

## Local Government Insider: New Albany latest to ban tobacco sales to those under-21

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The under-21 tobacco ban is the hot law these days in Franklin County.

*Dispatch* Reporter Earl Rinehart reports that the New Albany City Council voted on Tuesday to prohibit the sale of tobacco products to anyone younger than 21. Upper Arlington and Bexley passed similar ordinances in June. Grandview Heights joined the list in September.

Anti-smoking advocates have been showing up at suburban council meetings to urge officials to adopt the ban. The ordinances that have been passed also ban the sale of “alternative nicotine products” and, in some cases, electronic cigarettes.

The Grandview Heights City Council president has said he is confident that the movement will grow and that Columbus officials will pass a similar ordinance.

Cleveland also reportedly is considering a ban.

New Albany’s legislation says a retailer could face a fourth-degree misdemeanor for a first offense. That carries a punishment of up to 30 days in jail and a maximum fine of \$250. A subsequent offense could be a third-degree misdemeanor, which carries a maximum of 60 days in jail and a \$500 fine.

Grandview originally also penalized the underage buyer, but it later withdrew that provision. The New Albany, Bexley and Upper Arlington ordinances do not penalize the buyer.