

# E-cigarettes, shisha to be illegal from Feb 1 under amended Tobacco Act

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Singapore

A man smokes an e-cigarette in Toronto, Aug 7, 2015. (Photo: Reuters/Mark Blinch)

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SINGAPORE: Starting Feb 1, buying, using and possessing tobacco products like e-cigarettes, shisha and chewing tobacco will be illegal, the Ministry of Health said on Friday (Jan 26).

The new prohibitions on such "emerging and imitation" tobacco products are part of the first phase of amendments to the Tobacco (Control of Advertisements and Sale) Act, which were passed in Parliament in November last year.

Under the changes, anyone found in possession of, purchasing or using the prohibited products will face a fine of up to S\$2,000. Currently, only those caught importing, selling or distributing prohibited products are punished.

"(Members of) the public are encouraged to discard any prohibited tobacco products that they currently have in possession," the ministry said.

Shisha and snuff are among the tobacco products that will be more tightly regulated.  
(Photo: MOH)

Those caught importing, selling and distributing the products face a fine of up to S\$10,000 and up to six months' jail for a first offence. Repeat offenders can be fined a maximum of S\$20,000 and jailed for up to one year.

### **RAISING THE MINIMUM LEGAL AGE**

The minimum legal age for the purchase, use, possession, sale and supply of tobacco products will also be raised from 18 to 21 years old in future phases.

It will first be raised from 18 to 19 years old on Jan 1, 2019. On Jan 1, 2020, it will be raised to 20 years old and then subsequently to 21 years old on Jan 1, 2021.

The health ministry said these changes aim to "further reduce opportunities for youths to take up smoking before they turn 21" and to "better protect our population from the harms of emerging and imitation tobacco products".

