



Achieving smoke-free apartment living

Information Sheet 6

What is happening overseas?

The problem of smoke-drift in apartment blocks has given rise to interesting developments in the United States and Canada. In the private housing sectors of these countries, the number of multi-unit housing developments with comprehensive smoke-free policies is rapidly increasing.¹⁻³ During the decade 2000 to 2010 the numbers of smoke-free apartment blocks in the US grew exponentially from almost nil to a situation in which “virtually every state has smoke-free multi-unit housing available, and many states have thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of smoke-free units”.⁴ In California, by the end of 2011, sixteen local government jurisdictions had laws requiring at least 75% of units in apartment complexes to be smoke-free.⁵

Public opinion surveys, which almost invariably indicate overwhelming support for smoke-free apartments, provide some explanation for this trend.⁶

In California, tobacco control advocates are pushing for local ordinances that would require a certain percentage of apartment complexes to be designated smoke-free.

Canadian smoke-free housing web sites suggest that smoke-free policies in Canada are also increasingly prevalent. For example, 50 multi-unit housing complexes have advertised their smoke-free status on the web site Smoke-free Housing BC.⁷

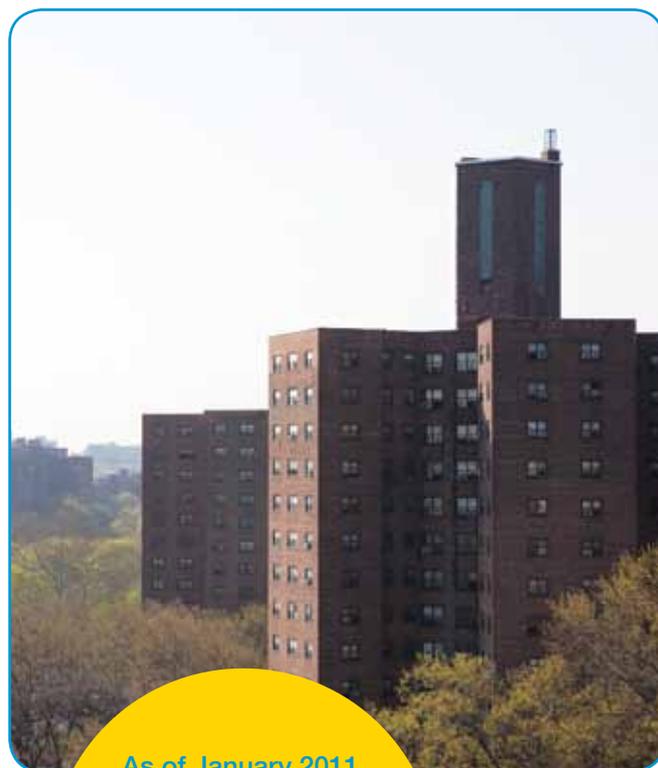
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The growth of smoke-free public housing

In July 2009, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development issued a notice regarding Non-Smoking Policies in Public Housing.⁸ The Notice encourages public housing authorities to implement smoke-free policies in public housing units. The US-based Smoke-free Environments Law Project reported that as of January 2011 at least 230 US local public housing authorities had adopted smoke-free policies for some or all of their apartment buildings.⁶ Over 200 had been adopted since the beginning of January, 2005; an average of over 2.9 per month.⁹ This constituted an increase of almost 1,300% in the number of housing authorities with smoke-free policies in 72 months.

Relevant web sites providing information about smoke-free housing in the US and Canada are listed in Information Sheet 7 ('General Information') in this resource.



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References

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