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No-smoking patrol hits main street in Osaka

OSAKA (Kyodo) A 12-strong squad of former police officers began patrolling the main strip of Osaka's Midosuji district Friday for flagrant smokers to help the city crack down on the public nuisance.

The street, one of several areas designated this month as a nonsmoking zone, is being patrolled by three four-member teams who distribute leaflets, tissue packs and other items telling people to mind their manners.

Ex-police officers tell pedestrians Friday that Midosuji boulevard, Osaka's main strip, is a nonsmoking area. KYODO PHOTO

The patrols set out at 10 a.m. Friday and had warned about 10 people for smoking in the first 30 minutes.

The teams will simply warn violators for the first three months. But in October, they will issue 1,000 yen fines.

The new ordinance by the Osaka Municipal Government on July 4 designates a 4-km stretch of Midosuji street and the area around City Hall as no-smoking zones.

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