

A Case Study *Oxford Housing Authority*



**Xavier Wortham,
Executive Director,
Oxford Housing Authority**

“Most families welcome it – especially those with kids that have asthma. Only two people have come into the complex since the policy that are smokers. This rule was not a deal breaker for them.”

Why Smoke-Free?

The Oxford Housing Authority made the decision to go smoke-free after hearing complaints about the impact of neighbors’ cigarette smoke on residents and their kids – especially those with asthma. The Housing Authority felt this policy would positively impact all residents and children. Management also took into consideration the cost of rehabbing a smoking unit compared with a non-smoking unit to get it ready for a future resident.

Process

The smoke-free policy took effect on January 6, 2014. The resident notification process began in September 2013 and included resident meetings at each of the five properties. The Housing Authority offered smoking cessation resources, including connections to local resources for help quitting smoking. The penalty for smoking on the property includes written violation letters and repeated infractions could lead to eviction.

Results

The results have been positive and there has been no effect on occupancy. Most families welcome the policy, especially those with children. Since its implementation, two families that include smokers have moved into the properties. The policy did not deter them from joining the community.

Recommendations for Other Housing Authorities

Connect with your local health department, as they can offer information for residents on the effects of secondhand smoke, and valuable cessation resources for those who desire to quit. QuitlineNC (1-800-QUIT-NOW) provides free 24/7 assistance with quitting tobacco use. Worthman also recommends connecting with other housing authorities who have already adopted a policy.

**Together we can
clear the air.**



Learn more about why other property owners and managers went smoke-free and how they did it.

**Visit the NC Smoke-Free Housing Website at
<http://www.smokefreehousingnc.com>**

State of North Carolina | Department of Health and Human Services | N.C. Division of Public Health | Tobacco Prevention & Control Branch | www.tobaccopreventionandcontrol.ncdhhs.gov | NC DHHS is an equal opportunity employer and provider.