

Multiunit Housing Goes Tobacco Free



The 100 Kennedy Park Circle condominiums in Fergus Falls has 18 privately owned units, and has implemented a tobacco free grounds policy to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke.

Public Health Partners with Condominiums to Protect Residents

About 80 million, or 1 in 4, Americans live in multiunit housing, such as apartments or condominiums. ¹ When one or more of those residents use tobacco, it creates undesirable levels of secondhand smoke for their neighbors. It is estimated that 28 million multiunit housing residents are exposed to secondhand smoke annually. ¹

In Fergus Falls, 100 Kennedy Park Circle condominiums reached out to Minnesota Department of Health and was connected with PartnerSHIP 4 Health's Tobacco Prevention Coordinator, Jason McCoy. Jason educated the board members and assisted in developing a tobacco free grounds policy. The policy was implemented in March 2020 and prohibits smoking or vaping in any of the 18 units, garages, or anywhere on the condominium grounds. If violated, the owner will be assessed a \$300 fine, a \$500 fine for each successive violation, along with associated legal fees.

Harvey Self, the condominiums' board treasurer states, "We were getting frustrated with the amount of secondhand smoke in our building, and I didn't realize that we could do something about it. Jason met with our board and gave us literature to work on the bylaws. We are so grateful to have found PartnerSHIP 4 Health!"



Signage at 100 Kennedy Park Circle condominiums clearly communicates the tobacco free policy for their grounds.

How to Go Smokefree

Only about one-third of multiunit housing residents are protected by smokefree policies for their buildings, but every resident deserves to breathe clean air. Secondhand smoke causes lung disease in adults and children who do not smoke. ¹ By going smokefree, properties also save money on turnover costs and greatly reduces fire risk to their buildings. ²

To learn more about how PartnerSHIP 4 Health can assist in creating tobacco free policies, contact Jason McCoy at 218-299-7180 or Jason.McCoy@co.clay.mn.us.

¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Smoking & Tobacco Use available at: https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/secondhand_smoke/going-smokefree-matters/index.html

²American Lung Association, Smokefree Policies in Multi-Unit Housing <https://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/tobacco/smokefree-environments/multi-unit-housing/>

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