

## Live Smoke Free

The Smoke-Free Multi-Housing program  
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## **HUD Strongly Encourages Public Housing to Adopt Smoke-Free Policies**

*Live Smoke Free program available to assist metro apartments in going smoke free*

ST. PAUL, MINN. – Last Friday, July 17, 2009, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released a notice (PIH2009-21 (HA)) strongly encouraging Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to implement non-smoking policies in some or all of their public housing units. The notice cites the harms of secondhand smoke as the primary reason for buildings to go smoke free: “Because Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) can migrate between units in multifamily housing, causing respiratory illness, heart disease, cancer, and other adverse health effects in neighboring families, the Department is encouraging PHAs to adopt non-smoking policies.” The notice is available at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/publications/notices/> or <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/publications/notices/09/pih2009-21.pdf>

“Children and the elderly comprise a large share of the residents in public housing. A considerable number of residents also have chronic diseases such as asthma and cardiovascular disease. These populations are particularly vulnerable to secondhand smoke exposure. Accordingly, the Minneapolis HUD Office stands by ready to assist any of the 124 Public Housing Authorities throughout Minnesota that administer the Public Housing Program with implementing an appropriate non-smoking policy,” said Minneapolis Field Office Director, Dexter J. Sidney.

Many public housing authorities in Minnesota have already adopted smoke-free policies; 24 have adopted a smoke-free policy for at least one of their buildings. Minnesota has the second highest number of public housing authorities with smoke-free policies in the country. In the metro, Carver County Community Development Agency, Dakota County Community Development Agency, and the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority have adopted smoke-free policies for at least one of their buildings.

The Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA) currently has two smoke-free buildings, and is planning for more. Kurt Keena, the Director of Property Management, has coordinated the CDA’s implementation of smoke-free policies. “The CDA felt it was important to offer a completely smoke-free housing option within our senior housing program. Doing so has allowed us to offer our residents an expanded range of choices in housing at affordable rents. The response has been quite positive, and we plan on expanding the option with future new developments,” he said.

Heritage Commons is a 102-unit smoke-free building owned by the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority. “Providing a smoke-free environment helps the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority achieve our mission to deliver quality, well-managed homes to a diverse low-income population and contribute

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to the well-being of the individuals, families and community we serve,” said Shannon Hartfiel, Property Manager at Heritage Commons.

Minnesota renters looking for smoke-free apartment buildings can find them by using an online directory compiled by the Association for Nonsmokers—Minnesota (ANSR)’s Live Smoke Free program. The online directory, [www.mnsmokefreehousing.org](http://www.mnsmokefreehousing.org), lists more than 250 Minnesota apartment buildings that are 100 percent smoke free. The directory provides renters with a free, easy way to search for apartment buildings that do not allow smoking inside the building or individual apartment units.

“Tenants are looking for smoke-free apartments. With the strong stance HUD has taken to encourage the adoption of smoke-free policies, we anticipate many more apartment buildings in the Twin Cities metro area will go smoke free,” said Brittany McFadden, Director of Live Smoke Free.

For information on finding or listing a smoke-free apartment building, please contact Live Smoke Free at (651) 646-3005 or [info@mnsmokefreehousing.org](mailto:info@mnsmokefreehousing.org).

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#### *About Live Smoke Free*

Live Smoke Free, a program of the Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota (ANSR), promotes smoke-free policies for apartment buildings in the Twin Cities metro area. Currently, Minnesota tenants seeking smoke-free multi-unit housing largely outnumber the amount of smoke-free units available. Live Smoke Free educates building owners, managers, tenants, and housing industry professionals about the benefits of smoke-free buildings. Live Smoke Free assists building owners and managers with creating and promoting a smoke-free policy for their property. The program also assists tenants in finding solutions to secondhand smoke problems. Tenants can learn how to talk to their landlord about creating a smoke-free policy for their building. For more information, go to: <http://www.mnsmokefreehousing.org/>

#### *About the Minnesota public housing authorities that have smoke-free buildings*

Attached please find a complete list of housing authorities in Minnesota that have smoke-free apartment buildings.

#### *About the Minneapolis HUD Office*

For more information about public housing in Minnesota, contact the Minneapolis HUD Office at (612) 370-3000 ext. 2224.

#### *About Minnesota renter demand for smoke-free housing*

According to a survey by the Center for Energy and Environment, almost half of the state’s renters stated secondhand smoke comes into their apartment unit from a location outside their apartment unit. Of those with problems, more than one-third of the respondents indicated the smoke bothers them “a lot” or “so much I’m thinking of moving.” The research also shows demand is strong for apartment units that do not smell of other people’s smoke: more than fifty percent of those living in rental apartment units would be “very likely” to choose a smoke-free apartment, all other things being equal. Close to 20 percent of smokers indicated they would like a smoke-free unit as well. For a complete report of the survey findings, go to:

[http://www.mncee.org/research/environmental\\_tobacco/multifamily\\_bldgs/index.php](http://www.mncee.org/research/environmental_tobacco/multifamily_bldgs/index.php)

#### *About secondhand smoke*

Secondhand smoke is a cause of lung cancer and heart disease in nonsmokers. In June 2006, the U.S. Surgeon General concluded that the scientific evidence indicates there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Exposure to secondhand smoke causes asthma in children and can trigger asthma attacks in both adults and children. According to the 2008 Minnesota Youth Tobacco and Asthma Survey, nearly half of students with asthma reported being exposed to secondhand smoke in the past seven days. For more information, go to:

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/secondhandsmoke/index.html>