



No butts

Lighting up at Swanbourne Beach could become a freedom of the past for smokers, if a local council's health policy succeeds.
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Beach smokers fight back

BEACHGOERS including Phoenix Nudist Club members are angry about a potential smoking ban at Swanbourne Beach.

The ban would stretch from North Street, Cottesloe to Commonwealth land at Campbell Barracks in Swanbourne.

Council will vote on recommendations to review local laws and seek public comment next month, after development services committee discussion last week. Options include restricting the ban to Swanbourne Beach or extending to parks and reserves.

A ban is too extreme says Phoenix Nudist Club member Helen Linden, a smoker who has ventured to Swanbourne "whenever the sun shines" for the past 30 years.

"We always leave the beach as clean as we

found it," Ms Linden said. "I enjoy smoking at the beach as part of the freedom of the naturalist lifestyle and most people are considerate."

If council enforced a ban, she would likely go to another beach along with partner Greg Hamblin, a former smoker, as they believe beachgoers should have the option to smoke when soaking up the sun.

Ms Linden said the move could affect WA tourism with the beach proving a popular tourist destination for events such as the Free Beach Olympics in February.

She said a designated non-smoking area could work, but a complete ban was unfair.

But Sunseeker Nudist Club president Helen Black supports the ban as about a quarter of the group's 130 families, known as 'swannies', are regular summer visitors.

"I think a ban is a good idea, there's nothing worse than putting down your towel and

out comes a whole lot of cigarette butts," she said. "Smoking at the beach goes against the whole idea of going for some fresh air."

The City of Joondalup was the first WA council to ban smoking on its 17km of coastline earlier this year, with penalties of \$50 for lighting up at beaches.

Joondalup Mayor Troy Pickard said the community and health groups strongly supported the new law, resulting in fewer cigarette butts littering Hillarys Marina.

However, a statewide ban was unlikely unless other councils followed suit. "We consider it vital other councils follow our lead to ensure adequate legislation to encourage wider community behavioural change."

Nedlands Mayor Sheryl Froese said the ban would be considered as part of the city's efforts to create "friendly family" areas and promote a healthier lifestyle.

