

Tribunal to hear second-hand smoke concerns

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A B.C. Human Rights Tribunal hearing centred on second-hand smoke is hoped to result in better protection for residents of subsidized housing, says Rose Marie Borutski.

The resident of Kiwanis Park Place in South Surrey led the effort that resulted in next month's hearing, set to begin Aug. 16.

Borutski believes it will have a province-wide impact for many seniors and people with disabilities.

"The health hazard of drifting second-hand smoke explodes into critical mass when considering all (multi-unit dwellings) provincially and nationally," she states in a press release issued this week.

The complaints, first filed nearly two years ago, allege discrimination based on physical disability due to second-hand smoke in subsidized suites at the 12850 26 St. complex.

According to Borutski, changes have been made since the conflict began – including the introduction of smoke-free rental agreements – but they haven't gone far enough.

Borutski says she hopes the hearing will "finally garner enough public attention and dialogue to provide protection for non-smoking seniors and persons with disabilities forced to live in subsidized housing."