



How Community Organizations Can Work Toward Smoke-Free Multi-Housing



Smoke-free housing options are an important component of a healthy community. The movement of tobacco smoke from one apartment unit into another is common, and up to 65% of air in apartment buildings can be shared among all the units.¹ Studies show that 30% of Minnesota renters report that smoke comes into their apartment unit from somewhere else in the building.² More than 75% of Minnesota renters surveyed said they would rather live in a smoke-free building than a similar but smoking allowed building.²

How Does Smoke-free Housing Benefit Communities?

- **A Child-Friendly Community.** Children are particularly vulnerable to the health effects of secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke can cause or worsen conditions such as asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia, low birth weight, and ear infections.³
- **A Healthier Community.** Research shows that living in a household with a no-smoking policy encourages cessation⁴. Any reduction in smoking reduces harmful secondhand smoke.
- **A Safer Community.** Cigarettes and other smoking materials are the leading cause of residential fire deaths in Minnesota and the United States.⁵ These fires can also result in millions of dollars in damaged property.
- **Safeguard Investments.** Cigarette burns on counters and carpets are eliminated with a smoke-free policy. Unhealthy smoke residue, also known as 'thirdhand smoke', that collects on windows, blinds, and walls is also eliminated. Cleaning a smoke-free unit is less expensive than cleaning one in which someone has smoked.
- **Social Justice.** People who own single-family homes can readily protect themselves from secondhand smoke. Renters comprise roughly 25% of Minnesota households and disproportionately include minorities, people with low-incomes, and children⁶. Without smoke-free policies, these populations cannot protect themselves from unwanted secondhand smoke coming into their homes.

How Can Community Organizations Support Smoke-Free Housing?

- Refer renters being exposed to secondhand smoke to Live Smoke Free and to our free, online smoke-free apartment directory
- Have Live Smoke Free's contact information and resources onsite to share with residents
- Link to Live Smoke Free in the resource section of your website
- Encourage new rental multi-housing developments in your neighborhood to open smoke-free
- Convert buildings owned by your organization to smoke-free
- Educate community members about this issue and the benefits of eliminating smoking in multifamily buildings



Receive Free Resources from Live Smoke Free

- Consultations
- Promotions (Press Releases, Signage, Listing in a Statewide Housing Directory)
- Implementation Tools (Surveys, Notification letters, Lease addendums, Translated documents)
- Educational Resources (Tailored for Management, Staff, and Residents)
- Cessation Materials

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References

- ¹ The Center for Energy and Environment. "Measured Change in Multifamily Unit Air Leakage and Air Flow Due to Air Sealing and Ventilation Treatments." 2007.
- ² Wilder Research. "Perceptions of Secondhand Tobacco Smoke Among Minnesota Metro Renters." 2009.
- ³ US Department of Health and Human Services. "The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General." 2006.
- ⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (May 2007). "State-specific prevalence of smoke-free home rules--United States, 1992-2003". MMWR Morb. Mortal. Wkly. Rep. 56 (20): 501-4. PMID 17522588.
- ⁵ U.S. Fire Administration. "Residential Smoking Fires and Causalities." 2005.
- ⁶ The Center for Energy and Environment. "Reduction of Environmental Tobacco Smoke Transfer in Minnesota Multifamily Buildings Using Air Sealing and Ventilation Treatments." 2004.

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