

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW LONDON PARKS POST SIGNS PROHIBITING TOBACCO

[New London, Conn.] – Following the adoption of a tobacco-free parks ordinance last year, the City of New London has installed new “Tobacco-Free Zone” signs in all city parks. The signs serve as a reminder to park visitors that violators of the ordinance could be subject to a \$49 fine.

On September 4, 2012 the New London City Council voted 6-1 to pass ordinance 09-04-12-7, which bans smoking in all New London public parks.

“I believe this action, which I was proud to support, will go a long way toward promoting better public health habits in the City of New London,” said Mayor Daryl Finizio.

The original smoking ban proposal was drafted by members of the ACHIEVE New London County Coalition and the New London Community & Campus Coalition in 2010. That year, the coalitions presented their proposal to the New London Parks and Recreation Department, who wrote a letter to the New London City Council in support of the proposed ban. The ban was implemented after two years of discussions and revisions.

“The New London Community & Campus Coalition continues to work on creating a healthier environment for New London youth and we are pleased that a tobacco ban in City parks and playgrounds was approved by the Council,” said NLCCC Community Coordinator Tony Mollica.

The coalitions hope that the ban will decrease cigarette litter and exposure to secondhand smoke. “A tobacco-free environment promotes positive community role modeling and protects the health, safety, and welfare of community members. In addition, tobacco-free parks will complement the school district’s policy prohibiting smoking on school property,” the coalitions said in an April 2012 letter to City Council President Michael Passero.

"It's imperative to take all reasonable measures to protect members of our society, especially our children, from exposure to harmful chemicals and environments. This ordinance is a good start, and more work needs to be done."

The signs were secured through funding from the Drug-Free Communities grant.

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Ledge Light Health District – LLHD – serves as the local health department for East Lyme, Groton, Ledyard, New London and Waterford, Connecticut. As a health district, formed under [Connecticut General Statutes Section 19a-241](#), LLHD is a special unit of government, allowing member municipalities to provide comprehensive public health services to residents in a more efficient manner by consolidating the services within one organization.

The Director of Health and staff of LLHD work to promote health and wellness among the 120,000 residents we serve. By enforcing the Connecticut Public Health Code, conducting health education programs, monitoring disease outbreaks and nurturing our environment, LLHD is focused on *promoting healthy communities*.

LLHD's mission statement – **to prevent disease, illness and injury; to protect and nurture our environment; and to promote improved health and prosperity for all residents** – describes in more detail our slogan of "promoting healthy communities."

Promoting healthy communities

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