

# Electronic cigarettes exempt from new smoking laws

As smoking laws place more restrictions on when and where one can smoke, electronic cigarettes are becoming the preferred alternative, offering smokers the opportunity to cut down on the harmful chemicals that they inhale and emit while successfully avoiding prosecution.

Smokers of tobacco cigarettes in South Africa will once again have to adjust their habits to avoid smoking in public places and near children due to recent laws passed.

"Tobacco cigarettes are not only harmful to the smoker," says Ridwaan Ismail of Health-e-Cigarettes, a local company that has launched its electronic cigarette this year. "They are proven to be harmful to those inhaling the secondary smoke. On the other hand, e-cigarettes are not harmful to those around you, and significantly reduce the damage caused to the smoker by cutting out all carcinogenic substances."

Instead of producing smoke from combustion, the electronic cigarette produces vapour. This vapour is created from liquid containing nicotine within the electronic cigarette.

Both odourless and colourless, the vapour is neither toxic nor harmful as a secondary smoke, making it safe to smoke in all public places.

According to the International Labour Organisation, second hand smoke kills 200 000 workers a year, while the World Health Organisation reports that almost half the children across the globe breath air polluted by tobacco cigarette smoke.

The new laws will prevent smokers from smoking in partially enclosed public areas, as well as smoking near children under the age of 18 years in an attempt to protect children from the harmful effects of second hand smoke.

"The nearly 4 000 chemical substances including Arsenic, cyanide and other carcinogenic agents, contained in tobacco cigarettes are not present in the e-cigarette, thus billing it as the 'Healthy Alternative'," says Ismail.

The cartridges used in the device, unlike tobacco butts, are also completely recyclable as they are made almost entirely of plastic, this combined with the non-toxic smoke make the e-cigarette a much more environmentally-friendly product.

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