
Change is in the air: BC rental property goes 100% smoke-free

Developers are waking up to the marketing potential of 100% smoke-free rental properties.

“Smoking bans in rental buildings are definitely gaining momentum,” said Chris Colbeck, Vice President, Sales and Marketing at Townline Homes, a developer of multi-family, mixed-use developments in Metro Vancouver and on Vancouver Island - the most recent of which they’ve decided to make 100 percent smoke-free.

Although some landlords have non-smoking policies, the bans are gaining in popularity, believes Chris Colbeck. Slated to open in June 2014, Townline’s newest rental property is the Hudson Mews, a 12-storey, 120 suite mid-rise located next to the old Hudson’s Bay Department Store property in downtown Victoria. According to Colbeck, it’s the first purpose built concrete rental building in Victoria in 30 years.

“An appealing and inviting home doesn’t smell like smoke,” continued Colbeck. “Older buildings, constructed when smoking was commonplace, suffer from a lingering smell of stale smoke. People don’t like that. When they move in – they want a place to smell new.”

Plus, Colbeck believes changing attitudes towards smoking are moving this issue along; and besides, he said, “It’s not just healthier for a building to go smoke-free, you have economics on your side.”

“A smoke-free building saves money on repairs, cleaning and maintenance costs, and greatly reduces the risk of fires caused by cigarettes. Not to mention it offers a healthier environment for our residents.”

“And, it’s much easier to establish no-smoking rules before you open your doors and second-hand smoke starts to become a major problem,” he added.

To live at the Hudson Mews, renters will be required to sign and acknowledge the bylaws which prohibits smoking of any kind inside their suites, on their balconies – or anywhere on the grounds or parking lot, said Colbeck. “We’ve built a strict no-smoking policy right in the bylaws, and if a renter doesn’t adhere to the rules, they’ll be subject to enforcement proceedings, and potential eviction.”

Health advocates including the BC Lung Association and the Heart and Stroke Foundation are eager to raise awareness of the need for more smoke-free rental multi-unit housing options in BC.

“We regularly receive calls from property managers and residents looking for help to address second-hand smoke,” says Sharon Hammond, Manager of www.smokefreehousingbc.ca a valuable resource for Landlords and Strata Corporations exploring the idea of going smoke-free.

“We want to promote smoke-free building success stories, like the Hudson Mews, to educate other rental property managers and developers on the growing demand for 100% smoke-free housing options so they’ll build more of them.” Given that BC has the lowest smoking rate in the country, it seems a no brainer for owners/developers to take advantage of this marketing niche.”

“It’s win-win. What’s good for resident health is also good for the bottom line.”

For easy-to-use info and tools on how to make your building smoke-free visit:
www.smokefreehousingbc.ca.

The [Heart and Stroke Foundations \(B.C. & Yukon\)](#) and the [BC Lung Association](#) work together to raise public awareness about the serious health risks of exposure to second-hand smoke and to advocate for smoke-free environments.