



Enforcement of smoking bylaw at Red Deer high schools to curb student vaping

September 12, 2019

(Red Deer, Alberta) - The City of Red Deer, in partnership with local school boards, is enforcing vaping at Red Deer high schools.

The use of vaping products among youth has increased so dramatically that Health Canada recently issued national plea for help in what is become a runaway public health problem. Canada's Chief Medical Officer is concerned about the seismic shifts in the nicotine market in a short period of time and the alarming number of youth vaping in Canada.

Local schools have seen an increase in student vaping - or the use of an electronic cigarette – on their property.

"We are seeing students from all grade levels using vaping products. With all high schools in Red Deer partnering with The City of Red Deer, we hope it will continue to educate our students on the health implications of tobacco and vaping," said Rose McQuay, Principal at École Secondaire Notre Dame High School.

"Student vaping has reached epidemic proportions among Red Deer youth. Not only have our schools seen a significant increase in students using vaping products, it now ranks as the number one reason for student suspensions," added Darwin Roscoe, Principal at Hunting Hills High School.

"With the use of the City of Red Deer Smoke-Free Bylaw, it gives us another tool to help enforce the no vaping policy at our school. We are grateful that all high schools in Red Deer are taking the same approach," said Jean Doyon, Director at École la Prairie.

In seeking ways to curb vape use, and its negative side effects on their students, Red Deer high schools have come together to use a common approach. While vape use is the leading cause of suspensions, they heard other communities seeing results through the use of their local bylaw enforcement. After consultation with The City of Red Deer, it was determined that utilizing their Smoke-Free Bylaw in combination with school suspensions, would provide an effective approach to curbing vaping among students.

Under The City's Smoke-Free Bylaw, vaping is prohibited in public spaces, including workplaces, and within 10 metres of playgrounds, seasonal skating rinks, skate parks, sports fields, water spray parks, or toboggan hills. As per the bylaw, city enforcement will issue tickets to anyone (including students) caught violating the bylaw.

Students caught vaping on school property, will receive a ticket for violating The City's Smoke Free Bylaw, with the following fines:

- \$200 for the first offense
- \$500 for the second offense
- Up to \$2500 for the third offense

In addition to the fine, students at Red Deer Public Schools and Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools will also receive suspensions from their schools.

Parents with questions are asked to contact their child's high school administrator.



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