

Appendix re: March 3, 2015 City Council Agenda Item N.1
Scientific Debate Surrounding E-Cigarettes

The following appendix provides some supplementary information concerning the scientific debate surrounding e-cigarettes.

Below is a list of some of the other positive and negative benefits of e-cigarettes being discussed publically.

Positives

- According to the FDA nicotine in e-cigarettes is absorbed slower than traditional tobacco cigarettes so they are less addicting
- Claimed to help people quit smoking tobacco
- E-cigarettes may be less harmful than traditional tobacco cigarettes because they do not contain tobacco or some of the other harmful chemicals present in tobacco cigarettes that are proven to cause cancer.
- Minimal risk from second-hand exposure to nicotine from exhaled water vapor

Negatives

- More young people being drawn to e-cigarettes. A tobacco survey found last year that 1 in 10 high school students had tried "vaping," as it is known. That was double the number in the previous year. That number is likely rising, to the alarm of public health experts who say the dangers of e-cigarettes are still far from established.
- Possible gateway to tobacco use
- One recent, preliminary study concluded that the nicotine-laced vapor "promoted the development of cancer in certain types of human cells much in the same way that tobacco smoke does."
- Another study found chemicals such as formaldehyde and acetone in exhaled e-cigarette vapor.

Food and Drug Administration

In 2011, the FDA stated that it planned to regulate e-cigarettes as a tobacco product, but to date, no rules or regulations have been issued. The FDA website contains the following statement concerning e-cigarettes.

E-cigarettes have not been fully studied, so consumers currently don't know:

- *the potential risks of e-cigarettes when used as intended,*
- *how much nicotine or other potentially harmful chemicals are being inhaled during use, or*
- *whether there are any benefits associated with using these products.*

Additionally, it is not known whether e-cigarettes may lead young people to try other tobacco products, including conventional cigarettes, which are known to cause disease and lead to premature death.

We regularly receive voluntary reports of adverse events involving e-cigarettes from consumers, health professionals and concerned members of the public. The adverse events described in these reports have included hospitalization for illnesses such as

- *pneumonia,*
- *congestive heart failure,*
- *disorientation,*
- *seizure,*
- *hypotension, and*
- *other health problems.*

Whether e-cigarettes caused these reported adverse events is unknown. Some of the adverse events could be related to a pre-existing medical condition or to other causes that were not reported to FDA.

The FDA is currently funding dozens of studies on the scientific and public health risks of e-cigarettes, Mitch Zeller, director of the FDA's Center for Tobacco Products is quoted as saying, "we don't know enough now to say anything remotely definitive" about those risks. "We can't even tell you what the compounds are in the vapors."

Illinois Department of Public Health

As of yet, the Illinois Department of Public Health does not have a stance on e-cigarettes. "The FDA has not really given us much to go on, we're in a holding pattern," IDPH spokesperson Melaney Arnold is quoted as saying. Arnold said there's not enough information to make a decision and IDPH is waiting for word from the national agency before taking a stance.