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CONTACT: PIO Julie Klein

(850) 983-5200 x 142

Smoke-free multi-unit housing encouraged by local coalition

MILTON, FL – In an effort to help decrease exposure to secondhand smoke in multi-unit housing in the county, the Santa Rosa County Tobacco-Free Coalition encourages owners and managers of local apartments and condominiums to go smoke-free. Secondhand smoke can leak around outlets and pipes, easily escaping into adjacent units and common areas, affecting neighboring residents. According to the U.S. Surgeon General, there is no safe level of secondhand smoke exposure.

“What a lot of apartment and condo owners don’t realize is they have the legal right to make a unit or building completely smoke-free, just like they have the right to make those same units pet-free. It can also help save money in cleaning and repair costs when turning over a unit,” said Krystal Johnson, chair of the Santa Rosa County Tobacco-Free Coalition.

“What’s also important to note is the apartment or condo owners may find themselves liable if they fail to address occupant issues around involuntary exposure to secondhand smoke,” added Johnson.

According to the World Health Organization, tobacco use is one of the main risk factors in numerous chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease, heart disease and multiple types of cancer. In Santa Rosa County, 23.5% of adults currently smoke and the county has one of the worst smoking rates in the state (2007 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System).

For more information on smoke-free housing or the Santa Rosa County Tobacco Free Coalition, please contact Julie Klein at (850) 983-5200 ext. 142. For information on the Florida Quitline, including information on free patches, gum or lozenges, call 1-877-U-CAN-NOW or visit www.floridaquitline.com.

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