



Ottawa Council on  
Smoking or Health

Conseil d'Ottawa sur le  
tabagisme ou la santé

Support for Regulations under the  
*Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017* and the *Cannabis Act, 2017*  
for Indoor and Outdoor  
Public Places, Workplaces and Multi-Unit Housing

Ottawa Board of Health  
April 16, 2018

Presented by Carol McDonald and Carmela Graziani  
[www.smokefreeottawa.com](http://www.smokefreeottawa.com)

## Support for Regulations under the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017* and the *Cannabis Act, 2017*

- The OCSH strongly supports the recommendations submitted by Dr. Vera Etches, Acting Medical Officer for the City of Ottawa, to the Ontario government's public consultations in March 2018 about regulating the use of tobacco, cannabis and electronic cigarette products under the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017* and the *Cannabis Act, 2017*.
- The OCSH submitted similar recommendations, including the need to prohibit the smoking of cannabis in indoor and outdoor public places, workplaces and multi-unit housing: <http://www.smokefreeottawa.com/whats-new>.

## Complaints from Ottawa Residents Affected by Second-Hand Smoke in Multi-Unit Housing

*“Chain-smokers moved in next door and down the hall. I cannot describe the effect it has on my physical and mental well-being. I breathe in toxins that irritate my eyes, lungs, nose and throat. My hallway is often filled with smoke. At times it’s so bad that I’ve had to stay at a friend’s house. The Smoke-Free Ontario Act prohibits smoking in hallways of apartment buildings, but smoke often infiltrates my hallway from the smokers’ units. Why is it okay to smoke on one side of the door, but not on the other? My building manager says that she can’t do anything about the smoke. But if anyone makes noise in our building after 11 pm, they can be fined or evicted! How is that, in 2018, knowing the serious health effects of second-hand smoke, I live in a world of smoke, both in my apartment and on downtown sidewalks?”*

From J.E., April 16, 2018

## Complaints from Ottawa Residents Affected by Second-Hand Smoke in Multi-Unit Housing

*“We have been suffering through a constant and intense onslaught of marijuana smoke and smell from this downstairs apartment. We have reached our breaking point. The smoke and smell produced by the marijuana use has been a significant source of emotional, psychological, and physical distress for me and my family, causing us undue hardship for the last 10 months. My daughter has been up all night with headaches. Family arguments have broken out on how to deal with the situation. I had to be hospitalized because the smoke so severely exacerbated my asthma. I have been going to counselling for the emotional impact this is having on me and my family. We have addressed the issues with our landlord, and despite his promise for help, he has done nothing to truly help us. I have reached out to law enforcement and by-law several times. They have told me there is nothing they can do. Most Canadians are protected from second hand smoke in public places and work spaces, so then why not in their own homes? Is there anyone, or anything that can help us?”*

From A.J., April 3, 2018

## Complaints from Ottawa Residents Affected by Second-Hand Smoke in Multi-Unit Housing

*“I have been renting my apartment for nearly 26 years. Currently the smoke is much worse at all hours of the day and is from more than tobacco cigarettes which makes my apartment intolerable. I assume it is marijuana but I am not sure. I have been thinking of moving which is significantly expensive.”*

From A.H., February 24, 2018

*“Beginning in the summer of 2017 my apartment, including the building has been infiltrated with marijuana/tobacco fumes. My life has been turned upside down. I am constantly trying to manage the extent of exposure from fumes. I have asthma and have had to increase my usage of my 2 types of inhalers.”*

From C.M., February 16, 2018

## Complaints from Ottawa Residents Affected by Second-Hand Smoke in Multi-Unit Housing

*“I have been awakened by a strong smell of smoke and was sick to my stomach. I cannot work many more years. Where do I go to escape this smoke and bad odor both from cigarette and marijuana odors?”*

From G.W., January 24, 2018

*“I live in a townhouse where the owners beside me both smoke cigarettes as well as marijuana. I have no control over being able to live in a healthy smoke-free environment.”*

From K.L., January 23, 2018

## Overwhelming Need in the City of Ottawa for 100% Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing

- What do these complaints have in common?
  - Residents are experiencing severe and life-threatening physical, emotional, and mental health effects.
  - Individuals/families lack financial resources to move.
  - Landlords/property managers have failed to protect residents.
  - The Province of Ontario has failed to legally protect all tenants/condo owners from exposure to second-hand tobacco and cannabis smoke.
  - This public health crisis will worsen after the federal government legalizes cannabis in 2018.

## Overwhelming Need in the City of Ottawa for 100% Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing

- “The inhalation of smoke is harmful to lung health as the combustion of materials releases toxins and carcinogens. These are released regardless of the source – whether it is burning wood, tobacco or cannabis.”<sup>1</sup>
- “The confirmation of the presence, in both mainstream and sidestream smoke of marijuana cigarettes, of known carcinogens and other chemicals implicated in respiratory diseases is important information for public health and communication of the risk related to exposure to such materials.”<sup>2</sup>

### **References:**

<sup>1</sup>Canadian Lung Association. Cannabis Position Statement. Cannabis and Lung Health. Accessed April 15, 2018.  
<https://www.lung.ca/news/advocacy-tools/our-position-statements/cannabis-position-statement>

<sup>2</sup>Moir D, Rickert WS, Levasseur G, et al. A comparison of mainstream and sidestream marijuana and tobacco cigarette smoke produced under two machine smoking conditions. Chem Res Toxicol. 2008;21(2):494-502.  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18062674>



## Overwhelming Need in the City of Ottawa for 100% Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing

“Cannabis use was associated with increased initiation of, persistence of, and relapse to cigarette smoking.”<sup>3</sup>

**Reference:**

<sup>3</sup>Weinberger AH, Platt J, Copeland J, Goodwin RD. Is Cannabis Use Associated With Increased Risk of Cigarette Smoking Initiation, Persistence, and Relapse? Longitudinal Data From a Representative Sample of US Adults. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*. 2018 Mar 6;79(2). pii: 17m11522. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29570966>

## Overwhelming Need in the City of Ottawa for 100% Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing

- 10% of all Champlain residents had asthma in 2012.<sup>4</sup>
- COPD is the leading cause of hospitalization in the Champlain region.<sup>5</sup>
- COPD is one of the top three reasons for hospital readmissions within 30 days.<sup>6</sup>

### **References:**

<sup>4</sup>Libman, Bruce. Champlain Local Health Integration Network. Lung Health in Champlain: An Overview of Asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Prevalence and Healthy System Usage, August 2014, page 10.

<sup>5</sup>Libman, Bruce. Champlain Local Health Integration Network. Preliminary Data for Champlain Health Link Areas, page 8. April 2013.  
[www.champlainlhin.on.ca](http://www.champlainlhin.on.ca)

<sup>6</sup>Discharge Abstract Database. Canadian Institute for Health Information. 2013-2014.  
<https://www.cihi.ca/en/access-data-and-reports>

## Overwhelming Need in the City of Ottawa for 100% Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing

- If the Province of Ontario does not regulate smoking and vaping in indoor and outdoor spaces in multi-unit housing, what can the City of Ottawa and the Ottawa Board of Health do to protect residents from second-hand smoke and vapour from tobacco, cannabis and electronic cigarettes?