



Dear Reader:

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Health and Human Services, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Lung Association are joining together to protect everyone living in federally assisted multifamily housing from the dangers of secondhand smoke. Since 2009, HUD has strongly encouraged Public Housing Agencies to adopt smoke-free buildings to protect the health of residents, and now urges federally assisted multifamily property owners to go smoke-free. To assist you in this process, HUD has developed smoke-free housing toolkits to provide user-friendly information on making all buildings smoke-free. There are materials for landlords, including Public Housing Agencies, and for resident organizations.

The U.S. Surgeon General has warned that breathing secondhand smoke for even a short time is dangerous. Children, the elderly and disabled, and low-income and other disadvantaged individuals and families are the most likely to suffer from breathing secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke causes heart attacks and lung cancer and it makes asthma worse. Smoke-free housing is especially important for kids. Secondhand smoke can hurt their growing lungs, and kids and teens with asthma have difficulty breathing. Secondhand smoke is also associated with Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Research has demonstrated that smoke does not stay contained within individual apartments and as a result can harm residents in non-smoking apartments. For more information on the harmful effects of secondhand smoke on children, please visit the website of the American Academy of Pediatrics at [www.aap.org/richmondcenter](http://www.aap.org/richmondcenter).

Smoke-free housing benefits landlords and managers as well. It reduces fires caused by smoking. In 2007, over 140,000 fires were started by cigarettes, cigars and pipes in the U.S. causing \$530 million in property damage, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Twenty-five percent of people killed in smoking-related fires are not the actual smokers, with many being children of the smokers, neighbors or friends. Smoke-free housing also saves on property maintenance costs from cleaning and painting stained walls and ceilings and repairing burn marks left by smoking. Less damage means less expense to get a unit ready for a new resident. It is completely legal to go smoke-free, and all smoke-free policies don't have to look alike.

Smoking is a powerful addiction and people who smoke need help to quit. There are ways for smokers to get help quitting, including by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669/TTY 1-800-332-8615). Smokers can also talk with their doctors and other healthcare providers, or visit the American Lung Association's website at [www.lung.org](http://www.lung.org).

Everyone deserves the right to breathe clean air. Please join us by going smoke-free and making sure that smokers know how to get help quitting. While there will be challenges along the way, everyone will benefit from smoke-free multifamily housing!

Sincerely,

Jon L. Gant  
Director, Office of Healthy Homes  
and Lead Hazard Control  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Charles D. Connor  
President and CEO  
American Lung Association

Robert W. Block, M.D., FAAP  
President  
American Academy of Pediatrics

Tim A. McAfee, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director, Office on Smoking and Health  
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and  
Health Promotion, Centers for Disease Control and  
Prevention