



## RESOURCES

Environmental Protection Agency

[www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

Centers for Disease Control

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Smokefree Apartment House Registry

[www.smokefreeapartments.org/](http://www.smokefreeapartments.org/)

## >INFOCUS

# Take it Outside

## Indoor Smoking Kills

*If you're a smoker, take that cigarette outside.  
Your family, your pet, and your home are suffering.*

### Take it Outside

You already know how bad it is for you. It's even worse for those around you.

The smoke you exhale becomes a part of your home. You spend 90% of your life indoors. That cigarette you put out? You're inhaling it all night while you sleep. So are your kids, your pets, and the rest of your family.

### Not A Smoker? Get Protected.

You may be protected from secondhand smoke at work by smoke-free workplace laws but if you live in a building where smoking is allowed, who is protecting you at home? Most cities, counties, and states in America do not have nonsmoking residence ordinances, but you can combat secondhand smoke in your building.

You might be breathing secondhand smoke right now and not even know it.

Think of yourself, your children, your pets, and your neighbors. Think of your building. Even if your neighbors only smoke with their doors closed, or stand by the window, secondhand smoke can still affect your home. You can stop the dangerous and damaging effects of secondhand smoke, and you can start right now.

### **BEAT SECONDHAND SMOKE. ARM YOURSELF WITH THE FACTS.**

*Secondhand 'side stream' smoke—the smoke that seeps off the lit end of a cigarette without being inhaled by a smoker—is actually higher in carcinogens and other dangerous chemicals than 'mainstream'—or exhaled—smoke.*

## GET YOUR LIFE >INFOCUS

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**FACT:** *Secondhand smoke seeps into every corner of a building through lighting fixtures, cracks in walls, holes in caulk, around plumbing, under doors, through heating, and ventilation or through any hole. Buildings are full of holes.*

**FACT:** *Secondhand smoke is classified as a carcinogen as strong as radon or asbestos. Secondhand smoke is a leading contributor to lung and heart disease and deadly forms of cancer.*

**FACT:** *Secondhand smoke becomes a part of your home. The chemicals it leaves behind inside building surfaces mix with common indoor pollutants to create powerful carcinogens that can affect every shower, glass of water, meal, and breath.*

**FACT:** *Asthma, sinus infections, ear infections, chronic coughs, emphysema, sudden infant death syndrome, and many more circulatory and pulmonary diseases are caused or aggravated by secondhand smoke.*

Take Action

If you want to protect yourself from secondhand smoke you need to stand up and defend yourself. Tell your landlord you want a smoke free floor, or even building. Look for smoke free buildings to

move into. Think your landlord won't make the switch? Here's how to make your case.

First, speak their language: Money.

A unit that's been smoked in needs more layers of paint, more carpet replaced, more deodorizing, more appliances replaced, and may still only be able to house another smoker.

Non-smoking units fill up faster and stay full longer. Even better for the landlord? People are willing to pay more money for non-smoking units in non-smoking buildings!

"Smokers" are not a protected class. According to judges' decisions it is completely legal to make people smoke in designated smoking areas or off the property altogether. In fact, it can be argued that as an environmental and fire hazard, your landlord can be sued for the effects of secondhand smoke by an affected tenant!

Those points should get your landlord's attention – now make it an easy choice to make your life safer and more pleasant. Show your landlord the internet and phone resources available to make the transition easier. Everything from facts and figures to sample lease agreements are available for download after a simple web search. Smoke free residences are a national movement with several local campaigns behind them – getting their support will help fill units on the quick!



Talk to your neighbors. Tell them about the effects and dangers of smoking in the home and bring a petition for them to sign stating that they want to live in a building without secondhand smoke! Make sure your petition has a check box where they can put a mark if they feel their quality of life or health has been negatively affected by second-hand smoke.

Now it's time to document the problem. Start a diary or carry a notebook and make a note whenever secondhand smoke affects you. Every stain, smell or other evidence of smoking can be noted. Contact a family physician and get a letter explaining how secondhand smoke is hurting you and your family.

If you're a smoker, consider how being made to walk to a designated smoking area is not only a chance to socialize, but also another incentive to quit. You already know how bad smoking is for you and those around you. This could be a push in the right direction.

If you're not a smoker, talk to your smoking neighbors. Tell them how their smoking affects you and your kids. This conversation won't always go smoothly, but doing this in a friendly manner will often bear fruit.

Talking With Management

If your management company or landlord doesn't respond to your requests it's time to get a little more involved. Form a group of concerned residents and start having meetings. Write the management letters explaining that you and your group need a smoke-free floor or building and would consider moving when your lease runs out. Get involved with a nonsmokers' rights group and ask for their support – they'll have presentations and other materials to help change your management's mind.

In the end, it's your health and peace of mind that are at stake. Every day you stay in a secondhand or third hand smoking environment is another tick of a deadly clock.

The Last Recourse

Believe it or not, there is legal precedent to pressure management into offering smoke-free solutions for their residents. You and your residents' group can contact a tenant law attorney and explore your options.

***Start saving your life today. Make the decision to work toward a smoke-free tomorrow.***

