

Two Shades of Green Spotlight



Smoke-Free Housing

CYPRESS HILLS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Smoke-Free Housing

- Prohibits smoking within residential units, in common areas, on nearby grounds
- Is legal & non discriminatory¹

The Benefits

- Saves \$500-\$1500 in unit turnover costs. ²
- Reduces cigarette fire risk, the leading cause of residential fires. ³
- Reduces asthma risks and tenant odor complaints. ⁴

Our Story

Working with **Two Shades of Green**, a collaboration to help affordable housing owners and managers create cost-effective green and healthy property management practices, [Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation](#) committed in 2013 to implement a smoke-free program in its 31 buildings and 257 units. The program integrates a smoke-free rider in leases with new tenants and encourages existing tenants, when they renew their leases, to agree to the policy. The response has been very positive.

"Smoke-free housing is an effective strategy to reduce exposure to tobacco smoke that can trigger asthma attacks, addressing a key community and organizational concern," said Shai Lauros, Cypress Hills Director of Community Development.

The organization is moving forward with a smoke-free policy in three new housing projects (29 units) leasing up in 2013. The policy has not adversely affected the demand for apartments. New tenants are excited to live in a smoke-free setting. Cypress Hill expects their properties to be fully smoke-free by 2015.



"Community concerns about health disparities, particularly asthma, led us to go smoke-free."

Shai Lauros, Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation



“More than 50% of tenants in NY multi-unit buildings prefer smoke-free housing.”

NY Adult Tobacco Survey 2007-09

COST OF REHABILITATING A RESIDENTIAL UNIT

- Nonsmoking
- Light Smoking
- Heavy Smoking

General Cleaning	\$240	\$500	\$720
Paint	\$170	\$225	\$480
Flooring	\$50	\$950	\$1,425
Appliances	\$60	\$75	\$490
Bathroom	\$40	\$60	\$400
TOTAL	\$560	\$1,810	\$3,515

Data reflect surveys from housing authorities and subsidized housing facilities in New England. Collected and reported by Smoke-Free Housing New England, 2009.

“Painting and cleaning costs are lower because we don’t have to remove stains and odors from tobacco smoke at unit turnover.”

*Kinne Yon
Kenbar Management
1510 Lexington Avenue*



Growing Support for Smoke-Free Housing

Cypress Hills is a part of a larger national trend of growing support for smoke-free housing. Since residents in New York City often live in close proximity to one another, providing safer and healthier housing has become a top priority. Several other NYC-based Community Development Corporations worked closely with the **Two Shades** team to incorporate healthier, smoke-free living into their properties.

Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. (HCCI) chose to pilot a smoke-free initiative at one of its occupied buildings, Dr. Petioni Plaza. Dr. Petioni Plaza is an eight-story, 65-unit building, and Harlem’s first LEED-Silver-designed building for seniors. Going smoke-free is the natural next step in the process to make the building safer and healthier. The building has a large Chinese population, so the team worked with translators to ensure all residents were a part of the process. HCCI also plans to integrate the other **Two Shades** components such as green cleaning and energy/water conservation.

In 2013, Bridge Street Development Corporation (BSDC) decided to open Noel Pointer, a brand new three-story, 23-unit affordable housing development, smoke-free after working with the **Two Shades** team. Choosing to open the building smoke-free was prime example of BSDC’s holistic approach to community development.

HUD Support

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) strongly encourages federally assisted and public housing owners to pursue smoke-free housing. To date, more than 440 public housing authorities throughout the United States have already gone smoke-free in all, or at least part of their properties.

Two Shades of Green Project Team

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), and the NYC Coalition for a Smoke-Free City, partnered to assist affordable housing owners in New York City adopt green and healthy property management practices that both reduce operating expenses and create healthier living environments for residents and staff. **Two Shades of Green** focuses on water conservation, smoke-free housing, integrated pest management, green cleaning, and active design. For more information contact: Colleen Flynn at cflynn@lisc.org or go to http://www.lisc.org/nyc/programs/green_and_healthy_neighborhoods/two_shades_of_green.php.

References

1. In New York State, restrictions apply to changing the terms and conditions of stabilized apartments when tenants renew their leases.
2. Kenbar Management, 2013.
3. NY State Office of Fire Prevention and Control, Revised Regulatory Impact Statement, 2003.
4. US Surgeon General, Secondhand Smoke Exposure in the Home, 2006.

Prepared by:

Ellen Tohn, Tohn Environmental Strategies, LLC
Rachelle Rochelle, Borough Manager, Brooklyn Smoke-Free Partnership
Sean I. Robin, Director of Housing Initiatives, East & Central Harlem District Public Health Office with the NYC DOHMH