

Wyckoff imposes new smoking, tobacco sales restrictions

Wyckoff – The Township Committee last week banned smoking in public parking lots and the sale of nicotine products to anyone under 21.

The ordinances, which were introduced on Oct. 20, were approved by a vote of 4-0, with Brian Scanlan absent.

Karen Blumenfeld, attorney and executive director of Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy, a non-profit group dedicated to educating the public about the benefits of smoke-free and tobacco-free living, attended the Nov. 2 meeting and thanked the committee for passing the law.

"State law does not preempt your law here," she said of the sales limit. "Ninety percent of all smokers start before the age of 21."

Resident Jon Unglert said that while he had no issue the age limit for sales, he felt the smoking ban in public parking lots infringed on civil rights.

Committeeman Rudy Boonstra said he smoked as a Board of Education member in the late 1970s.

"Me and another member who smoked had ashtrays at meetings, but we decided it wasn't a good example, so we took away the ashtrays," he said. "I quit 20-some years ago; it was the right thing to do."

After the meeting, Blumenfeld said there are now 13 municipalities in the state to have enacted ordinances restricting the sales of nicotine products to those 21 and older, including Bogota, East Rutherford, Englewood, Garfield, Rutherford, Teaneck, Tenafly and Westwood.

A state law passed in 2006 restricted the sales of tobacco and electronic smoking devices to those 19 and older.