

NGO seeks info on tobacco laws in state

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Vadodara: Using Right to Information (RTI) Act, a city-based voluntary organisation has sought to know from health departments of civic bodies at Vadodara, Surat, Bharuch, Ahmedabad and Himmatnagar on overall implementation of Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA) notified by government of India. The organisation Faith Foundation claims that the laws are grossly violated in state and no stringent action taken by the municipal health departments.

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health' is placed. The applicant has also asked about number of people who smoke and consume tobacco in government department and whether there are smoking and non-smoking zones in the office premise.

The organisation also wants to know about the number of people fined by officials for breaking anti-tobacco laws or caught smoking in no-smoking zones between 2004 and 2008, number of tobacco sellers were fined for selling tobacco prod-

ucts within 100 yards of schools and colleges and number of hotels and restaurants fined.

"We have observed that anti-tobacco laws are not properly implemented in our state. Through this RTI application, these health officials will at least introspect and detect loopholes in their respective cities. And if the need be, we are willing to sensitise health department officials on these laws," said Anant Christian of Faith Foundation.