POLICY UPDATE

Cabrillo College becomes smoke-free

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APTOS » When Cabrillo College students, faculty and staff return to campus this month, they will have to take smoking habits elsewhere, as the campus institutes a cigarette ban.

Effective Jan. 1, smoking is no longer allowed at Cabrillo’s Aptos and Watsonville campuses. The ban includes any vapor-producing products, such as electronic cigarettes.

Violators will not be fined, but are subject to student or employee disciplinary action, said Joseph Nugent, Cabrillo’s director of facilities, planning and plant operations.

To help implement the policy, the campus is promoting smoking cessation classes for students and employees, offered through human resources and the student health center. Since 1993, when the campus restricted smoking to its parking lots, a complete ban on cigarettes has been considered, said Nugent, who also heads the safety committee, which recommended that the board update its policy.

A year ago, discussion was reignited by a professor’s complaints to the committee that cigarette smoke from the parking lot wafted into the classroom, he said.

“I just think it’s a good thing for our students to be able to go to class and not be impacted by smokers if they don’t want to be,” Nugent said.

Marcus Kelly-Corbos, a member of Cabrillo's student senate, said he understands the campus’s health-related motives, but he opposes the change — as a smoker, he thinks he is being marginalized.

“It’s forcing us to go all the way down to Soquel Drive, towards the street area, which I mean, on a cold rainy day, it’s a little more dangerous down there,” Kelly-Corbos said.

CABRILLO SMOKING BAN
What: Employees, students, renters and visitors are no longer allowed to smoke any vapor-emitting products, including cigarettes and electronic cigarettes, within campus boundaries
When: Effective Jan. 1
Where: Cabrillo’s Aptos and Watsonville campuses. Cabrillo’s Scotts Valley location is in a shared building, where the campus cannot institute a smoke-free policy.
Details: Visit tinyurl.com/cabsmoke.

Cabrillo now joins UC Santa Cruz and dozens of other California colleges as smoke-free.

Saladin Sale, who co-chaired a committee overseeing UCSC’s 2014 policy change, said he’s heard students say they approve of their classmates not smoking outside residence halls and there are fewer cigarette butts lying around.

Meg Kobe, UCSC’s student health center director, said she’s distributed 150 “smoking quit kits” to students in the year since the policy change, more than in the previous 12 years combined. Accompanied by a counseling session, the quit kits contain pamphlets, gum and other tools to help students deal with nicotine withdrawal, Kobe said.