

No Smoking, No Problem

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A YEAR AFTER introducing a no-smoking policy at its properties across the West, Guardian Management, LLC, reports that nearly three-quarters of the residents were very or somewhat happy with the ban.

The number of nonsmokers who reported never being exposed to secondhand smoke in their apartments increased about 75 percent, according to a survey that the Oregon Public Health Division conducted at 17 of Guardian's Sec. 8 and low-income housing tax credit developments.

Among smokers, 43 percent reported smoking less since the policy's implementation in January 2008. Nearly half of the respondents who smoke reported making an attempt to stop smoking, of which two-thirds cited the policy as a reason for trying to quit.

"We've also found that the policy not only improves the overall health of our residents, but we can also offer cleaner, better maintained apartments that provide more value for residents, owners, and investors," says Jim Wiard, vice president of Guardian.

Guardian's policy, which covers 12,000 apartments, is believed to be the single-largest smoking ban at rental properties in the United States. The policy prohibits smoking not only in common areas, but also inside apartments, on balconies, and within 25 feet of any building on the properties.



Guardian Management says that most residents are satisfied with a smoking ban at its properties, including East Fair Terrace, an affordable seniors housing development in Gresham, Ore.