

Maine Tobacco Prevention Success Story

Back Bay Tower: Portland's 16-Story High-Rise Adds Smoke-Free Living to its List of Amenities

At a Glance

Smoke-free apartment buildings are becoming a wave of the future. As more people are becoming aware of the health hazards of secondhand smoke, smoke-free housing is the "hot" new amenity that renters seek out in a potential place to live.

Public Health Challenge

Based on the US CDC, approximately 1 in 4 people in the US live in multi-unit housing, and each year an estimated 28 million multi-unit housing residents are exposed to secondhand smoke in their home that came from somewhere else in their building, like a nearby apartment. Secondhand smoke can migrate from other units and common areas and travel through doorways, cracks in walls, electrical lines, plumbing, and ventilation systems. This can pose serious health threats to children and adults, including lung cancer, respiratory infections, and asthma.

Approach

Creating a smoke-free policy for multi-unit housing is a win for everyone involved. Tenants live in a smoke-free environment while landlords have reduced fire risk, property damage, and unit turnover costs. Additionally, with the world in a pandemic and more people working from home and staying in to avoid COVID 19, there is even more of a reason to create a smoke-free living environment for multi-unit residents. District Tobacco Prevention Partner staff strives to create strong partnerships and provide tailored technical assistance based on partner needs. Building a strong personal relationship with Back Bay Tower staff was a contributing factor to this property strengthening its smoke-free policy.



Results

A strengthened smoke-free policy was created and adopted for the 16-story high-rise that has 116 units and houses over 250 residents. Continued technical assistance was provided to the property to get adequate signage for the outdoor terrace, dog park and parking garages - all areas that were problem areas for smoking on the property. In addition, QuitLink information is available for tenants who desire to quit smoking.

Sustainability

District Tobacco Prevention Partners will continue to offer tobacco prevention and cessation resources to Back Bay Tower. We are optimistic about the opportunity to partner with the property further through the multi-unit housing partnership form.

For More Information Contact Us At:

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