

Charleston Residents Want Smoke-free Housing Policies

Across the nation, interest in smoke-free policies in multi-unit housing buildings is on the rise. A 2010 national study found that nearly 30% of apartment building residents lived in a smoke-free building. However the Charleston, South Carolina multi-unit housing market may be behind the curve! A survey of multi-unit housing residents living in Charleston, SC was completed in 2013 by researchers at Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, New York. Below are some of the findings from this study.

- 66% of multi-unit housing residents surveyed in Charleston already reported having a voluntary smoke-free home policy, where they did not allow smoking anywhere inside their unit.
- However, one-third of these individuals reported noticing secondhand smoke entering their unit from somewhere else in or around the building.
- Only 9% of residents reported living in a smoke-free building, where smoking was prohibited inside all areas of the building, including living units. This estimate is far below the national levels obtained 3 years earlier.
- Over 60% of multi-unit housing residents who currently live in smoking-allowable housing would prefer to have a policy in their building that prohibited smoking in all indoor areas.
- 80% of individuals currently living in smoking-allowable housing would remain at their current residence if a smoke-free policy was implemented.
- Over 70% of the residents surveyed would be willing to live farther away from work or recreation activities in they could live in a comparable smoke-free building.

These findings suggest that Charleston is ready to follow national trends in smoke-free housing. High support for smoke-free policies, combined with the low prevalence of current policies could result in a large market opportunity for pioneering multi-unit housing operators who implement smoke-free building policies.

For additional results of this Charleston study, or for more information about smoke-free multi-unit housing policies, please contact smokefreelowcountry@yahoo.com, or call (843) 364-2635.



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