

Montgomery Co. Council approved a bill to ban e-cigarettes

By Denrique Preudhomme

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ROCKVILLE, Md. - The Montgomery County Council approved a bill Wednesday to ban the use of electronic cigarettes in public places.

The [electronic cigarettes](#), known as the e-cigarettes bill, passed unanimously.

The Health and Human Service Committee recommended the e-cigarettes bill due to public health issues associated with e-cigarettes. Some issues include, 90 percent of smokers begin while in their teens or earlier, one in five middle school students who use e-cigarettes never used conventional cigarettes, and the use of e-cigarettes among high school students increased from less than 5 percent to almost 10 percent.

The committee said it saw a rise in the use of e-cigarettes over the past year-and-a-half. The committee acted nimbly to get the bill passed after following the evolution of vaping and e-cigarettes.

The bill comes on the heels of California's health advisory and [ban on e-cigarettes](#) in public places. The state found that the aerosol in e-cigarettes created harmful effects on people around them.



Mayo Clinic Minute: Health Risks of E-Cigarettes

Councilwoman Nancy Floreen stated that the State of California tested and found that e-cigarettes contain [10 chemicals on their prohibited list](#). Despite the prohibited

chemicals, e-cigarettes contain a variety of fruit flavors designed to appeal to younger buyers.



Councilwoman Nancy Floreen: Ban on E-Cigarettes

“If you look at the liquids that are used in these e-cigs, it’s like they could have been designed by Ben & Jerry’s,” Floreen said. “Coconut pecan ... wacky jacky kind of thing ... Fruit flavors that are intended to appeal to a younger audience, and therefore get them right in the mode of experiencing a nicotine delivery device, which is basically what e-cigs are.”

The Health and Human Services Committee stated concerns that e-cigarettes may renormalize smoking, encourage [poly-use](#) among teenagers or the marketing may attract children and adolescents because of the “(kid-friendly flavors, characters or famous actors, ads in media).”

Some reasons students gave for using e-cigarettes include “curiosity, attraction of flavors, use by friends and family, desire to quit smoking, availability,” and it being a sign of independence, the committee revealed in a [memorandum](#) to the county council.

The committee unanimously recommended banning e-cigarettes in public places despite testimony that opposed the measure at a public hearing held on January 20.

Floreen said the bill sends a message to the community and the world at large that, “Montgomery County is very dedicated to addressing public health ... I really do believe that’s one of our primary responsibilities as elected officials.”

The bill treats e-cigarettes the same as conventional cigarettes, which bans the use in public places. The bill seeks to provide uniform policies across the board and establish clear guidelines.

The bill also restricts the sale of certain liquid nicotine containers in retail outlets unless the nicotine is contained in [child-resistant packaging](#); prohibits the sale of e-cigarettes “in any place that is accessible to buyers of the product without the intervention of the seller (similar to tobacco products);” and generally amend county law regarding smoking, e-cigarettes, and health and sanitation, the county council stated.

Floreen commended the Health and Human Services Committee for the hard work done on the bill.

Floreen said, “Montgomery County residents will be the better” for the passing of the bill.

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e-cigarettes

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ROCKVILLE – E-cigarette use among high school students increased by 10 percent in the last 18 months, Montgomery County officials said Wednesday.

Pediatrician, Kirsten B. Hawkins, director of pediatric residency program at the MedStar Georgetown University Hospital said screening for cigarette use among teens in the Washington Metropolitan area was greater than 10 percent in the past month.

Electronic cigarette (e-cigarette) use gained rapid growth among middle and high school children, and youth in general, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) revealed in a [letter to JUUL, Labs, Inc.](#), maker of e-cigarettes.

“I have seen teens transition to combustible products when they lose their JUUL devices or can’t afford a pod replacement,” Hawkins said. “Nicotine is one of the most addictive chemicals known to man. Many teens and children tried juuling without knowing the risks associated.”

A [study](#) conducted by the University of California San Francisco found 80.9 percent of e-cigarette users are [poly-users](#), “most of whom also smoke cigarettes.” The study also found people who initiate tobacco use with e-cigarettes go on to use cigarettes and likely remain dual users rather than quitting conventional cigarettes.



Any Volunteers? The Risks of E-cigarettes for Young People
Published on Dec 7, 2016, by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Hawkins said her studies show “there are likely less carcinogens in e-cigarettes, but we do not know yet all the risks associated with the other parts of liquid nicotine. Regardless of delivery method, nicotine has the same health effects.”



Are Users Aware Of E-Cig Health Effects?: Rochelle Grossman, News Reporter for Daily Rx Minute.

Smoking causes almost 500,000 deaths a year in the US, while smoking-related diseases affect an average of 6.9 million US adults each year, the study by the University of California San Francisco revealed. The study identified [asthma](#) as an example of a disease known to be exacerbated by smoking.

Widespread reports of rapid growth of the use of e-cigarettes among youth are of great public health concern, because “no child or teenager should ever use any tobacco product,” according to a [report](#) published by the FDA. The report also stated that nicotine affects the developing brain of youths.

Hawkins supports [Montgomery County’s ban on e-cigarettes](#) in public places, which seeks to provide [uniform policies across the board](#). “E-cigarettes should be held to the same standard as combustible cigarettes,” she said. “Enforcement of the ban” should be the next step to prevent the harmful effects of e-cigarettes on youths.

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