

'Fire-safe' cigarettes?

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A state House committee approved a bill yesterday that would require tobacco companies to make and sell cigarettes that burn out if left unattended. The cigarettes get their "fire-safe" properties from a special paper that contains two bands of less porous material. The material will smother burning tobacco unless someone is actively smoking the cigarette. The proposed bill would bar the sale of any other type of cigarette in North Carolina. The bill's next stop is the House Finance Committee followed by a full-chamber vote.

Discarded smoking materials are the leading cause of structure fires in North Carolina. Half of the state's fatal fires are caused by tobacco products.