

# Secondhand Smoke in Multi-unit Housing



Secondhand smoke (SHS) consists of smoke from a burning tobacco product and the smoke exhaled by a smoker. It is a toxic substance that causes serious health problems for non-smokers.<sup>1</sup> Many people who live in public housing are especially affected by SHS.<sup>2</sup> This includes children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.<sup>2</sup>



The United States Environmental Protection Agency classifies SHS as a **cancer-causing agent**.<sup>1</sup>

It contains hundreds of **toxic chemicals** including formaldehyde, arsenic, and hydrogen cyanide.<sup>1</sup>

There is **no safe level** of exposure to SHS.<sup>1</sup>

## Health Risks

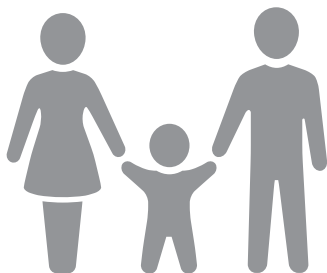
Breathing SHS causes serious health problems for children and adults.

**Children exposed to SHS are more likely to suffer from:**

- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)<sup>1</sup>
- Bronchitis and pneumonia<sup>1</sup>
- Ear infections<sup>1</sup>
- Asthma attacks<sup>1</sup>

**Adults exposed to SHS are more likely to develop:**

- Lung cancer<sup>1</sup>
- Heart disease & stroke<sup>1</sup>
- Breathing problems<sup>1</sup>



# 41,000

Approximately 41,000 nonsmoking adults die every year from SHS exposure in the United States.<sup>3</sup>

## Who is at risk?

# 1 in 3

More than one in three nonsmokers who live in rental housing are exposed to SHS.<sup>2</sup>

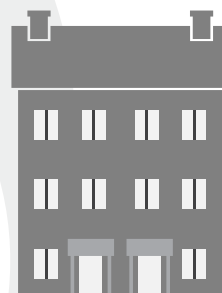
# 2 in 5

Two in five children (including seven in ten black children) are exposed to SHS.<sup>2</sup>

## Secondhand Smoke at Home

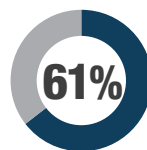
The home is the main place where children are exposed to SHS.<sup>2</sup>

SHS can drift into units through windows, doors, walls, hallways, and air ducts.<sup>2</sup>

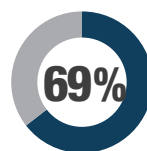


## Support for Smoke-free Housing

California renters support smoke-free housing restrictions to protect themselves and their families:



61% of renters **support smoking bans inside units**.<sup>4</sup>



69% of renters **support smoking bans in outdoor common areas**.<sup>4</sup>



## References: Secondhand Smoke in Multi-Unit Housing

- <sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006. Available from: [http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/sgr/2006/pdfs/6major-conclusions.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/2006/pdfs/6major-conclusions.pdf).
- <sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Secondhand Smoke: An Unequal Danger, 2015*. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/pdf/2015-02-vitalsigns.pdf>.
- <sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Tobacco Related Mortality*, Updated August 2015. Available from: [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/health\\_effects/tobacco\\_related\\_mortality](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/tobacco_related_mortality).
- <sup>4</sup> Goodwin, Paul. Goodwin Simon Strategic Research. *Summary of 12-County Survey for the Lung Association*. 2014.