

## Secondhand Smoke in Multi-Unit Housing

Our apartments are our homes. Most of the time, what we do in our own homes doesn't make a difference to anybody else—and is nobody else's business. But sometimes, our actions affect our neighbors. Loud music can be a nuisance. Cooking smells can be annoying. But secondhand smoke can be deadly.

Many times, people who smoke don't realize that smoke is drifting into their neighbors' apartments. But secondhand smoke can be a real health problem in apartment buildings.

### Secondhand smoke is a first-rate killer.

Did you know that there are over 4000 chemicals in tobacco smoke? And that over 50 of them cause cancer? Arsenic, carbon monoxide, formaldehyde, and benzene are just a few of these poisons.

Children exposed to secondhand smoke are at an increased risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), acute respiratory infections, ear problems, and more severe asthma. Smoking by parents causes respiratory symptoms and slows lung growth in their children.

Exposure of adults to secondhand smoke has immediate adverse effects on the cardiovascular system and causes heart disease and lung cancer.

### So what to do?

The Oregon Tobacco Quit Line can help you quit smoking. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW. If you are not ready to quit smoking, please smoke outside.

### Benefits for you

Smoking outside or quitting smoking will...

- protect your family *and* your neighbors from the deadly poisons in secondhand smoke
- prevent fires in your home
- reduce damage to your apartment...helping you get back more of your cleaning deposit
- help you avoid potential lawsuits by neighbors whose health has been damaged by secondhand smoke
- make you feel good because you are doing a good thing for your family and neighbors

### Why should apartment buildings be non-smoking?

The U.S. Surgeon General says that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke:

*"A smoke-free environment is the only way to fully protect nonsmokers from the dangers of secondhand smoke. Separating smokers from nonsmokers, cleaning the air, and ventilating buildings cannot eliminate exposure of nonsmokers to secondhand smoke."*

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Portland-Vancouver Metro Area Smokefree Housing Project - 3/07  
[www.smokefreeoregon.com/housing](http://www.smokefreeoregon.com/housing)

