



### Secondhand Smoke is a Health Hazard

- Secondhand smoke is the smoke that comes from a lighted tobacco product or from a person who is smoking tobacco. It contains more than 4,000 chemicals. At least 250 of those chemicals are known toxins and more than 50 are cancer-causing chemicals.
- Thousands of people suffer from diseases caused or made worse by secondhand smoke such as asthma, lung cancer, and heart disease.
- Secondhand smoke also causes ear infections, sore throats, watery eyes, and coughing.

### Air Purifiers and Ventilation do not Solve the Problem

- Banning smoking indoors is the only way to fully protect people from the dangers of secondhand smoke.<sup>1</sup>
- Air purifiers alone won't clean the air or relieve asthma or allergy symptoms. Banning indoor smoking can be more effective than air purifiers.<sup>2</sup>
- Air purifiers should not be relied upon to control health risks from secondhand smoke.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Surgeon General. June 2006.

<sup>2</sup>Consumer Reports. December 2007.

<sup>3</sup>American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, & Air-Conditioning Engineers. June 2005.

## Need More Information?

Call us or visit our web site for more materials and ideas to encourage your landlord to adopt a smoke-free policy.

To find a smoke-free building in your area, search our online Smoke-Free Homes Registry.



[www.Smoke-FreeHomes.Iowa.gov](http://www.Smoke-FreeHomes.Iowa.gov)  
651-646-3005

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321 East 12th Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 30519

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# Secondhand Smoke in Your Apartment

How to help you and your family



# Secondhand Smoke is Coming into my Apartment. What Can I do?

## Step One: Assess the Problem

1. Try to find out where the secondhand smoke is coming into your unit (doorways, vents, outlets, etc.).
2. Write down the dates and times you notice secondhand smoke coming into your unit.
3. Make a list of ways you have tried to solve the problem.
4. Talk with your neighbors to see if smoke drifts into their apartments too. Ask if they would be willing to talk to the landlord with you.
5. Talk to your doctor about all symptoms and illnesses your family has. The illnesses may be caused or affected by secondhand smoke.

## Step Two: Talk to the Landlord

1. Write a letter to your building manager or landlord to explain the problem. Keep copies of your letters or emails.
2. Meet with your landlord to talk about the problem. Give him or her the facts about the dangers of secondhand smoke.
3. Explain to your landlord that it is legal for building owners to make their buildings smoke free, even if it is a public housing authority or HUD building.
4. Suggest the landlord adopt a smoke-free policy for the entire building.

Find facts about secondhand smoke and smoke-free apartments at [www.Smoke-FreeHomes.iowa.gov](http://www.Smoke-FreeHomes.iowa.gov)

## Step Three: Seek More Help

1. **Contact the Smoke-Free Homes program**
  - Smoke-Free Homes can provide you with facts about secondhand smoke and smoke-free policies; help you write letters; or suggest further steps.
2. **Contact other agencies**
  - Your building's owners
  - Your local city or county health department
  - HUD's Multifamily Housing Complaint line: 1-800-685-8470 or [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov)
  - Iowa Attorney General's Office Consumer Protection Division: 1-888-777-4590 or [www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov](http://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov)

*You don't have to live with secondhand smoke coming into your apartment.*