

## The Beach Zone

*July 22, 2007*

BEACH NEWS: Smoke-free at the shore

Rhode Island can't force people to stop smoking on the beach, so they're asking nicely.

The state's Environmental Management and Health departments launched a voluntary no-smoking initiative at all state beaches in an announcement at Misquamicut State Beach in Westerly, R.I.

Environmental officials say cigarettes are the top source of litter on beaches.

Proposals to ban smoking on beaches came before the General Assembly this year, and supporters agreed to pursue the voluntary initiative first.

Dozens of communities across the country ban smoking on beaches, and nearly 900 municipalities restrict smoking in outdoor areas such as parks and restaurant patios, according to the Berkeley, Calif.-based advocacy group Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights.

[Associated Press]