

SMOKE FREE | MULTI-UNIT HOUSING NORTH-CAROLINA

HEALTH BENEFITS

Smoke-free Policies Save Lives

By adopting a smoke-free policy, you can create a healthier place for your residents to live and employees to work. Non-smokers and employees will breathe cleaner air, and it will be easier for smokers to quit. As many property owners and managers in North Carolina who have adopted smoke-free policies say it's a win-win situation.

Clearing the Air for All

The Surgeon General has declared that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. It increases risk for heart attacks and cancer, and kills about 50,000 adults in the United States each year. That's 137 people every day!

Millions of Americans are still exposed to secondhand smoke in their apartments and condominiums every year. Smoke easily travels from smokers' units to hallways, common areas, and non-smokers' units. Cancer-causing chemicals can linger in walls and furniture for years.

DHIC, a non-profit organization that develops and owns affordable housing across North Carolina, took some of their properties smoke-free because of secondhand smoke concerns:

"We are aware of the effects of secondhand smoke on nonsmokers, on children, on persons with asthma. Our goal is to enhance the quality of life for our residents and community at large."

The health benefits, particularly to older residents, are why one Triangle area property manager went smoke-free:

"My sister has lung cancer caused by secondhand smoke. She is a resident of my building. The number one thing is that it will keep my elderly residents healthier. So many of them do not smoke, and smoke-free policies will be good for their health and longevity."



DHIC took Water Park Village smoke-free to improve quality of life for all residents, including children. Image credit: DHIC.

Clearing the Air for Smokers

Smoke-free policies help improve the health of smokers. The majority of smokers in NC try to quit smoking every year. Smokers are more likely to be able to quit if they are in a smoke-free setting, including smoke-free housing. Quitting resources such as brochures, quitline referrals and support group meetings, also help.

Lenora Nelson, a property manager in Raleigh, says:

“Even smokers say a smoke-free policy is good because it will force them to quit smoking.”

Investing in Employees' Health

Smoke-free policies provide clean air for your employees. Leah Lyerly, Senior Vice President of Westminster Company, recalled that a site manager inspired them to take one of their Winston-Salem properties smoke-free. The manager initiated the smoke-free process as a result of her work conditions, the main office of the property was in a smoke-filled hallway.

Many management companies find that smoke-free policies motivate their on-site managers and other employees to quit smoking. This results in a better quality of life, health, and improved ability to work.

Smart Tips

- Consider the health impacts of secondhand smoke. Learn more at http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/secondhand_smoke/
- Help your smoking residents quit with free resources from the North Carolina Division of Public Health. Visit <http://www.QuitlineNC.com> or call 1-800-Quit-Now.

To hear other property owners' and managers' stories:

Visit the NC Division of Public Health's Smoke-Free Housing Website at <http://www.smokefreehousingnc.com>



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