



For Immediate Release:

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Apartment Fires Avoidable with Smoke-Free Policy

(Omaha, NE) – In the past week, Omaha residents of Fairway Apartments and Maple View Apartments fled their homes as fire crews responded to blazes caused by the negligent handling of smoking materials. Since December 2010, a total of four multi-family housing buildings in the Omaha metro area have gone up in flames due to smoking-related causes that were avoidable.

The Metro Omaha Tobacco Action Coalition (MOTAC) has a solution for property owners looking to minimize the threat of smoking-related fires and the extensive costs associated with them. The solution is implementing 100% smoke-free policies for their rental properties. MOTAC has coalition members and resources, such as RentSmokeFree.org to assist property owners in adopting 100% smoke-free policies.

“MOTAC members work to educate property owners and managers on their legal right to prohibit smoking in their units and on their campuses. Smoke-free policies reduce the risk of smoking-related fires and protect the health of and wellbeing of tenants and employees,” said Mary Crosby, MOTAC Media Chairperson.

Paul Vojchegoske, a supportive smoke-free housing partner with MOTAC, Chief Operating Officer of DEEB Realty, and radio host for *The Real Estate Factor* commented, “Smoke-free policies do alleviate the risk, or at least substantially lower the risk of fire within the owner's dwelling. Not only does it prevent, or could prevent, a lot of damage it also saves you a ton of money.”

MOTAC is a dynamic coalition comprised of health-related organizations, individuals, and educational groups working together to strengthen tobacco control and prevention efforts in the metropolitan Omaha community. For more information, visit www.motac.org.

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