

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



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Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 26, 2015



**Contact:**

Tobacco Free Collier  
Robert Ostbye  
Robert.Ostbye@flhealth.gov  
(239) 252-2672

**Local Survey Identifies Consumer Support for Smoke-Free Amenity**

- Local preference for smoke-free housing identified in survey results -

**Naples, FL** – Demand for smoke-free housing is increasing statewide, and in southwest Florida, the multi-unit housing market has not been able to keep up. More than 82 percent of Floridians are non-smokers; and people who do identify themselves as smokers often do not permit smoking in their home<sup>1</sup>. In Collier County, the smoking rate is even lower than the State average at 13.9 percent<sup>1</sup>, yet smoke-free living options remain scarce for people who want, or need, to live in a smoke-free environment.

In order to find out what local renters really want, Tobacco Free Collier partnered with tobacco free partnerships in Lee, Charlotte, Sarasota and Manatee Counties to collect renter opinions through an online survey tool. After several months of data collection, a clear preference for smoke-free housing options among participants was identified. Of all survey participants, 17% indicated that they currently smoke combustible tobacco products, which is consistent with the known smoking rate for the state of Florida. Regarding smoke-free living preferences, 87% indicated that they would support a smoke-free policy in their community.

Surveys were conducted from a sample of multi-unit housing residents because secondhand smoke exposure is especially an issue in multiunit housing communities where tobacco smoke can move along air ducts, through cracks in the walls and floors, through elevator shafts, and along plumbing and electrical lines to affect units that are nearby<sup>2,3</sup>.

“Secondhand smoke is a killer. I work hard to keep my family safe, yet we all suffer now with a neighbor whose smoke infiltrates our apartment,” anonymous survey participant.

The overwhelming support for smoke-free living from survey participants underpins a significant opportunity for local multi-unit housing communities looking to stand out against other providers in a highly competitive housing market. “Being an early implementer of smoke-free policies, a property management company could earn a reputation in the market for doing a better job of recognizing and offering the amenities tenants want, while at the same time ensuring higher retained earnings as a result of lower maintenance costs.” John Campbell, national landlord trainer and consultant.

For multi-unit housing operators in Collier County who are interested in capitalizing on the prevalent demand for smoke-free housing in our county, Tobacco Free Collier offers free consultation and resources including sample policy language, tenant correspondence materials, and examples from communities that have successfully provided the smoke-free amenity.

**ABOUT TOBACCO FREE COLLIER**

The Tobacco Free Collier Partnership is comprised of agencies representing many different sectors of the community including hospitals, nonprofit organizations, governmental agencies, medical clinics, educational institutions, and community leadership groups committed to establishing a Tobacco-Free Collier County. Through the Florida Department of Health in Collier County, Tobacco Free Collier offers free resources, materials, and technical assistance to property managers who want to offer “Smoke-Free” as an amenity.

## **ABOUT TOBACCO FREE FLORIDA**

Tobacco Free Florida is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Tobacco Free Florida is managed by the Florida Department of Health, specifically the Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida.

## **SMOKING CESSATION**

Smokers and smokeless tobacco users interested in quitting are encouraged to use one of the 3 Free & Easy Ways to Quit. To learn about Tobacco Free Florida and the state's free cessation resources, visit [www.tobaccofreeflorida.com](http://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com) or follow the campaign on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida](http://www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida) or Twitter at [www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla](http://www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla).

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<sup>1</sup> Florida Department of Health: Division of Public Health Statistics and Performance Management. 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Office of the Surgeon General. The Surgeon General's call to action to promote healthy homes. Washington, DC: Department of Health and Human Services, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Public Health Service, Office of the Surgeon General. Children and secondhand smoke exposure: excerpts from The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: a report of the Surgeon General. 2007.