

Electronic Cigarettes

Electronic cigarettes, or "e-cigarettes" as they are known, are the newest product on the market. They come in a variety of flavors and nicotine levels, and are claimed to be a less dangerous alternative to smoking real cigarettes. Metal tubes, designed to look like real cigarettes, contain a cartridge filled with a nicotine-laced liquid that is vaporized by a battery-powered heating element. The nicotine vapor is inhaled by smokers when they draw on the device, as they would a regular cigarette. Manufacturers are not required to declare the ingredients in e-cigarettes, nor in the substances inhaled and exhaled by the "smoker."



In July 2009, the FDA released its analysis of certain electronic cigarettes, which is the first known analysis of these new products. The analysis found that the e-cigarette cartridges contain carcinogens, including nitrosamines, and toxic chemicals such as diethylene glycol. The FDA Commissioner stated: "The FDA is concerned about the safety of these products and how they are marketed to the public."

Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights is concerned that the manufacturers of e-cigarettes are marketing them as something that smokers can use in smokefree workplaces and public places. Absent any proof that e-cigarettes are harmless to people exposed to the vapors they emit, their use in smokefree spaces would be a great disservice to public health. The lack of substantial research on e-cigarettes and the potential health risks posed by the use of this product, both to the user and to the people around them, is of grave concern. The burden of proof on the safety of e-cigarettes rests on their manufacturers.

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