

# BENEFITS OF A SMOKE-FREE POLICY IN YOUR APARTMENTS

For Property Owners and Managers



## Apartment buildings around the country are going smoke-free. Here's why:

- Tenants want to have smoke-free air in their homes.
- Secondhand smoke is known to be harmful to your tenants' health and decrease their quality of life.
- It is legal to put a smoke-free policy in place.
- A smoke-free policy can save you money.

## Reduce Damage

- A smoke-free policy can reduce damage such as cigarette burn marks, yellow walls, and lasting odors. Your units will stay in better condition longer.
- You can lower cleaning and painting costs if you go smoke-free.<sup>1</sup>

Nonsmoking Unit			Smoking Unit		
Labor	12 hours x \$35/hour	= \$420	Labor	30 hours x \$35/hour	= \$1050
Paint	3 gallons	= \$60	Paint	4 gallons	= \$80
Ceiling Paint	2 gallons	= \$40	Ceiling Paint	3 gallons	= \$60
Carpet Shampoo		= \$50	Carpet Shampoo		= \$50
			Primer		= \$100
			Replace rugs burns*		= \$600
			Replace laminates*		= \$800
<b>Total: \$570</b>			<b>Total: \$1,340 - \$2,740</b>		

*\*Costs depend on carpet and countertop condition. Analysis provided by Sanford Housing Authority, 2004 and Auburn Housing Authority, 2006.*

## Attract Tenants

By going smoke-free you will be able to attract new tenants and keep current tenants as well. Surveys taken around the country show a preference for smoke-free apartments.

- In most surveys, 65%-75% of multi-unit residents prefer smoke-free housing.<sup>2</sup>
- A recent survey of 160 Minneapolis/St. Paul renters found that 55% said they have moved or would move from an apartment because of secondhand smoke seepage. No one said they would move because of smoke-free air policy.<sup>3</sup>
- Most people do not smoke. In Franklin County, nearly 80% of the population are non-smokers.<sup>4</sup>
- Smoke-free housing sets you apart. Owners or managers who have put smoke-free policies in place have seen a rise in occupancy or no impact. Some managers are even able to raise rates as a result of the policy change (UNITS, Dec 2007).

*Continued...*



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### Improve Resale Value

- Recent articles suggest that smoke-free buildings will have a higher resale value. Agents are saying that more people are looking for houses and buildings that have been smoke-free.<sup>5</sup>

### Prevent Fires

- Smoking is the leading cause of home fire deaths in the United States. One out of four victims of smoking related fires is not the smoker who caused the fire. More than one-third were children of the smokers. Twenty-five percent were neighbors or friends of the smokers.<sup>6,7</sup>
- U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 142,900 smoking-material fires in 2006. These fires caused \$606 million in property damage.<sup>8</sup>

### Protect the Health and Comfort of Your Residents

- By creating smoke-free living space you will help reduce your tenants' exposure to secondhand smoke.
- For adults, smoke-free policies can lower the risk of both lung cancer and heart disease.<sup>9</sup>
- For children, smoke-free policies can lower the risk for asthma attacks, ear infections, and infections such as bronchitis and pneumonia.<sup>9</sup>

### Reduce Your Liability

Landlords not only have the right to prohibit smoking, but may also be liable under a variety of legal theories for failure to prohibit smoking when a tenant is affected by secondhand smoke.<sup>10</sup>



Based on legal cases from around the U.S., some possible claims against a landlord that allows smoking are:<sup>10</sup>

- Constructive eviction
- Covenant of quiet enjoyment
- Negligence
- Warranty of habitability

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4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2007.
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