

Benefits of Going Smoke-free

Six reasons to adopt a smoke-free policy in your apartment building

Reason #1: Market demand

In 2005, the Healthy Community Environments Survey asked Washington tenants about their attitudes toward smoke-free housing:

- About 85 percent of total renters prefer to live in smoke-free housing.
- More than 95 percent of non-smokers prefer to live in smoke-free housing.
- More than 52 percent of smokers prefer to live in smoke-free housing.

In addition, about 88 percent of Washington residents don't allow smoking in their homes.

Reason #2: Reduced cleaning and maintenance costs

It can cost an additional \$1,000 or more to turn over a smoking unit. Whether it's the smell, the yellow walls or the burn holes, cleaning up after a smoking tenant is time consuming and costly. Adopting a smoke-free policy will save money on cleaning, painting and repair costs.

Reason #3: Protect your property from fire

In Washington, cigarettes and smoking material are responsible for more deaths than any other fire source. When residential smoking fires occur, they cause more injuries, more deaths, and more expensive property damage than other types of residential fires. A smoke-free policy reduces your risk – and you may even be able to get an insurance discount. Ask your broker.

Reason #4: You have the right to adopt a smoke-free policy

There is no "right to smoke" under any federal, state or local laws. Smokers are not a "protected class." Owners and landlords of multi-unit dwellings have the legal right to set reasonable rules that protect their investments and the health of their tenants.

Reason #5: Avoid liability

Apartment owners actually run an increased risk for legal liability when their property is not designated smoke-free. Unlike people who smoke, non-smokers with serious breathing disabilities or smoke allergies actually do have legal protection under federal and state laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Fair Housing Act.

Reason #6: Protect the health of your tenants!

Secondhand smoke is toxic, causing 30 times as many lung cancer deaths as all regulated air pollutants combined. In fact, every year over 38,000 deaths in the United States are the result of exposure to secondhand smoke.

The facts are clear: going smoke-free is the right decision for your business, your health and your tenants' health!

"We believed there was a market for providing a healthy, smoke-free environment in apartment housing. In addition to the health benefits, we can now provide residents with a cleaner, better maintained apartment home, with a reduced fire risk. We see this as an added amenity we can offer to protect the health and safety of our residents."

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