

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH PROPOSES RULE TO MAKE PUBLIC PLACES SMOKE-FREE

Hillsborough, NC – As a part of its [2012-2014 strategic plan](#), the Orange County Board of Health has reviewed research on tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure and existing State and County smoke-free policies. Based on their findings they are considering a new rule that would expand jurisdiction to be more comprehensive and include a broader range of public places. The proposed new rule for Orange County would be similar in its impact and reach to the smoke-free ordinance that went into effect in Durham County on August 1, 2012.

The proposed Orange County Board of Health rule would prohibit smoking in County and Town buildings, vehicles and government grounds and in public places in Orange County, the Towns of Carrboro, Chapel Hill, Hillsborough and those parts of Mebane within the County limits.

Public Input Sought

On Tuesday, September 18, 2012, The Orange County Board of Health released a survey to elected officials and other key stakeholders in Orange County soliciting feedback on a proposed rule expanding the reach of existing smoke-free laws. The survey is the first step in a series of methods to solicit feedback from County leadership and the general public on the proposed rule.

On Wednesday, September 26, 2012, the Board of Health will meet to review the initial survey responses and make any modifications to the draft rule. Following the meeting, any necessary changes will be made by the County Attorney's office, and an updated version of the draft rule will be released. The public will be encouraged to provide input on the proposed rule and can do so in one of three ways:

- 1) An online survey will be posted on the Orange County Health Department Web site beginning on Thursday, September 27, 2012 - <http://orangecountync.gov/health>
- 2) A public hearing will be held as part of the Board of Health meeting on Wednesday, October 24, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in the Main Library Conference Room located at 137 W. Margaret Lane; Hillsborough, NC 27278.
- 3) A voicemail system will be available from September 27, 2012 – October 24, 2012 to allow people to leave their comments if they do not have access to the Internet and/or will not be able to attend the public hearing.

After the public hearing on October 24, 2012, the Board of Health will discuss and vote on the proposed rule. If the Board of Health adopts the rule, it will then be sent to the Orange County Board of County Commissioners to vote and adopt by ordinance on at a future meeting.

Background

The 2010 NC Smoke-free Restaurants and Bars Law (N.C. Gen. Stat. 130A-498) allows local governments to adopt and enforce smoke-free ordinances that are more comprehensive than State law in local

government buildings, on local government grounds, in local vehicles, or in public places.

Secondhand smoke is known to increase the risk of lung cancer, heart disease, heart attack and lung disease in nonsmokers and according to the Surgeon General; there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. As the second healthiest county in North Carolina, the Board of Health feels it is in the best interest of our citizens and those who visit Orange County to be provided with a healthy and smoke-free environment.

For additional research and data:

Secondhand Smoke Exposure (Source: NC Division of Health and Human Services):

<http://www.tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov/shs/index.htm>

Smoking (Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/effects_cig_smoking/index.htm

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