



CONTRA COSTA  
TOBACCO PREVENTION COALITION

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**Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors Regulate E-cigarettes**

Unincorporated Contra Costa County is the first jurisdiction in Contra Costa to adopt community-wide regulations banning the use of electronic cigarettes, also known as e-cigarettes, in public places. Retailers of e-cigarettes will now also be required to purchase a tobacco retailer license.

On Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to prohibit the use of e-cigarettes at all places where smoking is prohibited and require retailers of electronic cigarette retailers to purchase a tobacco retailer license.

E-cigarettes are battery-operated products designed to deliver nicotine, flavor and other chemicals. They often resemble the “look” of a cigarette, including a battery-lit glow at the end of the device. They turn nicotine, which is highly addictive, and other chemicals into a vapor that is inhaled by the user. A state law prohibits the sale of e-cigarettes to minors but the products are otherwise unregulated.

Mary Jaccodine, member of the Tobacco Prevention Coalition, explained, “E-cigarettes must be regulated because of their potential to change social norms around smoking and because they are delivery devices for nicotine, one of the most addictive drugs on earth. It has taken decades, but we are finally at a point where smoking is not considered glamorous. If e-cigarettes become part of our social landscape, we are reintroducing the notion that “smoking” is harmless and acceptable.”

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has very little information about the safety and efficacy of these products but preliminary laboratory analysis found they contained carcinogens and toxic chemicals to which users and bystanders could potentially be exposed. The FDA is also concerned that e-cigarettes can increase nicotine addiction among young people and may lead young people to try other tobacco products, including conventional cigarettes, which are known to cause disease and lead to premature death.

Supervisor Federal Glover indicated his support for the proposed regulations saying, “There is a perception that if we don’t do anything about this, it’s okay to smoke. This change is consistent with the stand that this board has taken on tobacco products in the past.”

For more information on tobacco prevention and secondhand smoke protections, contact the Tobacco Prevention Coalition at (925) 313-6216 or email [cctobaccopreventioncoalition@gmail.com](mailto:cctobaccopreventioncoalition@gmail.com).

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