

# China to control public smoking nationwide by year-end

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China, the world's biggest cigarette producer and consumer, aims to impose national smoking-control regulations by the end of this year, authorities said Tuesday.

The Asian giant has the world's largest [smoking](#) population, with 28 percent of all adults and half of its adult men estimated to regularly use cigarettes.

The World Health Organization (WHO) says a million people in China die of [tobacco](#)-related illnesses annually, with second-hand smoke contributing to some 100,000 deaths each year.

In June 2015 Beijing municipality adopted the toughest anti-smoking legislation in the country, banning smoking in offices, restaurants, hotels and hospitals.

Venues that flout the ban can face fines of up to 10,000 yuan (\$1,450).

Last week Shanghai also amended its tobacco regulations to ban [indoor smoking](#) and also outdoor smoking at public areas such as bus stops, schools and stadiums.

At a WHO conference in the commercial hub, government health spokesman Mao Qunan indicated measures would be rolled out across the country.

"The nationwide regulation to control smoking in public is undergoing the legislative process and is hoped to be announced and carried out this year," he told reporters.

"Strictly controlling smoking in public places through legal forms is an advancement for health."

Nearly 20 cities have already drawn up public no-smoking rules, Mao added. The commission first drafted the law in late 2014.

Enforcing anti-smoking measures can be difficult in China as the state-run tobacco industry provides the government with colossal sums—1.1 trillion yuan (\$160 billion) in taxes and profits in 2015, up 20 percent year-on-year.

China's tobacco regulator shares offices and senior officials with the state-owned China National Tobacco Corp—a near-monopoly and by far the world's biggest cigarette producer.

WHO director-general Margaret Chan called on more cities "to make sure that the tobacco control in China will make further progress".

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