

**SMOKE
FREE**

**MULTI-UNIT
HOUSING**
NORTH-CAROLINA

LANDURA MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES

As President of Landura Management Associates in Winston-Salem, Scott Alderman took his properties smoke-free in 2011 after experiencing two smoking-related fires within ten days. These fires cost the company \$2 million. Now all of Landura's units are smoke-free, and Alderman couldn't speak more highly of the benefits of the policy:

"Less than 2% of our tenants in 4,000 units have given negative feedback. It's more time-efficient for maintenance staff and cheaper for the bottom line."



Scott Alderman, President of Landura Management Associates.
Image credit: Scott Alderman.

Preparing for a Change

Alderman was one of the first multi-unit affordable housing operators in North Carolina to pursue a smoke-free policy. He and his staff were "feeling their way through the dark," as they worked with their attorneys and regulatory folks to ensure that smoke-free policies would be legal and feasible. Alderman was initially concerned about opposition to the policy, but ultimately this was not a problem:

"The response was not nearly what we had geared up for – we thought we'd have a lot more complaints. The main complaints were because residents didn't know if they were going to be able to smoke on the property."

Implementing the policy took some time because it was added to leases when they were up for renewal. Alderman and his staff prepared for the upcoming policy change by sending letters to tenants informing them of the change, and providing referrals to quitlines and websites for smokers that wanted to quit. Alderman chose not to grandfather tenants because he was worried it would lead to complaints and enforcement problems down the road.

How It Works

The new smoke-free policy applies to all of the properties that Landura owns. All common areas and buildings are smoke-free except for areas 25 feet from buildings, and there are no designated smoking areas. Scott chose this policy because designated smoking areas would need to be handicap accessible, which could require additional construction costs.

No one has moved out because of the new policy, but Landura has had to evict a few tenants for not obeying the policy. Alderman says the time and costs to enforce the policy are no different from any other policy:

“We took violators to court for failure to abide by the lease and rules and regulations, and the courts upheld the lease. The costs are regular court costs, similar to any other lease violations. We budget for legal costs, so it’s not a financial burden, and not a burden on staff time.”

As a pioneer for smoke-free policies in NC, Alderman knows what it’s like to get started. Implementing a smoke-free policy may be intimidating at first, but careful planning and consistent enforcement can help to ensure a smooth transition.



All of Landura’s properties are smoke-free. Image credit: Scott Alderman.

Smart Tips

- If possible, do not grandfather in tenants indefinitely.
- Start the process early.
- Advertise your smoke-free policy.

To hear other property owners’ and managers’ stories:

Visit the NC Division of Public Health’s Smoke-Free Housing Website at

<http://www.smokefreehousingnc.com>



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