



ORANGE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS APPROVES SMOKE-FREE PUBLIC PLACES RULE

ORANGE COUNTY, NC (November 21, 2012)—During its meeting on Tuesday night, the Orange County Board of County Commissioners voted 6-1 in favor of adopting a Rule to ban smoking in public places.

The ban applies to property owned by Orange County and the municipal governments, including parks and sidewalks. Smoking would also not be allowed on private property where the public is invited. The UNC campus and other state governed facilities will continue operating under their existing smoking ordinances and will not be affected by this new rule.

“This is about education and empowerment. What we really want to make sure is that we’re helping people understand where smoking is allowed and where smoking isn’t allowed,” said Dr. Colleen Bridger, director of the Orange County Health Department.

A \$25 fine will be issued to any violators, but the emphasis is being placed on awareness of the consequences of secondhand smoke and reversing people’s behavior in an effort to improve the County’s overall quality of life.

“It is a big win for creating a healthier environment for all who live in, visit, and work in Orange County,” added Bridger.

“I am just grateful that the citizens of Orange County will have fresh air to breath when they are in public places,” said Commissioner Steve Yuhasz.

The idea of a smoke-free public places rule in Orange County originated two years ago when a group of County high schools students approached the Board of Health, requesting they consider adopting such a rule. The Rule was brought to a vote following a public hearing on October 24, 2012, and passed 10-1.

The next step is for the Rule to go into effect with an educational period beginning on January 1, 2013. Full enforcement of the Rule would go into effect beginning on July 1, 2013.

To view the Rule and additional data, please visit <http://orangecountync.gov/health/smoke-freepublicplaces.asp>

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