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San Diego – The Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) Board of Directors voted unanimously Thursday to ban the use of electronic cigarettes in places where it is already illegal to smoke tobacco products.

“The popularity of electronic cigarettes has grown significantly in recent years. We now have uniform policy between the way we treat traditional cigarettes and electronic cigarettes,” said MTS Chief Executive Officer Paul Jablonski.

Currently, it is prohibited for passengers to smoke in MTS buses and trolleys, and within 25 feet of any bus stop, trolley station or other MTS facility. The new ban, which expressly includes electronic cigarettes, will go into effect on July 18. Fines associated with the ban will be \$50 for the first offense, \$75 for the second offense, and \$100 for the third and subsequent offense. The amended ordinance will prohibit passengers that “smoke or carry a lighted or smoldering pipe, cigar, cigarette, or tobacco or use any electronic smoking product or device that causes smoke, mist or vapor in any form.”

Electronic cigarettes have also been banned by many other local jurisdictions, including the County of San Diego, City of San Diego, El Cajon, La Mesa, Lemon Grove and Poway. California transit agencies have banned electronic cigarettes as well, including the North County Transit District, LA METRO and San Francisco’s BART.

MTS operates 95 bus routes and three Trolley lines on 53 miles of double-tracked railway. Every weekday more than 300,000 passenger trips are taken on MTS bus and Trolley services. MTS is expecting to set a new record this year with more than 97 million riders. For more information on how you can use public transportation and save money, go to www.sdmts.com.

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