



Group Wants No-Butts Beaches

Council May Ban Smoking In Public Areas

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COSTA MESA, Calif. -- A Costa Mesa group wants cigarette butts off public beaches, piers and parks and is asking Orange County city councils to ban smoking in public areas.

Volunteers with the Earth Resource Foundation say they want all six county beach cities to ban smoking next year. They have already requested that city councils in San Clemente, Huntington Beach and Newport Beach ban smoking in public areas and have also set their sights on Seal Beach, Laguna Beach and Dana Point.

"Every time we clean the beach, cigarette butts are a top litter item," said Stephanie Barger, executive director for the group. "If smokers were responsible and picked up after themselves, we wouldn't have this issue."

The smoking-ban campaign takes its cues from a similar movement at Solana Beach in San Diego County, where health and pollution concerns prompted the City Council to unanimously adopt a smoking ban that went into effect Nov. 21.

San Clemente is the furthest along in banning smoking on beaches. The city has asked for input from departments for a review during the first quarter of 2004.