

SMOKE-FREE HOUSING POLICY EVALUATION

Findings of the 2011 Waterloo Region Housing and Region of Waterloo Community Housing Inc. Household Tenant Survey

Report to the Region of Waterloo Community Services Committee

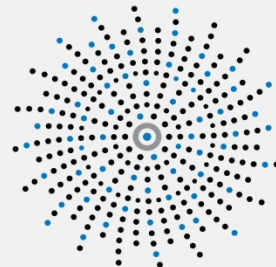
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Region of Waterloo

Suggested Citation:

Kennedy RD, Ellens-Clark S, Kaufman P, Johnston LW. *Smoke-free Housing Policy Evaluation - Findings of the 2011 Waterloo Region Housing and Region of Waterloo Community Housing Inc. Household Tenant Survey*. Waterloo, ON: Propel Centre for Population Health Impact, University of Waterloo.

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Smoke-free Housing Policy Evaluation – Highlights

The 2011 Waterloo Region Housing and Region of Waterloo Community Housing Inc. Household Tenant Survey

Below are some key findings from the 2011 survey mailed to every household managed by Waterloo Region Housing in April 2011. The smoke-free policy was passed by Region of Waterloo Council in October 2009 and was approved by the Region of Waterloo Community Housing Inc. Board of Directors in November 2009. A similar pre-policy survey was conducted prior to the policy enactment on April 1st, 2010 and is reported elsewhereⁱ. The present survey was conducted after the policy was implemented. The survey was completed by 685 households: 514 respondents indicated that the household had no smokers; 129 indicated that their household had one or more smokers; and 42 households did not indicate the smoking status of the members of their household.

- 50% of all respondents reported that they, or others in their household, are sometimes or often exposed to second-hand smoke (SHS) in their home.
- 40% of respondents reported someone in their household has health problems that get worse when they breathe SHS (unchanged from the 2010 survey)
- The majority of respondents, 78%, reported they support the Region of Waterloo smoke-free housing policy
 - Support was approximately 89% from households with no smokers and approximately 33% from households with a person who smokes
- Most respondents reported they already have households that are 100% smoke-free inside (82%) and on their patio or balcony (71%), an increase of 7% and 13%, respectively, from the 2010 survey.
 - 92% of households with no smokers are 100% smoke-free inside, an increase of 2% from 2010
 - 38% of households with smokers are 100% smoke-free inside, an increase of 3% from 2010
- 31% of smokers (n=42) reported they smoke less since the policy was implemented and 7% said they have quit smoking (n=10). 41% of respondents who smoke reported that they tried to quit in the last year.
- 32% of households that permitted smoking inside in April 2011, reported that they plan to make their home 100% smoke-free in the next 6 months. This is the same proportion of respondents as the 2010 survey.
- 35% of respondents who smoke reported that because of the new policy they are more likely to go outside to smoke.
- 25% of respondents reported that smoking has caused problems between them/their household and with their neighbours.

Future tenant surveys will be conducted as more and more leases make housing smoke-free. Future surveys will continue to measure reported attitudes and behaviour regarding smoking.

ⁱ Kennedy, RD. *Smoke-free Housing Policy Evaluation – Findings from the 2010 Waterloo Region Housing and Region of Waterloo Community Housing Inc. Household Tenant Survey*. Waterloo, ON: Propel Centre for Population Health Impact, University of Waterloo. Available at: <http://www.propel.uwaterloo.ca>

BACKGROUND

Waterloo Regional Housing (WRH) and Region of Waterloo Community Housing Inc. (ROWCHI) Smoke-free Housing Policy Evaluation—Survey 2011

In October, 2009, Region of Waterloo Council approved a smoke-free housing policy. This policy came into effect on April 1, 2010 and made all new leases signed with Waterloo Region Housing – in all buildings and properties – 100 percent smoke-free. These restrictions are applied to all living spaces in the lease, including patios and balconies. This smoke-free housing policy also restricted smoking outdoors at all properties in the portfolio to a distance of five metres away from any window, entrance or exit to the building/unit; outdoor restrictions applied to all tenants and visitors. Region of Waterloo Community Housing Inc. (ROWCHI) Board of Directors voted and passed the same policy on November 27th, 2009.

As per Ontario law, tenants with existing leases were “grandfathered” — meaning tenants who had previously been allowed to smoke in their units, including on the balcony or patio, would still be permitted to do so.

This was the first policy in Ontario to make an entire housing portfolio smoke-free, and one of the first in Canada. Region of Waterloo Council requested that regional employees support other local community housing providers to implement similar smoke-free policies.

A committee was created to evaluate aspects of the new smoke-free policy. The evaluation committee consists of membership from Waterloo Region Housing, Region of Waterloo Public Health, and a scientist from the Propel Centre for Population Health Impact at the University of Waterloo. The policy evaluation consists of an enforcement database, air quality monitoring, and a tenant survey.

The survey of tenants is being conducted to measure support for the smoke-free policy, and understand how the policy may affect smoking behaviour. Considering the policy permits “grandfathering,” it is expected that impacts from the policy may take several years to influence behaviour.

This report provides the results of the March 2011 survey, which was administered to tenants after the no-smoking policy was passed by on April 1st, 2010. A copy of the tenant household questionnaire is included in Appendix A of this report. This report makes some comparisons to the 2010 survey, which was conducted prior to the policy coming into effect.

SAMPLE

Waterloo Region Housing (WRH) manages 2722 affordable rental housing units. Building types in the portfolio include low and high-rise apartments, townhouses, semi-detached and single family homes. Housing is provided for different tenant groups including “seniors,” “adult, no dependant,” and “families.” Senior units are intended for residents who are 60 years of age or older. Seniors live in low or high rise apartments. “Adult, no dependant” is typically for residents with no children who are younger than 60 years old. This adult housing is in low or high rise apartments. To simplify this report, the tenant group “Adult, no dependant” is referred to as “adult.” Most of the tenants in “family” units live in townhouses or semi-detached single family dwellings; however, some family units are also in low-rise apartments.

METHODS

The questionnaire and research methods used in this study received approval from the Region of Waterloo Public Health Research Ethics Board, and the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo (ORE# 16168).

An envelope containing a cover letter that described the new policy, the survey questionnaire, and letter that provided instructions on how to access language translation support for completing the survey was delivered by a private courier to every household in the portfolio. The envelope was labelled with the tenant’s name and address, and delivered to their mailbox, or in some cases right to the door. These envelopes were delivered in mid-March 2011, and respondents were asked to return the completed survey by April 28 2011. Copies of the cover letter and translation support material are included in Appendix B.

The survey was entitled “Survey – Evaluation March, 2011 – Smoke-free policy for New Leases and Transfers in Waterloo Region Housing.” The survey had 29 questions, 21 of which were for all households, and 8 of which were specifically for respondents who smoke cigarettes.

Respondents were asked to return the completed survey using a prepaid, self-addressed envelope. Alternatively, respondents were invited to drop off the completed survey in person to the WRH office in either Kitchener or Cambridge.

ANALYSIS

Response percentages are reported for each question. Non-responses (missing data) are not included in most response proportions. Some question responses are reported based on household smoking status; households are classified as either not having a resident who smokes, or having a resident who smokes. Response percentages for questions intended for people who smoke only report from the sample of respondents who identified as a person who smokes.

Analysis was conducted in PASW Statistics 18 and the statistical package Rⁱⁱ. Test of equal or given proportions was used to determine significance, using an alpha of 0.05.

Although the survey tool did not provide space for remarks, many respondents wrote written comments throughout the surveys. These comments were entered into a spreadsheet along with the anonymous respondent identification and which question the comment was written beside.

FINDINGS

Response Rates:

The 2011 survey was distributed to all 2722 households and completed by 685 respondents, which represents a response rate of 25.2%. The 2010 survey response rate was 26.3% (n=717).

- This is considered a good or very good response rate given no incentive was offered for households to complete the survey.ⁱⁱⁱ
- This response rate is similar to previous surveys sent to the households across the portfolio by Region of Waterloo Housing.^{iv v}

Table 1 below details the response rate by tenant group, which are seniors, adult, and families.

Table 1. Response rates by tenant group

	Response Rate	Returned Surveys	Total Units in portfolio
Seniors	39.0%	420	1076
Adult	28.3%	87	307
Family	13.3%	178	1339

There was no statistically significant difference between the response rates from the 2010 survey and the 2011 survey (p-value = 0.34).

Household and Respondent Descriptions:

Household and respondent descriptions are reported for the entire sample (n=685) in tables 2-5 below.

Table 2. Question 1) Did you sign a smoke-free lease (that means you moved in after April 1, 2010)?

	Percent	Frequency
No	79.8%	478
Yes	20.2%	121
Total	100%	599

Missing responses: 86; total sample n=685

Approximately 20% of respondents answered that they signed a smoke-free lease.

Note - surveys delivered to households that had a smoke-free lease were marked with an 'X' on the bottom of the first page. There were 72 surveys returned that had an 'X' – representing 10.5% of the survey respondents. Of the 121 respondents that indicated in Question 1 that they had a new lease, 55 did (and 66 did not). It is unclear why this discrepancy exists.

Table 3. Question 2) Are you 65 years old, or older?

	Percent	Frequency
No or Missing	48.6%	352
Yes	51.4%	333
Total	100%	685

There were 333 respondents that indicated they were 65 years old, or older; this represents approximately 51% of the sample.

Table 4. Question 3) How many adults live in your household?

	Percent	Frequency
Missing	5.1%	35
More than one	21.0%	144
One	73.9%	506
Total	100%	685

The majority of respondents reported that their household had only one adult (74%, n=506).

Table 5. Question 4) Number of children/teens (under 18).

	Percent	Frequency
Missing	26.1%	179
More than one	14.7%	101
One	6.4%	44
Zero	52.7%	361
Total	100%	685

There were 145 households that reported that at least one child or teen (under 18 years of age) lived in their household. This represents 21% of the sample, the same as the 2010 survey.

Note: Based on responses to questions 1b and 2b, approximately 70% of the households that completed the survey (n=478) have a person from a population considered more vulnerable to SHS exposure – specifically seniors, who are more likely to have compromised pulmonary and cardiovascular health issues, and youth who have developing lungs.

Smoking Behaviour in the Household:

The survey included questions for all respondents about smoking behaviour and home-smoking practices (questions 5-11). Question 11 asked about respondent's anticipated future smoke-free home policies. The responses to these questions are detailed in Tables 6-14 below. Response percentages do not include non-responses; the number of missing responses is reported with each table.

Table 6. Question 5) How many people in your household, including yourself, currently smoke, daily or less?

	Percent	Frequency
0	79.9%	514
1	16.0%	103
2-3	2.5%	16
More than 3	1.6%	10
Total	100%	643

Missing responses: 42; total sample n=685

Respondents reported that approximately 20% of households have at least one resident who smokes daily or less (n=129). This is a smaller proportion of the sample compared to the results in the 2010 survey, which reported 28%.

The responses to this question were used to classify households by smoking status; households that have a smoker (n= 129) or do not have a smoker (n= 514).

NOTE: The proportion of households in Ontario that have at least one resident who smokes is estimated at 24.9%.^{vi}

Table 7. Question 6) Do you smoke cigarettes, either daily or less?

	Percent	Frequency
No	83.0%	535
Yes	17.0%	110
Total	100%	645

Missing responses: 40; total sample n=685

Approximately 17% of survey respondents reported that they smoked cigarettes, either daily or less. This is a significantly smaller proportion of the sample compared to the proportion of the sample from 2010, which was 24% (p-value<0.05).

Note: Smoking prevalence in Ontario is estimated to be 16.8%, lower than the national average of 17.9%.^{vii} The Ontario Tobacco Research Unit (OTRU) has reported that people in Ontario with lower socio-economic status have a smoking prevalence rate of approximately 27%.^{viii}

Table 8. Question 7) Since the smoke-free policy have you changed how you smoke? (reported proportions from survey respondents who did not indicated “Do not smoke”)

	Percent	Frequency
No change	57.8%	78
Smoke less	31.1%	42
Smoke more	3.7%	5
Have quit	7.4%	10
Total	100%	135

Missing responses: 30; total sample n=685. This sample included smokers and non-smokers. There were 520 respondents who indicated that they do not smoke.

This question was asked to all respondents and the majority (n=520) indicated they did not smoke. Table 8 reports the proportion of responses from the remaining sample. There was no reported change in smoking habits after the smoke-free policy came into effect for approximately 58% of respondents (n=78). Approximately a third (31%, n=42) reported they smoked less since the policy was implemented, and approximately 7% (n=10) reported they have quit smoking.

Table 9. Question 8) Does anyone smoke inside your home?

	Percent	Frequency
Never	81.9%	538
Sometimes	11.7%	77
Often	6.4%	42
Total	100%	657

Missing responses: 28; total sample n=685

The majority of respondents, approximately 82%, reported that their homes are 100% smoke-free (n=538); this is a significantly greater proportion than what was reported in the 2010 survey, which was

75%. Approximately a fifth of respondents, 18% (n=119) reported that their household permit smoking at least sometimes.

**Table 10. Question 8) Does anyone smoke inside your home?
Reported by Smoking Status of the Household**

	No Smoker in Household	Smoker in the Household
Never	92.3% (n=465)	37.9% (n=47)
Sometimes	7.3% (n=37)	32.3% (n=40)
Often	0.4% (n=2)	29.8% (n=37)
Total	100% (n=504)	100% (n=124)

Missing responses: 15; sample n=643

The vast majority of households that do not have a smoker report that smoking never takes place inside their home (approximately 92%, n=465). Approximately 8% of households that do not have a resident who smokes report that someone smokes “sometimes” or “often” inside their home.

Approximately 38% of respondents from households that have a person who smokes, reported that their homes are 100% smoke-free. There was no significant difference in the proportion of smokers who reported allowing smoking in their home, either “often” or “sometimes”, between 2010 and 2011.

Note: A nationally representative study of smokers found that 39% of Canadian households with a smoker are 100% smoke-free (95%CI: 36.3-41.8).^{ix} These results are similar to our survey results.

Table 11. Question 9) Does anyone smoke on your patio or balcony?

	Percent	Frequency
Never or do not have	71.4%	469
Sometimes	24.1%	158
Often	4.6%	30
Total	100.1%	657

Missing responses: 28; total sample n=685

Approximately 29% of respondents indicated that smoking takes place on their balcony sometimes or often. This is a statistically significant decrease from 40% in the 2010 survey ($p < 0.01$).

Table 12 below reports smoking behaviour on patios or balconies, reported by the smoking status of the household, as determined by question 5.

**Table 12. Question 9) Does anyone smoke on your patio or balcony?
Reported by Smoking Status of the Household**

	No Smoker in Household	Smoker in the Household
Never – or do not have a balcony or patio	80.6% (n=406)	33.6% (n=42)
Sometimes	19.2% (n=97)	44.0% (n=55)
Often	0.2% (n=1)	22.4% (n=28)
Total	100% (n=504)	100% (n=125)

Missing responses: 14; sample n=643

Most households that do not have a smoker report that smoking never takes place on their balcony or patio or they do not have a balcony or patio (81%, n=406). Approximately 19% of households with no smokers report that smoking takes place at least sometimes on their patio or balcony, down from 28% in 2010. Approximately 34% of households that have a smoker reported that no one ever smokes on their patio or balcony (or they do not have one). Twenty-two percent of respondents who have a smoker in their household often have someone smoking on their patio, down from 32% reported in 2010. However, this is not a statistically significant difference ($p\text{-value} = 0.71$).

Note: Less than 4% of housing units in the portfolio (n=99) have no patio or balcony (I. Peters, personal communication, November 23 2011).

Table 13. Question 10) If someone smokes in your home or on your patio or balcony, is it: [check all that apply]:

	Percent	Frequency
A member of the household	12.5%	80
Visitor	26.7%	171
Neighbour	6.9%	44
No one smokes on my patio or balcony	66.6%	426

Missing Responses 45; sample n=640 – note multiple responses were possible.

Most respondents (66.6%) reported that no one currently smokes on their patio or balcony. Over a quarter of respondents (n=171) reported that visitors to their household smoke on the patio or balcony, and 44 respondents reported that neighbours smoke on the patio or balcony.

Table 14. Question 11) If you allow smoking in your home, do you plan to make your home 100% smoke-free within the next 6 months?

Reported for households that indicated they still permit smoking

	Percent	Frequency
No	68.3%	110
Yes	31.7%	51
Total	100%	161

Missing Responses: 46; total sample n=685 . NOTE – 478 respondents in 2011 reported the household was already 100% smoke-free.

From the sample of respondents that did not indicate that their household was already 100% smoke-free (n=161), approximately 32% (n=51) reported that they do intend to make their home 100% smoke-free in the next 6 months. This includes both households that have a person who smokes and those households that do not have a person that smokes. This finding was not significantly different from the 2010 survey result (p-value = 0.82).

Of the respondents that indicated “yes”, approximately 41% (n=21) were from households with a smoker.

Support for smoke-free policy

Question 12 asked respondents if they support the smoke-free policy; responses are reported in table 15 below.

Table 15. Question 12) Do you support the new policy that made all new leases in your building 100% smoke-free, including no smoking on patios or balconies?

	Percent	Frequency
Yes	77.8%	512
No	22.2%	146
Total	100%	658

Missing Responses: 27; total sample n=685

The majority of respondents were supportive of the policy (78%, n=512); the proportion of respondents that supported the policy in 2011 was statistically greater than in the proportion of respondents that supported the policy in the 2010 survey (72%; proportion test p-value = 0.024). Approximately 33% of households with a person who smokes reported that they supported the policy in 2011 (n=42). Households with no smoker reported 89% support for the smoke-free policy in 2011 (n=470).

Second-hand Smoke Exposure and Health:

Questions 13-16 asked about respondents' second-hand smoke exposure in their home and how SHS may impact the health of their household. Responses are detailed in tables 16-21 below.

Table 16. Question 13) How often do you smell second-hand smoke coming into your home?

	Percent	Frequency
Never	50.2%	333
Sometimes	30.6%	203
Often	19.3%	128
Total	100%	664

Missing Responses: 21; total sample n=685

Half of respondents (approximately 50%, n=331), indicated that they are sometimes or often exposed to second-hand smoke in their home.

Table 17. Question 14) If second-hand smoke comes into your home, where does it come from? [check all that apply]

	Percent	Frequency
Neighbouring units	36.25%	232
From outdoors	22.34%	143
Other	7.03%	45
No, it doesn't come into my unit	51.25%	328

Missing responses: 45; sample n= 640 – Note frequency sums to 748 as multiple responses were possible.

Approximately a third of respondents (37%, n=232) reported that smoke enters their home from neighbouring units. Approximately a fifth of respondents (22%, n=143) reported that smoke enters their home from outdoors.

Table 18. Question 15) Do you or others in your home have health problems that get worse when you breathe in second-hand smoke?

	Percent	Frequency
No	59.8%	376
Yes	40.2%	253
Total	100%	629

Missing Responses: 56; total sample n=685

Forty percent of respondents (n=253) reported that someone in their household has health problems that are made worse when exposed to second-hand smoke.

**Table 19. Question 16) If you live in an apartment building, do you smell second-hand smoke in other parts of the building such as hallways, lobby or other common indoor spaces?
Reported for households that live in apartments**

	Percent	Frequency
Always	9.7%	48
Often	11.5%	57
Sometimes	40.1%	199
Never	38.7%	192
Total	100%	496

Missing responses: 51; Note: 138 respondents answered "Do not live in an apartment", total sample n=685

Over half of respondents reported that they smell second-hand smoke in common indoor spaces at least sometimes (approximately 61%, n=304), which is not significantly different from the 2010 survey findings (p-value = 0.39).

Table 20. Question 17) Do you smell second-hand smoke when you are on the grounds of your property?

	Percent	Frequency
Always	4.1%	26
Often	6.9%	44
Sometimes	48.0%	304
Never	41.0%	260
Total	100%	634

Missing responses: 51; sample n=634

The majority of respondents (59%, n=374) indicated that they smell second-hand smoke at least sometimes.

Table 21. Question 18) In general, when people are smoking outside on the grounds of your property do they step 5 metres away from the building?

	Percent	Frequency
Always	15.67%	100
Often	7.05%	45
Sometimes	19.28%	123
Never	12.70%	81
Don't Know	45.30%	289
Total	100%	638

Missing responses: 47; sample n=638

Almost half of respondents (45%, n=289) reported they 'don't know' if people are smoking 5m from the building perimeters. Approximately 13% (n=81) respondents reported that outside smokers 'never' smoked 5m away from the building.

Cigarette butts:

Question 19 asked respondents to report how often they see cigarette butts around their housing unit. Responses are detailed in Table 22 below, reporting from the entire sample.

Table 22. Question 19) Do you see cigarette butts lying on the ground on the property where you live?

	Percent	Frequency
Always	11.9%	75
Often	10.2%	64
Sometimes	43.0%	271
Never	34.9%	220
Total	100%	630

Missing responses: 55 ; sample n=685

In 2010, 74% of respondents reported that they saw cigarette butts on their property at least sometimes. In 2011, fewer respondents reported seeing cigarette butt litter at least sometimes (65%, n=410). This represents a statistically significant decrease in reported cigarette litter (p-value<0.01).

Perceived social norms

Question 20 asked respondents to report how often they think their neighbours go outside to smoke. This question was asked to help inform health promotion strategies that may focus on social norms. Responses are detailed in table 23 below, reporting from the entire sample.

**Table 23. Question 20) How often do you think your neighbours go outside to smoke?
Reported for respondents that have a neighbour that smokes**

	Percent	Frequency
Never	5.5%	35
Sometimes	18.0%	115
Often	11.4%	73
Always	5.8%	37
Don't Know	55.8%	357

Missing Responses: 45; Note – 23 respondents reported “my neighbours don't smoke”, total sample n=685

Over half of respondents reported they do not know how often their neighbours go outside to smoke (approximately 56%, n=357). Approximately 6% of respondents reported they think their neighbours “never” go outside (n=35), compared to 9% from the 2010 survey. It is interesting that only 4% of respondents from the 2011 survey stated their neighbours do not smoke (n=23). For this question neighbour was not defined so respondents may have thought a neighbour was someone who lived immediately beside them, or someone in the same building.

Perceived problems between neighbours:

Question 21 asked respondents to report how often, if at all, smoking has caused problems between households. Responses are described in table 24 for the entire sample.

Table 24. Question 21) Has smoking caused problems between you/someone in your home and your neighbour(s)?

	Percent	Frequency
Not at all	74.9%	472
Just a little	14.1%	89
A fair amount	5.2%	33
A great deal	5.7%	36

Missing responses: 55; total sample n=685

More than a quarter of respondents reported that smoking has caused at least minor problems between themselves or someone in their home and their neighbours (approximately 25%, n=158), similar to the findings in 2010.

QUESTIONS FOR PEOPLE WHO SMOKE

The survey included 8 questions (questions 22-29) for respondents who smoke. This section of the survey included the following statement: “If you smoke, please respond to the following questions or statements:”

Note: Some respondents completed this section that did not indicate in Question 6 that they were a smoker. Tables 25-29 only report responses from respondents that indicated in Question 6 that they smoked “either daily or less.” This included 110 respondents.

Quitting Intentions and Smoking Behaviours:

Table 25. Question 22) At any time during the past year, did you try to quit smoking?

	Percent	Frequency
No	59.0%	59
Yes	41.0%	41
Total	100%	100

Missing responses: 10; “smoker” sample n=110.

41% (n=41) of respondents indicated that they have tried to quit smoking in the last year, the same as in 2010 (p-value = 1).

NOTE: An international study of smokers from Canada, US, UK and Australia reported that smokers with lower incomes were more likely than others to have an interest in quitting but were less likely to have made a quit attempt.^x

Table 26 Question 23) Do you plan to quit smoking in the next 6 months?

	Percent	Frequency
Yes	27.8%	27
No	72.2%	70
Total	100%	97

Missing responses: 13; “smoker” sample n=110.

More than a quarter of smokers reported that they plan to quit smoking in the next six months (approximately 28%, n=27). This was also similar to the 2010 survey finding.

Table 27. Question 24) If your lease currently requires you to smoke outside, do you follow the rules? (remember this survey is anonymous)

	Percent	Frequency
Always	48.6%	34
Often	11.4%	8
Sometimes	21.4%	15
Never	18.6%	13
Total	100%	70

Missing responses: 40; “smoker” sample n=110.

Approximately 60% of respondents state either “always” or “often” following the rules, while 19% reported they “never” follow the rules regarding smoking inside. A large proportion of smokers did not answer this question (n=40).

Table 28: Question 25) Since the new smoke-free policy, do you smoke outside more often than before the policy?

	Percent	Frequency
Yes	35.2%	31
No	64.8%	57
Total	100%	88

Missing Responses: 16; “smoker” sample n=110. Note – 6 respondents reported they already go outside 100% of the time; proportions reported did not include those respondents

There were 6 respondents to question 25 that reported that they already go outside to smoke 100% of the time. Of the remaining sample, approximately 35% (n=31) reported that they go outside to smoke more often after the new smoke-free policy was implemented.

Table 29. Question 26) When I smoke on the grounds of my property, I am 5 metres away from the building.

	Percent	Frequency
Always	54.9%	56
Often	7.1%	7
Sometimes	12.4%	13
Never	14.2%	13
Never smoke outside on my property	11.5%	11
Total	100%	110

Missing Responses: 10; "smoker" sample n=110.

Over half of respondents (55%, n=56) indicated that they always respect the 5 metre distance when smoking on the grounds of their property. A small percentage (14%) reported they never stand 5 metres away from the building when smoking.

Social de-normalization of smoking behaviour:

Evaluations of smoke-free policies have shown that increases in smoke-free spaces are associated with reductions in the perception of the social acceptability of smoking.^{xi} Question 27 asked respondents to report if they agree or disagree with the statement “there are fewer and fewer places you feel comfortable smoking,” while Question 28, which is similar to Question 27, asked about their comfort smoking outside.

Table 30. Question 27) There are fewer and fewer places where I feel comfortable smoking.

	Percent	Frequency
Strongly Agree	39.2%	38
Agree	39.2%	38
Disagree	14.4%	14
Strongly Disagree	7.2%	7
Total	100%	97

Missing responses: 13; “smoker” sample n=110

Of those that responded to this question, approximately 78% (n=76) reported that they agree or strongly agree that there are fewer and fewer places they feel comfortable smoking, compared to 68% from 2010 (not significantly different, p-value = 0.11).

Table 31. Question 28) There are fewer and fewer places outside where I feel comfortable smoking.

	Percent	Frequency
Strongly Agree	33.0%	32
Agree	34.0%	33
Disagree	24.7%	24
Strongly Disagree	8.3%	8
Total	100%	97

Missing responses: 13; “smoker” sample n=110

Approximately 67% (n=65) of respondents to this question either agreed or strongly agreed that there are fewer places where they feel comfortable smoking outside.

Interest in Cessation Support:

Region of Waterloo Public Health (ROWPH) provides help to tenants to access smoking cessation supports, such as group or individual counselling, nicotine replacement therapy, etc. Question 29 asked respondents about their interest in accessing a smoking cessation program provided by ROWPH.

Table 32. Question 29) Would you consider using one of the Region of Waterloo Public Health quit-smoking programs to help you quit smoking?

	Percent	Frequency
Yes	20.0%	20
Don't Know	30.0%	30
No	50.0%	50
Total	100%	100

Missing Responses: 10; "smoker" sample n=110.

Of those who responded to this question, 20% (n=20) reported "yes," they would consider using one of the ROWPH quit-smoking programs to assist in smoking cessation. Almost one third of respondents (30%, n=30) reported they "don't know".

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS THAT WERE HAND WRITTEN ON THE SURVEYS

This survey did not include spaces for respondents to add open-ended comments but many did – 117 unique respondents (17%) wrote at least one comment on their survey. Most of the respondents (63%, n=74) who included unsolicited comments had indicated that they support the no-smoking policy. Some of the comments asked for policy makers to make the smoke-free policy more stringent while others suggested it was going too far. There were concerns raised about the impact of exposure to secondhand smoke on their health, particularly for residents with respiratory issues (e.g., allergies, asthma and emphysema). However, some respondents also raised concerns about the potential impact of the policy on the equity of residents who smoke, and raised other issues of priority in housing (e.g., alcohol and drug use, mould, bothersome odours and safety).

Comments were tracked by the anonymous respondent ID and according to where the comment was written on the survey; most comments were associated with a specific question.

Here is a sample of the range of comments that were received related to the survey questions:

Following question 12, “Do you support the new policy that made all new leases in your building 100% smoke-free, including no smoking on patios or balconies?”

“The best thing ever done”

“...in all fairness, same rules should apply to everyone”

“It should apply to everyone - even though I smoke”

“No - Only because tenants that have moved in since April 2010 or later still smoke or are smoking”

“If I smoked, I would like to smoke in my home and on my balcony. It's your space!”

Following question 15, “Do you or others in your home have health problems that get worse when you breathe in second-hand smoke?”

“As long as you keep your apartment ventilated and don't smoke too much there is no problem for me. No one has the right to control the outdoors for others - it belongs to all of us. What about people who go camping and make campfires. Do you intend to end this pleasure for families as well?”

“Since I was a child, if I smell cigarette smoke, I get nauseated and almost vomit.”

“Sometimes need to get oxygen and very high sensitivity to second hand smoke”

Following question 21, “Has smoking caused problems between you/someone in your home and your neighbour(s)?”

“not with neighbours as I avoid them - has severely affected my health and the enjoyment of my unit.”

“when my neighbour smoked, I didn't say anything because I don't want to have some troubles.”

“I am a working person and I pay top rent and I have the right to smoke if I wish.”

“I get less visits from "smoker" friends”

General Comments

“The smokers policy should have been banned outright for everyone regardless of how long they have lived in the apartments. It will take 50 years or maybe never to clear out smokers from the Housing apartments.”

“Alcohol, cigarettes, caffeine, you will never be able to control and stop. Very dangerous with out people's lives at stake. Wasting time - no enforcement - danger situations”

“5 metre[s] away from buildings requires people that smoke to go on the sidewalk or in the Park where all the children play so this doesn't make sense. Or in the parking lot. The people that do smoke in their home or outside of their units are less than 5 metres away from buildings. If you want smoke free units then you should provide paint to paint units or apartments every two years. Since you don't provide the paint and the people pay their rent then they should not be condemned because they smoke in their house...”

“People don't care. They always smoke. Please give a ticket to them for \$1000.”

“1 year later and no improvement”

“When people are out on their patio or balcony we are unable to open our windows or the balcony door window. When there is someone smoking in the unit beneath us, it is very bad in our kitchen. The problem is that smokers have all the rights and the non-smokers just have to put up with it.”

“I strongly disagree with smoke-free policy, it affects my freedom.”

“Worry about other pollutants in area and atmosphere and food”

NEXT STEPS

The evaluation committee will conduct similar surveys with households in the Waterloo Region Housing and Region of Waterloo Community Housing Inc. portfolios in 2013. With this longitudinal cross sectional data it will be possible to understand trends in policy support and smoking behaviour. The results of subsequent surveys will also be presented to Regional Council in similar reports.

End Notes and References

- ii R Development Core Team. (2010). R: A language and environment for statistical computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. Retrieved from <http://www.R-project.org/>.
- iii In an experimental study by Larson and Chow (2002), researchers found that mail-back survey response rates with no incentive, were 13%. When researchers included a person cover letter, response rates were 14%. This is similar to the lowest response rate experienced with the households in “family” housing, and is lower than the overall average response rate for the housing portfolio.
- Full reference:
Larson PD, Chow G. (2002). Total cost/response rate trade-offs in mail survey research: impact of follow-up mailings and monetary incentives. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 32(7), 533-537.
- iv Region of Waterloo, Community Services Committee. (2010). *Report PH-08-034*. Waterloo, ON. Retrieved from [http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/0/A75A72CD6B1CF7B58525746E00450EF8/\\$file/PH-08-034.pdf?openelement](http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/web/region.nsf/0/A75A72CD6B1CF7B58525746E00450EF8/$file/PH-08-034.pdf?openelement)
- v Region of Waterloo Public Health, Environmental Health and Lifestyle Resources. (2009 March 3). Memorandum to Ken Seiling and Memembers of Council: Results of survey on second-hand smoke in regionally owned housing. Retrieved from http://www.smokefreehousingon.ca/cms/file/Waterloo_MUD_Survey_Memo.pdf
- vi Calculated using cycle 1, 2008 of CTUMS (Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey) – weighted results for Ontario. The proportion of households in Canada that have a smoker is 25.2%.
- vii Reid JL, Hammond D. *Tobacco Use in Canada: Patterns and Trends, 2009 Edition (v2)*. Waterloo, ON: Propel Centre for Population Health Impact, University of Waterloo.
- viii Ontario Tobacco Research Unit (OTRU). (2009). “Smoking and Quitting Behaviours of Low SES Adult Smokers?” *Evaluation News*, (3)1, 1-4. Retrieved from www.otru.org/pdf/newsletters/OTRU_news10_web.pdf
- ix Propel Centre for Population Health Impact. (2010). Unpublished data. The International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Project (ITC) Four Country Study, data generated from Wave 7, 2008 – 2009.
- Details of the ITC Project can be found at: www.itcproject.org
- x Siahpush M, Yong HH, Borland R, Reid JL, Hammond D. (2009). Smokers with financial stress are more likely to want to quit but less likely to try or succeed: findings from the International Tobacco Control (ITC) Four Country Survey. *Addiction*, 104(8), 1382–1390.

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