

Syria Bans Public Smoking

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Syrian president Bashar Assad has handed down a decree yesterday that bans smoking in all public places. The smoking ban will be in place in six months time, and includes restaurants, cinemas, cafes, public transport, schools and official functions.

Those caught smoking in public areas will be fined 2000 Syrian pounds, or US\$45. It is Syria's second smoking ban. In 1996 Assad's father banned smoking in government institutions and at airports and hospitals.

Similar smoking restrictions are already in place across the Middle East in Lebanon, the UAE, Egypt and Iraq.

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