



## Sample Letter from Multiunit Housing Resident to Councilmember

Visit your city's website to learn who your City Councilmember is and how to contact them.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Council Member \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I live at \_\_\_\_\_ [name and address of property (make sure to include the city!)]. The air in my home is making me sick because secondhand smoke from neighboring units drifts into my unit on a regular basis. The U.S. Surgeon General has warned that there is no risk-free level of secondhand smoke exposure and that it can cause serious health problems. [Include additional details about how the secondhand smoke has impacted you. For example, "The secondhand smoke in my home gives me headaches," or "Some nights I can't sleep in my own bedroom because of the smoke."]

Local research by the *Center for Energy and Environment* found that secondhand smoke can easily travel from unit to unit and there is no way to fully seal a unit from exposure. I have done everything I can do improve my situation including [list all that apply to your situation]:

- Sealing cracks and crevices in my unit to prevent air flow
- Installing air filtration devices
- Asking my neighbors to smoke outside
- Asking my property manager or homeowners' association board for assistance
- Visiting my doctor to find treatment for symptoms caused by secondhand smoke exposure
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

These actions have been unsuccessful, and I have spent \$\_\_\_\_\_ of my own money to try to protect myself from the smoke.

The Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act excludes rental and common interest community (CIC) units from clean indoor air protections. It is up to rental apartments or CICs to adopt their own smoke-free policy, but many do not.

Municipalities can take measures to help protect people like me from secondhand smoke exposure in our homes. For example, in January 2021 the St. Paul City Council passed an

ordinance to require a smoking policy disclosure before the sale of a unit in a CIC. Cities in California have required that all multi-unit housing be smoke free by city ordinance.

I ask that you strongly consider city-level actions to protect residents from harmful secondhand smoke exposure. The Live Smoke Free program has resources and policy options at <https://mnsmokefreehousing.org/policy-makers/>. I am happy to discuss this issue with you as well. Everyone deserves clean air to breathe in their own home. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,

[First and last name]

[Address]

[Email address]

[Phone number]