

We Choose Health

Focus is directed at the prevention of chronic disease through a 16 county collaborative effort aimed at building healthier communities by assisting in the development of policy, systems, and environmental changes. Local health departments in the southern most region of Illinois are working together with Southern Illinois Healthcare and local healthy community coalitions to implement strategic efforts in their local communities that will benefit the region through:

- Increasing the number of parks, ball fields and other outdoor spaces that provide smoke free environments
- Increasing the availability of smoke-free multi-unit housing
- Supporting worksites in adopting and implementing wellness policies
- Expanding the number of schools utilizing coordinated school health programming
- Increasing local support of breast feeding



Get Involved- Contact Your Local Representative:

Egyptian Health Dept.	618-272-4691
Franklin-Williamson Health Dept.	618-993-8111 ext. 223
Hamilton County Health Dept.	618-643-3522 ext. 114
Jackson County Health Dept.	618-684-3143 ext. 100 /134
Perry County Health Dept.	618-357-5371 ext. 119
Randolph County Health Dept.	618-443-2995 ext. 115
Southern Illinois Healthcare	618-457-5200 ext. 67847
Southern Seven Health Dept.	618-634-2297



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TRANSFORMING SOUTHERN ILLINOIS INTO A REGION THAT SUPPORTS AND ENHANCES HEALTHY LIVING.

www.hsidn.org

This project 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

WE CHOOSE HEALTH

Making our communities places where the healthy choice is the easy choice through policy, systems, and environment



Smoke-Free
Multi-Unit
Housing
Initiative

Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing

Focus is aimed at modifying the environment to make the healthy choice practical, available, and sustainable for the whole community. We Choose Health efforts are specifically directed toward:

- Creating policy changes within organizations and at the community level
- Creating systematic changes that impact all elements of an organization, institution, or system
- Creating environmental changes that impact the economic, social, and/or physical environment

Pursuing smoke-free multi-unit housing protects the health of nonsmokers from unintended secondhand smoke exposure in their own homes.

- Secondhand smoke causes approximately 49,400 deaths in the United States each year
- Up to 65% of the air inside any one unit of the multi-unit building is shared among other units and common areas
- No ventilation system can eliminate indoor exposure to secondhand smoke or health risks associated with secondhand smoke
- Third-hand smoke exposure can persist two months after a smoke occupant moves out of a housing unit, even if the unit is cleaned and prepared for a new occupant

We Choose Health will support local community groups in their pursuit of smoke-free policies in multi-unit housing.

Economic benefits of a smoke-free policy:

- Decreases unit maintenance expenses five fold while also greatly increasing property values
- Reduces the risk of fires
- Lowers insurance premiums

Health benefits of a smoke-free policy

- Creates environments free from the damaging effects of secondhand smoke
- Smoke-free policies help people quit smoking
- Smoke-free policies help prevent the onset use of smoking by kids

Steps to make a smoke-free policy

1. Contact your local We Choose Health representative for assistance (local contact information on back)
2. Survey your tenants
3. Promote smoking cessation to tenants that smoke
4. Write a smoke-free policy
5. Notify your tenants
6. Enforce the smoke-free policy

If you smoke and want to quit, or know someone who wants to quit, call the Illinois Tobacco Quit Line toll-free at **1-866-QUIT-YES (866-784-8937)**, which is operated by the [American Lung Association](#)



Ask about the availability of SMOKE FREE signage

The Rights

- There is no “right” to smoke under state or federal law
- There is no law that prohibits a smoke-free policy
- Smokers are not a protected class under any state or federal law. A smoke-free policy should be implemented and enforced just like any other policy included in the lease such as a pet policies and trash policies
- You, as the property owner/manager, have every right to adopt a smoke-free policy that will protect your property as well as protect and promote the health of your tenants

Legal Liability

- If a landlord chooses to not adopt a smoke-free policy, although legal cases are rare, a tenant could bring legal actions against the landlord for being knowledgeable about secondhand smoke exposure and not taking action to eliminate the problem

Discrimination

- It is not discriminatory to create and enforce a smoke-free policy
- A policy should be based on the act of smoking and not an individual’s status as a smoker
- A policy does not require smokers to quit smoking it simply prohibits that individual from smoking in areas designated in the policy