

# Smoke-free ban would 'kill' legions

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Lodge and at other private clubs and some golf courses and maybe even churches," Emmerson said.

Any type of a smoking ban would kill the Royal Canadian Legion, said Stouffville Legion member George Lovett.

"The legion would be finished if that ever happened. About 90 per cent of our members smoke," he said.

The move to put tough smoking laws in place across the region is gathering strength, with York Regional Council scheduled to vote on the bylaw June 28. If adopted, York will have similar smoking laws to Toronto and Peel Region.

"The region will implement it and police it. The region has the means to enforce it," said Councillor Sue Sherban, a task force member.

For the past year, the task force has gathered public input by hosting public meetings in each of its eight municipalities.

At the public meetings, residents, business owners, managers and employees in York Region made deputations regarding the eventual enactment of uniform smoke-free bylaws in York's municipalities.

Some restaurant and bar owners filed strong opposition to the bylaw, while others suggested law suits would be launched if restaurant and bar owners were forced to make their customers butt out.

Eventually, people will accept the smoke-free rules, Councillor Judy Scala said. "The public demands it. When it comes to smoking, people are saying 'Enough is enough.'"

Currently, smoking is banned in municipal buildings across York Region, with the exception of East Gwillumbury. "But, we don't have a law regarding smoking in town-owned vehicles. There's a lot more to do before this is finished," Emmerson said.

In some municipalities, including Whitchurch-Stouffville, Markham and Vaughan, retail stores and shopping malls are 100-per-cent smoke-free.

The new law will mean there will be no smoking regulations at bingo halls, billiard halls and bowling alleys.

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