

No butts about it: St. John's enacts no-smoking housing rule

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The City of St. John's has adopted new non-smoking rules for its non-profit housing, but not after a debate about the city's role in enforcing lifestyle choices.

The rules mean that tenants who sign leasing agreements with the city from now on will have to agree to not smoke indoors.

The rules do not apply to current tenants, who may continue to smoke in their own homes.

Coun. Gerry Colbert said he agrees with the restriction, but feels the city should do more.

The city could consider "some form of education program [and] work with the government and the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corp. [with] an education program that helps people to move away from cigarette smoke, simply because of the health issues," Colbert told Monday evening's council meeting.

That proposal didn't go down well with Coun. Shannie Duff, who said the city should not start policing residents' lifestyle choices.

"Then perhaps what we should say is if you have a drinking problem, you're not allowed in our apartments, either, [or] if you eat too much, then you're not allowed in," Duff said.

"Let's stay to the original intent."

Tenants at the Riverhead Towers apartment complex put the item on council's agenda, after they complained about second-hand smoke.

Duff said that all council is trying to do is to lessen the impact smoking has on people who live under the same roof.

Read more: <http://www.cbc.ca/canada/newfoundland-labrador/story/2008/07/29/city-smoking-ban.html#ixzz0uH5FSJ1P>