



## **For Immediate Release**

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### **Rising Demand for Smoke-Free Housing in New York Leads to Expanded Website**

*SmokeFreeHousingNY.org provides free resources to multi-unit housing property owners and tenants*

**(Albany, NY) December 12, 2011** –The American Lung Association in New York and the Community Partnerships for a Tobacco Free New York announced that a newly enhanced website launched will help property owners and tenants learn more about smokefree housing.

The newly enhanced site, [SmokeFreeHousingNY.org](http://SmokeFreeHousingNY.org), was launched by the 34 community partnerships of the New York State Tobacco Control Program. First created in August 2008, [SmokeFreeHousingNY.org](http://SmokeFreeHousingNY.org) has been expanded in response to the growing need to provide accurate and current information to New York property owners and tenants on handling the issue of drifting tobacco smoke in multi-unit housing. New additions to the site include a toolkit for landlords, guides for condo owners and tenants, and a section dedicated to affordable and public housing.

"Easily accessible information about smoke-free housing is important because there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke and secondhand smoke kills 2,500 New Yorkers each year," said Irwin Berlin, M.D. board chair American Lung Association in New York. "When secondhand smoke intrudes into a person's home environment, there's truly no escape. This website will help property owners and tenants quickly access accurate information that can help them implement healthy smoke-free policies."

"Landlords understand the cost savings and health benefits of having a no-smoking policy but are sometimes hesitant to go smoke-free because they think the process will be too difficult," said Susan Kennedy, Director of the Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island. "This website gives landlords the tools they need to successfully adopt and enforce a no-smoking policy. We hope that property owners considering smoke-free housing policies will visit the website and contact us for additional support."

Through the relaunched website, visitors will be able to:

- Learn the benefits of a no-smoking policy
- Download a step-by-step landlord toolkit to implement a no-smoking policy, including tenant surveys, sample letters and lease language
- Download a tenant guide for those seeking relief from SHS
- Download a Condo guide and Co-op guide (to be posted in the near future)
- Access documents to address legal concerns
- Get updated news on smoke-free housing
- Advertise and search for smoke-free properties for free
- Contact a local community coalition for assistance

A recent report released by the New York State Tobacco Control Program, shows that New Yorkers are increasingly choosing to live in smoke-free homes. In fact, 64.2% of smokers with children state that their homes are 100% smoke-free. At the same time, the report shows that over 43% of adults living in multi-unit housing with a home smoking ban still experience secondhand smoke exposure in their home.

“For those living in multi-unit housing, exposure to secondhand smoke is not just dependent on whether members of your own household smoke, but whether your neighbors smoke,” said Kennedy. “With more people recognizing the health hazards of secondhand smoke and demanding to breathe clean healthy air, we’re seeing increased interest in smoke-free housing policies here on Long Island and across the state. There are local resources in communities across the state to assist property owners with adopting these policies that can have a huge impact not just on health but tenant satisfaction.”

The Community Partnerships offer free assistance to help property owners adopt smoke-free housing policies, conduct surveys to assess tenant support for policy change, provide sample policy language, meet with tenant groups and provide signage.

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#### **About the American Lung Association in New York**

Now in its second century, the American Lung Association in New York is the leading statewide organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease. With your generous support, the American Lung Association is "Fighting for Air" through research, education and advocacy. For more information about the American Lung Association, or to support our work, call 1-800-LUNG-USA (1-800-586-4872) or visit [www.alany.org](http://www.alany.org).

#### **About the Community Partnerships for a Tobacco Free New York**

Community Partnerships for a Tobacco Free New York are funded by the NY Tobacco Control Program. Community Partnerships educate community leaders and the public about the dangers and social costs of tobacco; engage local stakeholders to adopt policies that will restrict tobacco industry presence, de-normalize tobacco use, and eliminate secondhand smoke. For more information or to find a partnership in your area, visit [www.TobaccoFreeNYS.org](http://www.TobaccoFreeNYS.org).

#### **Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island**

One of 34 community partnerships funded by the NY Tobacco Control Program. TAC’s work focuses on establishing smoke-free policies to make Long Island a healthier place to live. For more information, visit [www.BreatheFreely.org](http://www.BreatheFreely.org)