



# How Fire Departments Can Promote Smoke-Free Building Policies

Fire Departments can play a key role in fire prevention by encouraging property managers to implement a smoke-free building policy and encouraging residents to “take it outside.” Here are a few ways in which your department can take action:

## ASK

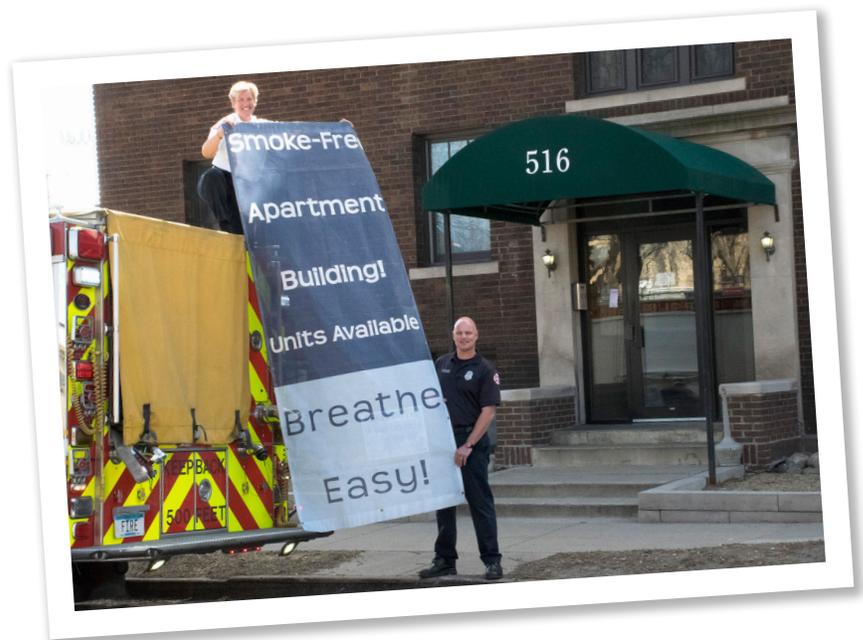
- “Does this building have a smoke-free policy?”
  - > Add a question to your rental inspection form.
- “Does this building have fire damage that can be documented for educational purposes?”
  - > Collect photos of burn marks on furniture and other fire damage to be used as educational tools at events.

## PROVIDE

- Share information on the benefits of a smoke-free policy.
  - > Handout brochures or flyers from Live Smoke Free at fire prevention events or during inspection.
- Add links to Live Smoke Free educational resources and support on your website.

## PROMOTE

- Send a letter to property managers in your jurisdiction promoting free resources available from Live Smoke Free.
- Include a statement of support for implementing a smoke-free policy on your website and in your educational materials.
- Speak in support of smoke-free policies at a local housing industry event.
- Include information on the benefits of a smoke-free policy and “taking it outside” at community fire prevention events.



LIVE SMOKE FREE | 651-646-3005 |



**CONTACT LIVE SMOKE FREE TO LEARN MORE**

**[www.mnsmokefreehousing.org](http://www.mnsmokefreehousing.org)**

Live Smoke Free (LSF) is a Minnesota non-profit program that provides FREE support to fire departments, housing owners and managers, local policy makers, residents, and housing industry professionals interested in smoke-free policies.

This work is made possible by the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership of the Minnesota Department of Health and the Hennepin County Public Health Department.

# Protect Yourself from Smoking-Related Fires

YOUR LOGO HERE

THE ONLY WAY TO BE PROTECTED FROM SMOKING-MATERIAL FIRES IS TO NEVER SMOKE INSIDE.

Your Fire Department is asking residents to be a part of the **“take it outside”** movement when using combustible tobacco products. Smoking is the leading cause of known home fire deaths nationwide. Each year, careless smoking starts about 35,000 home fires in the US. These fires cause more than 1,200 deaths and lead to hundreds of millions of dollars in property loss each year. We want everyone to be safe, so please if you smoke, **SMOKE OUTSIDE**.

## Important smoking facts to remember:

- An idle cigarette can reach an ash temperature of 550 degrees – a live fire in your fingers! After taking a drag it can reach a temperature of 1350 degrees. For comparison, wood ignites at 500 degrees with only 10 minutes of exposure. This means that even a little ash that falls off a lit cigarette can start a fire.



- Cigarettes can smolder under the cushions of a chair or sofa, in cans, and in ashtrays for several hours before igniting. Even ashes in an ashtray or a metal can smolder if they are not properly put out. That’s long enough for everyone to be asleep before the fire shows itself.
- A lit cigarette left in an ashtray is a fire hazard. It can easily ignite butts as it burns down and it can easily roll out of the ashtray and cause a fire.
- Smoking and taking medications that cause drowsiness or using substances like alcohol can be a deadly mix if not monitored to ensure butts are properly extinguished.
- Even “fire safe cigarettes” can still burst into flames at a later point in time.

## NEVER

- Flick your ashes off a cigarette butt.
- Dispose of cigarette butts in potted plant soil. Potting soil often contains Vermiculite, wood bark, peat moss, or Styrofoam; all of which are flammable.
- Use oxygen while smoking.

## ALWAYS

- Use a metal container with a metal lid to dispose of butts. The container should be filled with water or sand to ensure that all ashes and butts that are placed in the container remain extinguished.
- Smoke outside at least 25 feet away from any building.



We hope these safety tips will help keep you, your loved ones, and your apartment building safe from fire. Should you have any questions about fire safety, please contact your Fire Department. Thank you!

(Adapted from the West Metro Fire Rescue District.)