

# SMOKEFREE MULTI-UNIT HOUSING IN LATINO COMMUNITIES



## What's the Issue?

**Secondhand Smoke (SHS)** is the smoke from combustible tobacco, electronic smoking devices, or marijuana products that smokers and non-smokers inhale.<sup>1</sup>

**Thirdhand Smoke (THS)** consists of the smoke particles that remain on surfaces after smoking has taken place. These smoke particles are pollutants that cannot be removed by conventional cleaning methods.<sup>2</sup>

## Latinos Are Disproportionately Affected by SHS and THS

When smoking occurs in a multi-unit housing (MUH) complex, SHS travels into non-smokers' units through the vents, walls, floors, and windows.<sup>4</sup> In California, approximately **45% of Latinos live in MUH**. Latinos are at a higher risk of adverse health effects of SHS and THS compared to non-Hispanic whites.<sup>5</sup>



The "**Survey of California Latino Renters About Smokefree Multi-Unit Housing Laws**" was the **first-ever** statewide survey (2006) of Latinos' attitudes towards SHS in MUH and found that **95% of respondents** would prefer to live in an apartment building where smoking is not allowed anywhere or where there are separate smoking and non-smoking sections.<sup>6</sup>

SMOKERS WHO ARE  
REGULARLY EXPOSED TO  
SHS AT WORK OR IN THEIR  
HOMES SUFFER FROM:



**25-30%**

increased risk of  
heart disease



**20-30%**

increased risk of  
strokes

**8,000** NON-SMOKERS  
DIE ANNUALLY FROM A  
SHS-RELATED STROKE<sup>3</sup>

**95%**  
OF LATINO RENTERS  
SURVEYED PREFER  
SMOKEFREE HOUSING<sup>6</sup>

# Smokefree laws that limit SHS exposure in MUH protect all tenants.

## There are many ways we can protect families living in MUH

### Establish Smokefree Units:

Require properties to be 100% smokefree or establish partial smokefree policies such as having designated areas. City and county ordinances are effective for the entire MUH population by providing more uniform and permanent protection.<sup>7</sup>

### Create Smokefree Zones around Complexes:

In addition to making MUH properties smokefree, establishing no-smoking zones around properties can prevent exposure to SHS (at least 25 feet from entryways and windows).<sup>8</sup>

## Example of an Enforcement Model:

### Berkeley Ordinance:<sup>9</sup>

- + Enforcement authority: health housing and community service department
- + Rent-controlled housing is exempt from evictions
- + Fines not exceeding \$500

## Additional Resource

### Smokefree Multi-unit Housing Model Ordinance

[www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/CA-Smoke-free-MUH-Model-Ordinance.pdf](http://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/CA-Smoke-free-MUH-Model-Ordinance.pdf)

## HISPANIC LATINO COORDINATING CENTER

[hlcc@healthcollaborative.org](mailto:hlcc@healthcollaborative.org)

[www.healthcollaborative.org/hlcc](http://www.healthcollaborative.org/hlcc)

## References

1. Secondhand Smoke. Smokefree.gov, <https://smokefree.gov/quit-smoking/why-you-should-quit/secondhand-smoke> [Accessed 9/2020].
2. Burton, Adrian. Does the smoke ever really clear? Thirdhand smoke exposure raises new concerns. (2011): A70-A74
3. Health Effects of Secondhand Smoke. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2020. [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/secondhand\\_smoke/health\\_effects/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/secondhand_smoke/health_effects/index.htm) [Accessed 9/2020].
4. Is Secondhand Smoke Infiltrating Your Apartment or Condominium." American Lung Association. 2020. [www.lung.org/our-initiatives/tobacco/smokefree-environments/multi-unit-housing/secondhand-smoke.html](http://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/tobacco/smokefree-environments/multi-unit-housing/secondhand-smoke.html) [Accessed 9/2020].
5. King, B. A., et al. National and state estimates of secondhand smoke infiltration among US multiunit housing residents. *Nicotine & tobacco research*. 15(7), (2012):1316-1321.
6. Public Opinion Research Survey: July 2006 Survey of California Latino Renters About Smoke-free Multi-Unit Housing Laws. American Lung Association of California Center for Tobacco Policy and Organizing.
7. Becoming a Policy Wonk on Smoke-free Multi-Unit Housing. American Lung Association of California Center for Tobacco Policy and Organizing. 2013. <http://tobaccopolicycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/719.pdf> [Accessed 9/2020].
8. Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing Approaches to Protect Tenants from Secondhand Smoke. ChangeLabSolutions. 2013.
9. Matrix of Strong Local Smokefree Multi-Unit Housing. American Lung Association of California The Center for Tobacco Policy and Organizing. 2017. <http://tobaccopolicycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/722.pdf> [Accessed 9/2020].