

Community Transformation Grant Smoke Free Multi Unit Housing

There are over 11,000 publicly funded multi-unit housing units in the State of Montana. Of those, 2,319 units are governed by Housing Authorities. 9 of 19 Housing Authorities in Montana have already implemented a smoke free policy. 1,172 Housing Authority units are already smoke free. Requests have been made from all 19 Housing Authorities for assistance with implementing a policy, strengthening existing policy and/or achieving high compliance. Successful implementation of smoke free policies in publicly funded multi-unit housing units will be a crucial step in protecting residents from the dangers of second hand smoke.

Statewide surveys also reveal that many vulnerable, low-income Montana citizens, including children and seniors, continue to be exposed to secondhand tobacco smoke in their homes. Thirty percent of Montana housing is renter occupied and 15% of Montana housing stock is multi-unit housing (American Community Survey, 2010). The 2008 Montana Adult Tobacco Survey found that fewer than one-in-five respondents who live in multi-unit housing (approximately 9,000 or 19%) are protected by a smoke free policy set by their landlord. More than one-third (36%) of those respondents have children 17 years or younger living with them. Of Montana multi-unit renters who do not have a smoke free policy in their building or complex, the majority (85%) are in favor of their landlords implementing a smoke free policy.

Project Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved protection for multi-unit housing residents from secondhand smoke, improved knowledge about the dangers of secondhand smoke in the multi-unit housing.
Project Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to multi-unit housing owners and managers with passing, expanding or improving compliance of smoke free policies. • Educate tenants about the dangers of secondhand smoke in multi-unit housing with a public education campaign, to be released in the fall of 2012. • Pass smokefree policy incentives for recipients of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit at the statewide level
Current Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Montana Tobacco Use Prevention Program • Montana Department of Commerce-Housing Division • Housing Partners-Housing and Urban Development, several Housing Authorities, developers and individual owners and managers of multi-unit housing.
Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tenants' report protection by policy. Source: Adult Tobacco Survey ○ Assessment and reporting from tobacco prevention specialists on policies according to facility. Source: MTUPP database
Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus wide smokefree policy passed for the Billings Housing Authority • Signage produced and distributed to owners and managers working with tobacco prevention specialists to strengthen compliance to smokefree policies
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving from rent restricted multi-unit housing to private housing: how do we access these people?
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue work on the qualified action plan process • Choose owners and managers for education on the benefits of smokefree policies • Place media spots educating tenants on the dangers of secondhand smoke • Update database on multi-housing facilities in Montana

For more information, contact:

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