

# Putnam County implements 'No Smoking, No Vaping' policy

While health officials debate the question of electronic cigarettes nationwide, Putnam County is moving ahead with implementation of a revised County Code, that expands the definition of smoking to include the use of electronic cigarettes. What this means is that where smoking is prohibited in public places, such as a Putnam restaurant, bar, or school, then using electronic cigarettes is also against the law.

Last May, the Putnam County Legislature voted unanimously to extend the County's Clean Indoor Air Act legislation to include all vapor-producing devices.

"Protecting Putnam County residents is our highest priority," said County Executive MaryEllen Odell. "We are taking the lead here to protect our residents and visitors from the harms of tobacco, and the health department has already begun distributing 'no-smoking-no-vaping' signs to area establishments."

"The vapor from e-cigarettes is not benign," said Dr. Michael Nesheiwat, Putnam County's interim health commissioner. "It has fewer toxic ingredients than cigarette smoke, but that does not make it safe. Some research has shown that nicotine replacement therapy during pregnancy has adverse effects on the developing fetus, but most of the science so far focuses on the thousands of chemicals in cigarettes, not the nicotine present in both traditional and electronic varieties."

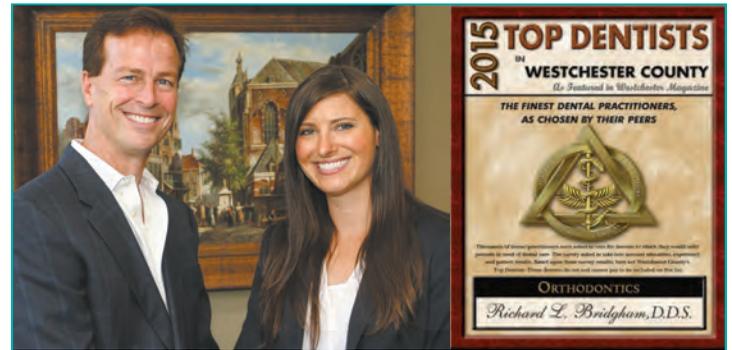


IMAGE COURTESY OF THE PUTNAM COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Primary enforcement of the new code pertaining to vaping, as with cigarettes, is the responsibility of the owner of the establishment. Owners, landlords and other establishment managers are now expected to ask patrons to turn off e-cigarettes in the same way they would ask one to put out a cigarette, pipe or cigar. As with tobacco

smoking, the Putnam County Department of Health can be notified to make a complaint.

*This article was provided by the Putnam County Department of Health. For more information, visit the Department of Health's website at putnamcountyny.com/health.*



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