



## **Achieving a Smoke-free Condo Building**

### *Basic Steps*

- 1.) Obtain a copy of the condo association's bylaws and look for a "nuisance clause," which prohibits behavior that disturbs other residences.
- 2.) Obtain a copy of any local smoke-free laws.
  - a. See if the legislation applies to common areas in multiunit housing or outlines the health consequences of secondhand smoke.
- 3.) Talk to your neighbors who smoke in a friendly way.
  - a. Explain to him or her that you are experiencing smoke seepage and ask if s/he would refrain from smoking in specific areas.
  - b. Give him or her information on the health consequences of secondhand smoke exposure.
- 4.) Talk to your other non-smoking neighbors to build support for a smoke-free condo.
  - a. Ask other neighbors if they are bothered by secondhand smoke seepage.
  - b. Give them information on the health consequences of secondhand smoke exposure.
  - c. Ask if they would write a formal complaint letter to the condo association board. Obtain a copy for your file.
- 5.) If the condo building is too large to talk to everyone, take a formal survey of the residents.
- 6.) Calculate the percentage of smokers who live in the building.
- 7.) Familiarize yourself with the condo association board.
  - a. Find out when they meet, who is on the board and the process by which changes are made.
- 8.) Talk to members of the condo association board.
  - a. Bring the results of the formal or informal survey.
  - b. Bring fact sheets on the health consequences of secondhand smoke.
  - c. Bring a note from your doctor.
  - d. Bring support letters from residents.
  - e. Bring the condo association bylaws.
  - f. Bring your non-smoking neighbors.
- 9.) Lobby the board to change the rules.
  - a. If the bylaws contain a broad nuisance clause, argue that secondhand smoke seepage violates the existing clause.
  - b. If the nuisance clause is very specific, argue that secondhand smoke should be included under that clause.
  - c. If there is no clause, argue that one must be created that includes smoking.
  - d. Avoid grandfathering in the rule; this is not legally necessary.
- 10.) Don't give up!
  - a. Continue educating your neighbors and the board.
  - b. Get supporters of a smoke-free condo to run for board positions.
  - c. Get members of Respiratory Health Association or local Smoke-free Coalition to give a presentation to your board.