, such as sports fields, parks and splash pads. That also includes spectator seating areas.

Second-hand smoke is harmful to health and particularly harmful to children because they have smaller lungs and breathe in more second hand smoke per body weight than adults, according to the Region. Children who are exposed to second-hand smoke are at higher risk of breathing and other health-related problems.

Peel's outdoor smoking bylaw will help protect children from the effects of second-hand smoke in places where they play, commented Peel's Medical Officer of Health Dr. David Mowat. Residents will no longer have to walk through a cloud of tobacco smoke when they enter an arena, community centre or other municipal building.

Regional tobacco enforcement officers and municipal bylaw officers can issue warnings, tickets and fines starting at \$250 if the law is broken.

Smoke-free places protect the health of the community while supporting smokers who want to quit, Mowat added. Smokers who are motivated to quit can be successful with a supportive environment and a proven cessation method. It is never too late to quit smoking.