

PUBLIC HEALTH

North Van smoking bylaws going unenforced

NORTH SHORE NEWS

A Lower Lonsdale business owner is taking the City of North Vancouver to task for an apparent lack of interest or ability to enforce its anti-smoking bylaws.

On March 31, a city bylaw passed in 2014 came into effect. It extended the provincial ban on smoking within three metres of doors, windows and air intakes to 7.5 metres.

Joel Posluns, owner of the Aikikai martial arts studio on East First Street, has repeatedly called on Vancouver Coastal Health and the city's bylaw officers to issue tickets to one man who routinely smokes on the sidewalk outside his establishment.

"We're into health. We do aikido and yoga in the building. The last thing we want is for the building to be filled up with cigarette smoke," he said.

"We'd open our doors and within 30 seconds, the building would fill with smoke."

Although the three-metre ban has been in place since 2007, it has only ever been used to ticket business owners in the City of North Vancouver who allow their staff or patrons to smoke too close to the building, according to Lindsay MacDonald, regional tobacco reduction co-ordinator for Vancouver Coastal Health.

And the law, which carries a maximum penalty of six months in jail and a \$10,000 fine, can't be applied to people smoking within the three-metre radius if they are walking. The same applies to the 7.5-metre ban put in place by the city, according to Mayor Darrell Mussatto.

"Our staff are telling us it's going to be very difficult to enforce that. We haven't written a ticket," Mussatto said. "We may or may not have jurisdiction in that area."

Certainly do! - cjk