



**MATCH**  
COALITION, INC.

Protecting Connecticut's Health

# BE SMOKE-FREE

at HOME, WORK, and PLAY

## SMOKE-FREE AT HOME

It is legal. No federal or state laws prohibit smoke-free policies in multi-unit buildings.

All across the country, cities are addressing the issue of secondhand smoke exposure in multi-unit housing by adopting policies which limit where people can smoke.

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has strongly encouraged public housing authorities to adopt smoke-free policies to protect the health of residents.

Smokers are not a protected class and smoking is not a fundamental right. In fact, the Tobacco Control Legal Consortium notes in their 2010 Law Synopsis Report, "Secondhand Smoke Seepage into Multi-Unit Affordable Housing," that prohibiting smoking can protect against lawsuits by tenants with certain disabilities that are exacerbated by exposure to secondhand smoke.

The MATCH Coalition is working together with tenants, housing authorities, and property owners to voluntarily increase the number of smoke-free housing units in Connecticut.

## SMOKE-FREE POLICIES SAVE LIVES.

**HEALTH** Exposure to secondhand smoke puts tenants and their guests as well as property management staff at risk.

Secondhand smoke (SHS) is deadly. The harmful effects have been well documented. There is overwhelming scientific evidence that secondhand tobacco smoke is a direct cause of lung cancer (causing an estimated 3,000 nonsmokers to die each year, including 440 Connecticut residents<sup>i</sup>), heart disease (35,000 deaths each year), and lung and bronchial infections (affecting a quarter million children every year).<sup>ii</sup> SHS increases risk of lung cancer 20 -30% and the risk of heart disease 25-30% in non-smokers.<sup>iii</sup>

There is no risk-free level of exposure to SHS.

The elderly and children are at a great risk for health problems even at very low levels of exposure to SHS. SHS is a leading trigger of asthma attacks and other respiratory problems, and a known cause of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).<sup>iv</sup>

Ventilation or air cleaning cannot control SHS. The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating & Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) issued their latest position document on secondhand smoke. It states: "At present, the only means of effectively eliminating the health risk associated with indoor exposure is to ban smoking activity."

Air quality studies in apartment buildings show that up to 60% of the air comes from other units in the building.<sup>v</sup>

**SAFETY** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) lists smoking as the leading cause of residential fire and the number one cause of fire deaths in the United States. Smoke-free policies reduce the risk of residential fires by limiting the areas in which residents can smoke on a property, and prohibiting smoking inside the building or individual units. The leading cause of fatal fires in multi-family buildings is smoking, accounting for 26% of all fire deaths.<sup>vi</sup>

## SMOKE-FREE POLICIES REDUCE COSTS.

**COST SAVINGS** Cigarette smoke also harms residential units and increases the cost of cleaning and repairing properties that are damaged from smoke residue, burns and fire.

Units with smoke residue on carpets, walls, counters and curtains are expensive to clean and take more time to turn.

The results from a Smoke-Free Housing New England study from 2009 shows that the cost to rehabilitate a unit where smoking is allowed is up to 7x more than the cost of cleaning a unit where smoking is prohibited. The cost is about \$3,515 for a unit occupied by a heavy smoker.

Many insurance carriers provide discounts for “comprehensive” fire-safe plans, which include the adoption of written smoke-free policies.

## **CONTACT MATCH FOR SUPPORT**

### **MOBILIZE AGAINST TOBACCO FOR CONNECTICUT’S HEALTH**

MATCH Coalition is a non-profit corporation established in 1995. We are dedicated to saving Connecticut lives by promoting smoke free environments, reducing disparities in tobacco control and increasing access and funding to prevention and cessation programs. There are over one hundred member organizations representing thousands of Connecticut residents including the American Heart Association, American Lung Association and the American Cancer Society.

**PLANNING SUPPORT** MATCH staff can meet with property managers, boards, and tenant associations to review key steps and develop a plan for the implementation of a smoke-free policy.

**PRESENTATIONS TO TENANTS** MATCH staff can meet with tenant associations to review the effects of secondhand smoke and discuss the benefits of smoke-free policies.

**SMOKING CESSATION PROGRAMS** Tobacco use is an addiction. Today there are many programs and methods available to support individuals of all ages who want to stop tobacco use. MATCH can help identify and connect individuals to state and local tobacco use programs. Call the CT Quitline for free help quitting at 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

**[www.matchcoalition.com](http://www.matchcoalition.com) (860) 838-4379 fax (860) 289-5405 [matchcoalitionct@gmail.com](mailto:matchcoalitionct@gmail.com)  
45 Ash St. East Hartford, CT 06108**

MATCH smoke-free policy work is made possible by a grant from the Connecticut Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

**“Smoke-free policies are about the smoke, not the smoker. Smoke-free policies do not preclude someone who smokes from living in the building; rather, they simply require that all tenants abide by the policy while on the property.”**

*-National Center for Healthy Housing*

---

<sup>i</sup> Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, [www.tobaccofreekids.org](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org).

<sup>ii</sup> National Cancer Institute, *Health Effects of Exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke*, Smoking and Tobacco Control Monograph No. 10, based on a California Environmental Protection Agency report: 1997.

<sup>iii</sup> The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Secondhand Smoke: Surgeon General Report: 2010.

<sup>iv</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>v</sup> Smoke-free Environments Law Project, Ann Arbor, MI.

<sup>vi</sup> Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Fire Administration *Residential Structure and Building Fires*: October 2008.