



www.smokefreeforme.org

It's About the Smoke, not the Smoker:

Advocating for smoke-free policy adoption in public
and affordable housing



Public Housing in Maine

There are **20 public housing authorities** in Maine which own and manage housing units and **5 tribal housing authorities** which own and manage housing units. There are an **additional 5 that provide Choice Housing Vouchers** (Section 8).



How it began...

In 2003, Healthy Androscoggin began receiving calls from tenants from local Housing Authority tenants regarding secondhand smoke exposure inside their apartments.

Four housing authorities were contacted and agreed to disseminate surveys to gauge the tenant interest in going smoke-free...

Tenant survey results in Maine

If available, would you prefer to live in a smoke-free environment?

Town/County	% YES	% NO
<i>Lewiston and Auburn Housing Authorities</i>	76%	24%
<i>Sanford Housing Authority</i>	71%	29%
<i>Brunswick Housing Authority</i>	76%	24%
Total	74%	26%

Total surveys conducted show 78% of tenant populations prefer smoke-free housing, and 80% of Maine single family homes are already, voluntarily, smoke-free.



*In late **2004**, Auburn Housing Authority became the first housing authority in Maine, and one of the first in the nation, to adopt a smoke-free policy.*

*Less than 5 years later, **18** of Maine's public housing authorities have adopted a smoke-free policy, accounting for more than 5,000 individual units.*

*There are **156** public housing authorities nationally with a smoke-free policy.*



Maine Smoke-Free Housing Authorities

Auburn: 9/04 (grandfather clause abolished 11/08)
Bangor :05/07 (no grandfathering)
Bar Harbor: 07/06 (24 mo. grandfather; entirely tobacco free 07/08)
Brewer 08/07: (12 mo. grandfather in elderly facilities)
Brunswick 10/07: (12 mo. grandfather)
Bath: 1/09 (no grandfathering)
Ellsworth: 07/06 (no grandfathering)
Fort Fairfield: 07/06 (24 mo. grandfather)
Lewiston 11/08 (4 mo. grandfather)
Mount Desert Island: 06/06 (no grandfather)
Old Town: 07/06 (12 mo. grandfather)
Pleasant Point Passamaquoddy Reservation: 06/08 (new complex—tribal)
Presque Isle 01/09 (policy requirements TBA)
Sanford: 09/05 (unlimited grandfather)
South Portland: 01/09 (6 mo. grandfather)
Southwest Harbor: 07/06 (unlimited; tobacco-free at turnover)
Tremont: 03/08 (unlimited grandfather)
Waterville: 07/07 (unlimited grandfather)
Westbrook: 01/09 (no grandfathering)



Motivating Policy Adoption

- **Cost and Appearance**
 - Care for properties
 - Turnover at Auburn and Sanford Housing Authorities' smoking units cost upwards of \$3,500, or 7 times as much as a non-smoking unit
- **Tenant Health**
 - Harm of SHS is no longer thought of as a myth
- **Legal Threat**
 - ADA and FHA protections of those with respiratory disabilities are a concern for public housing authorities
- **Ease of Change**
 - PHA's are often unaware that smoke-free policies are legal and easy to adopt, and practically self-enforcing



The Financial Burden

The Financial Burden

NONSMOKING UNIT		
Labor	12 Hours x \$35/Hour	= \$420
Paint	3 Gallons	= \$ 60
Ceiling Paint	2 Gallons	= \$ 40
Carpet Shampoo		= \$ 50
TOTAL:		\$570

SMOKING UNIT		
Labor	30 Hours x \$35/Hour	= \$1050
Paint	4 Gallons	= \$ 80
Ceiling Paint	3 Gallons	= \$ 60
Carpet Shampoo		= \$ 50
Primer		= \$ 100
Replace Rug Burns*		= \$ 600
Replace Laminates*		= \$ 800
TOTAL:		\$1,340 - \$2,740*

* Costs depend on carpet and countertop condition.

Analysis provided by Sanford Housing Authority, 2004 and Auburn Housing Authority, 2006.



The Financial Burden

Financial Cost for Non-smoking vs. Smoking-Allowed Apartments			
<i>Seton Village (subsidized, elderly), Waterville, 2008</i>			
	Non-smoker	Light smoker	Heavy smoker
Paint	\$168	\$222	\$478
Flooring	\$50	\$942	\$1,422
Appliances	\$60	\$75	\$489
Bathroom	\$40	\$60	\$400
General Cleaning	\$240	\$480	\$720
TOTAL	\$558	\$1,779	\$3,509



Concerns that May Arise

- Misconceptions about the “rights” of smokers.
- Enforcement.
- Grandfathering
- Outdoor access for the elderly and disabled.
- Communicating with non-English speaking populations.



Remember...

**Its about the smoke,
not the smoker.**



Gov't. Subsidized Housing

A letter from HUD's Detroit Regional Office Legal Counsel written in July 2003 states that landlords are allowed, under federal law, to make buildings smoke-free. In October 2004 HUD's Seattle office went on to state that **“there is no written policy requiring grandfathering of any tenant.”**

Success in Collaboration

- MaineHousing plays a large role in community outreach to the landlord population.
- Local housing authority transition to smoke-free is due to the collaboration of the Coalition, HMPs, and key housing professionals/agencies.
- Local housing authorities, in turn, help educate landlords (specifically Section 8) about smoke-free housing options.
- Overall collaborative marks a greater level of legitimacy given to the smoke-free housing movement.





Partnering for Greater Outreach

- Housing authorities were asked to distribute the Coalition's fact sheet to landlords who receive payment through the HA's Section 8 program.
 - 21 housing authorities have distributed over 5,000 of the Coalition's fact sheets



Things to Remember...

- Keep in contact with public housing professions who have already gone smoke-free-- engage them in your efforts.
 - *They will become your champions!
- Focus on factors most important to them.
 - *Financial impact, legal complications, ease of enforcement, etc.
- Work with state housing authority and larger developments to set a precedence around smoke-free housing.
- Make it **EASY**- provide sample lease & rule language, walk them through the process.



For Further Information

- www.smokefreeforme.org
- info@smokefreeforme.org
- www.smokefreehousingne.org
- Visit www.slideshare.net/breatheeasy for downloadable materials and copies of the presentation.