



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Encourages Housing Property Owners to Go Smoke-Free

*Smoke-free multi-unit housing is healthier for tenants and saves property owners money*

**Champaign, IL** – The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD) sent a mailing on Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup> to Champaign County multi-unit housing property owners detailing the benefits of smoke-free rental properties.

The mailing describes the cost savings to landlords of smoke-free rental units. The expense to clean a smoking unit after a smoker moves out can be anywhere from \$4,000 to \$15,000. The expense to clean a smoke-free rental unit is generally under \$1,000. Cigarettes are also the leading cause of residential fires.

Beyond the risks and costs to property owners, smoking in multi-unit housing puts nonsmokers at risk for inhalation of secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke drifts into non-smokers' apartments through ventilation systems, light fixtures, electrical outlets, doorways, and windows. Secondhand smoke can remain in the air for hours after a cigarette is extinguished. Of the 4,000 chemicals in secondhand smoke, 250 are known toxins, and 50 are known carcinogens. Nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke increase their risk of developing lung cancer by 20-30 percent. Secondhand smoke can also cause or worsen illnesses such as heart disease, bronchitis, asthma, pneumonia, and ear infections.

There are many multi-unit housing property owners in Champaign County that have already adopted smoke-free policies. CUPHD has a directory of smoke-free housing on its website. Known smoke-free Champaign County properties include:

217 Midtown, 309 Green (American Campus Communities), 75 Armory (Next Chapter Properties), Atrium Apartments (Green Street Realty), Campustown Rentals (American Campus Communities), Capstone Quarters (Green Street Realty), Eastview Apartments, Kellner Rental Properties, Loft 54 (American Campus Communities), Marshall Apartments, Parkside Apartments, Parkview Senior Homes, Roland Realty, Smith Apartments, Stone Ridge Square Apartment Community, Taylor Realty (RE/MAX), The Point at UI, The Tower

at 3rd (American Campus Communities), The University Group, and Windsor West (Regency Apartments) has two smoke-free buildings.

Mike Kellner, owner of Kellner Rental Properties in Champaign said, “Removing smoke residue from an apartment is expensive and the cost is nearly impossible to recover from the previous residents. This process is necessary however, since nonsmokers shy away from apartment that smells like smoke. We also have less litter to clean up outside since there are no cigarette butts.”

Tara McCauley, CUPHD Special Projects Coordinator said, “Nonsmokers should be able to breathe clean air in their apartment buildings. We hope to increase the number of Champaign County multi-unit housing options that are healthy for tenants and staff.”

CUPHD has resources to support property owners in their transition to smoke-free housing, including no-smoking signage, smoking cessation classes, sample no-smoking lease language, organization of tenant meetings, and sample communications with tenants. One CUPHD cessation resource, the Freedom from Smoking class, begins on Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup>. The class is offered regularly.

Property owners can contact Tara McCauley at CUPHD (contact info above) if they are already smoke-free and want to be added to the CUPHD smoke-free housing directory, or if they are interested in exploring a smoke-free policy.

CUPHD’s smoke-free multi-unit housing campaign is part of the Illinois Department of Public Health’s We Choose Health initiative, which is made possible by funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**For more information:**

<http://www.c-uphd.org/wechoosehealth>

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