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**Subject:** Press release: Smoke free apartments  
**Attachments:** SFApt Project press releas2007.doc

The following is provided for immediate release:

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### **Smoke-free Housing Movement Rolls into Yolo County**

**Woodland, CA.**— As many California cities debate laws to ban smoking in outdoor and indoor shared spaces, more and more Yolo County multi-unit housing complexes are going smoke-free.

The brand new, affordable housing complex Springlake at Terracina off Farmer's Central Road is now leasing units in its 100% smoke-free complex. And it is not the only apartment complex in Yolo County with smoke-free units. At least 16 other Yolo County apartment complexes currently restrict smoking in at least 50% of individual units according to the Smoke-free Apartments Project of the Yolo County Health Department. A 2004 poll of Davis residents showed that 84% of people felt that smoking restrictions should be in place in shared housing complexes. In addition, 70% supported completely smoke-free shared housing complexes.

Exposure to secondhand smoke kills 53,000 nonsmokers each year in the United States. It is well

known that cancer causing chemicals drift between units in apartment complexes through windows, under doors, and even through electrical outlets and shared ventilation systems, putting neighbors at risk. In addition, smoking in a unit increases risk of fires, complaints from other tenants, and turnover costs due to chemicals in smoke that stay in surfaces such as walls, carpet and counters.

The cities of Belmont, Calabasas, and Roseville have already put laws in place to restrict smoking in apartment homes with more than 10 units, as well as city parks, golf courses, sidewalks, and lines for movies and ATM machines. All of this, to protect the public from exposure to secondhand smoke.

“It is wonderful that apartment owners and managers in Yolo County are voluntarily working with the Smoke-free Apartments project to protect children and families from secondhand smoke exposure in their homes,” states Bette Hinton MD, Director-Health Officer of the Yolo County Health Department.

The Yolo County Health Department regularly offers free classes and resources to those who are ready to quit smoking. For more information about upcoming classes, individuals can call the Stop Smoking Program at (530) 666-8645.

For more information about local smoke-free apartment complexes or assistance in going smoke-free call the Smoke-free Apartment Project of the Yolo County Health Department at (530) 666-8645.

# 17 apartment complexes go smoke-free

Enterprise  
11/19/07

## Davis units are taking the lead

By Sharon Stello  
ENTERPRISE STAFF WRITER

While many California cities consider restricting smoking in public places and some have banned smoking in apartments, more and more Yolo County apartment complexes are voluntarily going smoke-free.

The brand-new Springlake at Terracina apartment complex, now leasing units in Woodland's Spring Lake development, is the latest to adopt a 100 percent smoke-free policy. At least 16 other complexes in Davis prohibit smoking in 50 percent or more of their units, according to the Yolo County Health Department.

Most established no-smoking rules after the Health Department introduced the Smoke-Free Apartments Project in 2004. A group of UC Davis student interns contacted apartment managers, provided them with information about the health hazards of second-hand smoke and let them know that it's legal to restrict smoking in apartments — no different than refusing to allow pets or loud music.

Steven Jensen, tobacco education and prevention coordinator, said the project started with Davis apartments and will next focus on Woodland and West Sacramento.

When Davis apartments were first surveyed in 2004 and 2005, only one reported having a smoke-free policy. In a follow-up survey last June, that number jumped to 17 complexes with smoking restrictions. Most prohibit smoking in all units. Many ban smoking within 20 feet of the buildings or anywhere on the grounds.

"It's gone extremely well, way beyond what our goal was and what we thought we would be able to do," Jensen said. "And they all did this voluntarily ... because it was best for the health of their tenants and their business."

No-smoking policies allow people — especially children and those with asthma or allergies — "to live in their apartment without being exposed to second-hand smoke," Jensen said.

Sundance Apartments, a 59-unit complex on Arthur Street in Davis, was one of those to go smoke-free. Tenants are not allowed to smoke in the apartments or within 20 feet of buildings.

"I think one of the biggest reasons was to prevent a lot of damage inside the units that it causes," said manager Felicia Young.

The policy also respects those who have allergies or don't like the smell of cigarette smoke, which can linger for a long time, she said.

"It's really hard to get rid of that smell," Young said.

The tenants, who are mostly students, have cooperated with the no-smoking rules. Young said the transition was a little more difficult at another Davis complex she managed. Older residents who had been smoking longer were resistant to the change, she said.

Exposure to second-hand smoke kills 53,000 nonsmokers each year in the United States. The Health Department reported that cancer-causing chemicals can drift between apartment units through windows, under doors and even through electrical outlets and shared ventilation systems, putting neighbors at risk.

Smoking in a unit also increases risk of fires, complaints from other tenants and turnover costs, health officials said. Chemicals in cigarette smoke are nearly impossible to clean without replacing countertops, window coverings and carpets. Walls often must be deep-cleaned, not just repainted.

The cities of Belmont, Calabasas and Roseville have already put laws in place to restrict smoking in apartment homes with more than 10 units, as well as city parks, golf courses, sidewalks and lines for movies and ATMs to protect the public from exposure to second-hand smoke.

According to the Health Department, in a 2004 poll of Davis residents, 84 percent of respondents said they believe smoking restrictions should be in place in shared housing complexes. In addition, 70 percent supported completely smoke-free complexes.

"It is wonderful that apartment owners and managers in Yolo County are voluntarily working with the Smoke-Free Apartments Project to protect children and families from second-hand smoke exposure in their homes," Dr. Bette Hinton, Yolo County health officer, said in a news release.

While there are no immediate plans to seek a smoking ban in Yolo County apartments, Jensen said he plans to approach the Board of Supervisors and various city councils to propose a resolution encouraging apartment owners to make at least half of their units smoke-free. Jensen said similar resolutions have been adopted by the city and county of Sacramento.

For more information about local smoke-free apartment complexes or assistance in going smoke-free, call the Smoke-Free Apartment Project of the Yolo County Health Department at 666-8645.

The Health Department also offers free classes and resources to those who are ready to quit smoking. For more information about upcoming classes, call the Stop Smoking Program at 666-8645.

— Reach Sharon Stello at [sstello@davisenterprise.net](mailto:sstello@davisenterprise.net) or 747-8043. To comment on this story, visit [www.davisenterprise.com](http://www.davisenterprise.com)

**GUEST COMMENTARY:**

# Trend: Yolo apartments going smoke-free

**From Steven Jensen  
Tobacco Education and Prevention  
Coordinator  
County of Yolo**

From As many California cities debate laws to ban smoking in outdoor and indoor shared spaces, more and more Yolo County multi-unit housing complexes are going smoke-free.

The brand new, affordable housing complex Springlake at Terracina off Farmer's Central Road is now leasing units in its 100% smoke-free complex. And it is not the only apartment complex in Yolo County with smoke-free units. At least 16 other Yolo County apartment complexes currently restrict smoking in at least 50% of individual units according to the Smoke-free Apartments Project of the Yolo County Health Department. A 2004 poll of Davis residents showed that 84% of people felt that smoking restrictions should be in place in shared housing complexes. In addition, 70% supported completely smoke-free shared housing complexes.

Exposure to secondhand smoke kills 53,000 nonsmokers each year in the United States. It is well known that cancer causing chemicals drift between units in apartment complexes through windows, under doors, and even through electrical outlets and shared ventilation systems, putting

neighbors at risk. In addition, smoking in a unit increases risk of fires, complaints from other tenants, and turnover costs due to chemicals in smoke that stay in surfaces such as walls, carpet and counters.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CHARLES SANO



The Web Site of The Sacramento Bee

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## Woodland apartments close doors to smokers

**New complex is believed to be the city's first with a total ban, and it reflects a national trend.**

**By Lakiesha McGhee - [Imcgee@sacbee.com](mailto:Imcgee@sacbee.com)  
Published 12:00 am PST Thursday, November 22, 2007**

A new Woodland apartment complex is part of a growing national movement to prohibit cigarette smoking in apartments and condominiums.

The Terracina at Springlake Apartment Homes is the first complex in the city to be 100 percent cigarette smoke-free, according to the Yolo County Smoke-Free Apartments Project.

"It's a very positive amenity for the resident," Terracina property manager Tami Pedroia said about the smoke-free clause.

Thousands of apartment owners and managers in the state and across the country are voluntarily placing smoke-free stipulations in leases.

This year, California took the lead when two cities – Belmont and Temecula – adopted ordinances that restrict smoking inside multiple-unit residences. Calabasas will consider a similar ordinance this month.

In Yolo County, Woodland City Councilman Art Pimentel said he plans to pursue a smoke-free ordinance for apartments in his city. At least 16 apartments in Davis voluntarily restrict smoking in 100 percent or at least 50 percent of units since a countywide Smoke-Free Apartment Project began there in 2003.

Bans on smoking in indoor and outdoor areas have been debated in cities over the past several years after more details have emerged about the dangers of secondhand smoke. The federal Environmental Protection Agency has identified secondhand smoke as a Group A carcinogen, part of the most dangerous class of substances that cause cancer in humans.

No-smoking rules have been adopted for most indoor workplaces, restaurants and outdoor public places such as parks, golf courses, beaches, lines for movie theaters and ATMs.

Jim Bergman, founder of the Smoke-Free Environments Law Project based in Michigan, said smoking bans are being sought for private homes because of secondhand smoke possibly seeping through the cracks of a neighbor's doors, walls, windows or ventilation systems. Apartment owners are more aware that it's not against the law to ban smoking in rental units

and that there are financial benefits in doing so, he said.

"It feels almost like a tidal wave at this point," said Bergman, who has worked for the past 10 years to encourage smoke-free apartments. "Four years ago, it was impossible to find an apartment that was smoke-free, but it is rapidly becoming the norm."

Federal fair housing laws more often protect nonsmokers in cases when breathing problems are aggravated by neighbors who smoke. Smoke-free apartment owners also recognize that it is less costly to clean apartments after residents move, Bergman said.

Advocates for cigarette smokers say specifically targeting tobacco smokers in their homes is discriminatory and that the government is intruding on people's rights by enforcing such laws.

"When you talk about banning smoking in apartments and homes, that is the point when the government is stepping into our private lives," said Robert Best, state coordinator of the Citizens Freedom Alliance Inc. and the Smokers Club.

Best maintains no-smoking laws for homes are based mostly on the unpopularity of smoking and not scientific facts. There is no strong proof, he said, that cigarette smoke can seep through walls and harm a person. Instead, people's personal freedoms are what's in danger, Best said, adding that legal tactics should focus on tobacco companies.

Smoke-free apartment initiatives under way in Yolo County are voluntary, said Steven Jensen, county tobacco education and prevention coordinator. The county Smoke-Free Apartment Project is part of an internship program at the University of California, Davis, he said. Davis apartments were first surveyed in 2004 and 2005, and only one reported having a smoke-free policy. Most established smoke-free rules after the county Health Department introduced the concept with the help of UC Davis interns, Jensen said.

The county plans to focus its efforts next on Woodland and West Sacramento in low-income, affordable housing developments, Jensen said.

Without prodding, Terracina at Springlake in Woodland opened its 156 smoke-free units last week. The complex is already 64 percent occupied, according to property management.

Terracina, an affordable housing development, is part of USA Properties Fund and USA Multifamily Management in Roseville, which recently made a commitment to build only smoke-free housing communities, Pedroia said. The company owns and manages 67 communities throughout the Sacramento area, Bay Area, Southern California and Nevada.

Diane Raymond moved into the Woodland complex Tuesday with the help of friends.

"It's just perfect and they haven't missed a thing," Raymond said as she stood in her kitchen. She said the best amenity, in addition to a clubhouse and swimming pool, is that smoking isn't allowed inside homes or anywhere outside on the property.

Residents are cited for violating the rule and multiple violations can result in eviction. Those who track smoke-free laws say enforcement of smoking restrictions in homes can be difficult.

Councilman Pimentel, who works with Raymond at Woodland Community College, was helping her move into the complex. He said it's beneficial for all apartments to be smoke-free since most people don't smoke.

In 2001, 86 percent of Californians surveyed were nonsmokers and 70 percent of Californians approved of apartment complexes requiring at least half of rental units be nonsmoking, according to the state Department of Health Services Tobacco Control Section.

"It just makes sense," Pimentel said, explaining that he wants to expand the city's smoking ordinance to include apartments. Woodland's current smoking ordinance bans smoking within 20 feet of public places, he said.

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# Smoke-Free Apartments Project fights residential smoke

## Davis initiative spreading through Yolo County

**By: GEOFF JOHNSON**

**Posted: 11/27/07**

According to a press release from the Yolo County Health Department, a poll of Davis residents taken in 2004 found that 84 percent think smoking restrictions should be implemented in shared housing, and 70 percent support completely smoke-free housing.

Now finding a cigarette-free apartment is easier than ever before, thanks in part to the Yolo County Smoke-Free Apartments Project.

The initiative began in 2004 as a collaboration with the UC Davis internship program Saving Lungs, Saving Lives, said Vicki Quintana, outreach specialist for the Yolo County Health Department. The project encourages apartments to keep at least half their residences smoke-free, along with providing free information and technical assistance to apartment complexes, she said.

"Smoke can travel through cracks in the doors or ventilation or any shared spaces," Quintana said. "The idea is important because most people in California don't smoke, and only about 14 percent of Californians smoke."

The program, which is entirely voluntary, is important because secondhand smoke has been classified as even more dangerous than originally suspected, Quintana said. The California Air Resources Board recently designated secondhand smoke a toxic air contaminant, and Surgeon General reports from 2006 state that there is "no safe level" of secondhand smoke, Quintana said.

"Exposure to secondhand smoke at any level can increase a person's risk for developing tobacco-related illnesses," she said.

Because of the efforts of the Yolo County Smoke-Free Apartment Project and apartments taking their own initiative, Davis offers 16 apartment complexes that have rules stipulating that half or more of the complex must be smoke free, she said.

Property manager for Americana Arms Leslie Tri said her apartment complex joined the Southern California-based Smoke Free Apartment House Registry and increased the number of available smoke-free rooms to a quarter of the complex's 160 rooms.

Tri said she had been considering the Smoke-Free Apartment Project, and wouldn't object to enforcing its guidelines.

"One of the things I'm hoping to be able to do is to double the number of smoke-free units we have," she said.



Trish Whitcomb, project manager for The Colleges at La Rue and Russell Park apartments, said that while neither of her complexes were part of the project, both had laws dictating where people can smoke.

"For us, in housing, it means that a person can't smoke outside someone's window," she said. "We really encourage people to stay well beyond what the guidelines are for open windows and open doors."

This is true of all on-campus housing, she said.

For more information about the Saving Lungs, Saving Lives internship program, call 666-8613 or e-mail [victoria.quintana@yolocounty.org](mailto:victoria.quintana@yolocounty.org).

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