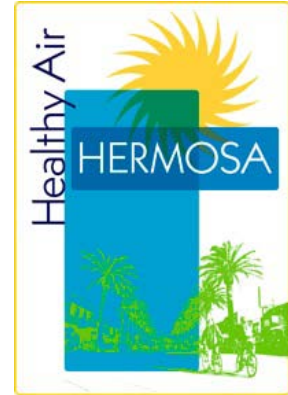




FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Hermosa Beach Launches Healthy Air Hermosa Education Program for New Smoke-free Ordinance

From the Pier to the Parks, Residents and Visitors will Enjoy a Smoke-free Environment

HERMOSA BEACH, CA – With the protection of the public’s health and safety its top priority, city leaders, joined by public health advocates, today launched the Healthy Air Hermosa public education campaign to ensure residents and visitors can enjoy a smoke-free environment in its public outdoor gathering spots—from the Pier to the parks.

Mayor Howard Fishman and Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Duclos announced at a press conference on Pier Plaza the establishment of new smoke-free zones in the City of Hermosa Beach that go into effect on March 1 and officially kicked off efforts to educate residents, visitors and business owners about the ordinance.

“With our outdoor lifestyle, the small minority who smoke in public places threatens the health and safety of the majority of our residents, visitors and workers who don’t smoke,” said Mayor Fishman. “Through its Healthy Air Hermosa public education campaign, the city is working with businesses and law enforcement to educate the public about the new ordinance so that all may enjoy healthier air in the city’s designated public places. Starting March 1, the public will see educational information and reminders all around the community – from table tents and coasters in restaurants to posters and banners hung throughout the city.”

Beginning March 1, the new city ordinance (H.B.M.C. Section 8.40.020) will establish smoke-free zones in the following locations: all public parks; Pier Plaza, the heart of the city’s downtown; the Hermosa Beach Pier; outdoor dining areas, including within five feet of the outdoor dining areas; the Strand, which is the sidewalk and bike path adjacent to the beach; the Greenbelt, which is the pedestrian path between Valley Drive and Ardmore Avenue, and City owned public parking lots. Smoking is already prohibited on the beach, in city buildings and inside of restaurants.

“Though California has some of the strictest laws in the nation regarding tobacco control, state law falls short when it comes to protecting the public from secondhand smoke in outdoor public gathering area,” said Mayor Pro Tempore Duclos. “It has been left to cities to address this issue and to take necessary steps to more fully protect the health, safety and welfare of its residents and visitors from the well documented harms of second and third hand smoke. We also cannot ignore that fact that the overwhelming majority of Californians – nearly 87% according to one report – are non smokers. They are entitled by law to full and equal enjoyment of public accommodations. My thanks goes out to Mayor Fishman for his vision and strong leadership in establishing healthy air as a priority in Hermosa Beach.”

Representatives and volunteers from the Los Angeles chapters of the American Heart Association, The American Lung Association and the American Cancer Society; Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Surfrider Foundation, Beach Cities Health District and the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence/South Bay (NCADD/SB) joined city leaders at the press conference. These organizations are contributing to the public education campaign to ensure Healthy Air Hermosa is a success.

Following the press conference, volunteers armed with educational materials, table tents and coasters visited local restaurants and businesses in smoke-free zones to educate owners, managers and employees about the new ordinance. The negative economic effects of smoking on food service employees include absenteeism, productivity loss, higher cleaning and maintenance costs and increased insurance rates. In addition, studies have found that customers prefer smoke-free establishments.

The Hermosa Beach Police Department will also be engaged in an informational campaign about the new ordinance but will have the power to issue citations for those violating the ordinance. Fines will range from \$100 to \$500. After three citations, the city can file a criminal misdemeanor complaint.

For more information, contact:

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About Hermosa Beach

Founded in 1907, Hermosa Beach is known as “The Best Little Beach City.” Named “Southern California’s Greenest City” for its work to protect the environment, it is a thriving community of some 20,000 residents located on the southern end of Santa Monica Bay in Los Angeles County, and its beaches have been ranked among the best in the world. To learn more, please visit www.hermosabch.org.

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