

## Smoking-Related Fires in Ohio Multi-unit Housing

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### Are smoking-related fires really a problem in multi-unit housing?

- Yes. Nationally, the estimated annual average number of smoking-related fires in multi-unit housing totaled about 6,900 across all states from 2007-2011 — this is about 1,380 per year, on average.<sup>1</sup>
- Smoking-related MUH fires resulted in approximately 140 civilian deaths, 470 civilian injuries, and about \$215 million in direct property damage per year in the U.S. over the 5-year time period.<sup>1</sup>
- One out of four fatal victims of smoking-material fires is not the smoker whose cigarette started the fire (smoking-related fires in all building types).<sup>1</sup>

### How big is the smoking-related fire problem in Ohio multi-unit housing?

- Ohio fire departments responded to over 1,500 smoking-related fires<sup>2</sup> at multi-unit housing properties between 2004 and 2013 — this is about 150 smoking-related fires per year, on average.<sup>3</sup>
- From 2004-2013, smoking-related fires in multi-unit housing in Ohio resulted in an estimated:<sup>3</sup>
  - \$30 million in property damage (unadjusted for inflation)
  - 250 civilian injuries and 65 firefighter injuries
  - 38 civilian deaths.

### How do smoking-related fires compare to other types of fires in multi-unit housing in Ohio?

- Although smoking-related fires account for only about 5% of all fires in Ohio multi-unit housing, they are responsible for about 10% of the total property damage costs.<sup>3</sup>
- The injury rate<sup>4</sup> (civilians and firefighters combined) in smoking-related MUH fires in Ohio is about 2.5 times higher than the injury rate in Ohio MUH fires due to other causes (fires that are not related to smoking).<sup>3</sup>
- The civilian fatality rate in smoking-related MUH fires in Ohio is more than 5 times higher than the civilian fatality rate in Ohio MUH fires due to other causes (fires that are not related to smoking).<sup>3</sup>

### How many Ohioans allow smoking in their homes?

- Over 7 out of 10 (74%) Ohioans do not allow smoking anywhere inside their homes (all types of residences included), and the majority (over 95%) say that they enforce these rules consistently.<sup>5</sup>
- This means that about a quarter (26%) of adults — or over 2 million Ohio residents — still allow smoking inside their homes.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: The Smoking-Material Fire Problem, July 2013. National Fire Protection Association, Fire Analysis and Research Division (John Hall, Jr.), <http://www.nfpa.org/~media/Files/Research/NFPA%20reports/Major%20Causes/ossmoking.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Smoking-related fires were defined as those determined to be associated with the following heat sources: cigarettes, pipes, cigars, or other smoking material; or cigarette or cigar lighters.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Ohio Department of Commerce, Division of State Fire Marshal, 2004-2013 fire data. Due to variability in data reported to the Division of State Fire Marshal, all estimates should be interpreted with caution. Estimates of numbers of fires are rounded to the nearest hundred, injuries are rounded to the nearest five, and property damage is rounded to the nearest million dollars. Casualty and loss estimates can be heavily influenced by the inclusion or exclusion of one unusually serious fire.

<sup>4</sup> Rates (number of injuries or fatalities per fire) calculated by dividing the number of injuries or fatalities in a category (smoking-related or other fires), by the number of fires in that category.

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2013 Ohio Adult Tobacco Survey.

