National Burn Awareness Week LTE (NOTE: This observance falls on February 4-10)

Drafted January 5, 2018

**Smoke-free housing can help prevent burns, fires**

Dear Editor,

START YOUR LETTER BY LETTING READERS KNOW THAT IT IS NATIONAL BURN AWARENESS WEEK. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF SIMPLE WAYS TO PREVENT BURNS, INCLUDING NOT LEAVING ITEMS ON A BURNING STOVE UNATTENDED, KEEPING MATCHES AND LIGHTERS OUT OF THE REACH OF KIDS, AND UNPLUGGING APPLIANCES LIKE IRONS WHEN YOU’RE NOT USING THEM. NOW SHARE THAT THERE IS ANOTHER THING THAT CAN BE DONE TO PREVENT BURNS AND FIRES – PROHIBITING SMOKING IN MULTI-UNIT HOUSING.

STATE THAT SMOKING IS THE THIRD-LEADING CAUSE OF RESIDENTIAL FIRE DEATHS, AND THAT THE NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION REPORTS THAT HOME FIRES CAUSED BY SMOKING-RELATED MATERIALS RESULTED IN MORE THAN 1,600 CIVILIAN INJURIES IN 2011. **(NOTE – THIS IS A MESSAGE THAT CAN BE GREATLY ENHANCED BY HAVING SOMEONE FROM YOUR LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENT SUBMIT THIS LTE SINCE THEY CAN TALK ABOUT THE TRUE IMPACT OF HOME FIRES AND WHAT THE DAMAGE THEY’VE SEEN FROM SMOKING-RELATED MATERIALS).** YOU CAN ALSO SUPPLEMENT THIS MESSAGE BY TALKING ABOUT [SECONDHAND SMOKE](http://wismokefreehousing.com/files/download/77463bcb31e1e05).

NOW SHARE THAT A NEW RULE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT WILL REQUIRE PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITIES TO IMPLEMENT A SMOKE-FREE RULE BY THE END OF JULY. DISCUSS WHY YOU THINK THIS IS A GOOD THING (PROVIDES A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR TOBACCO USERS TO QUIT, PROTECTS KIDS AND RESIDENTS FROM SHS, ETC.).

YOU CAN ALSO TALK ABOUT THE WORK YOUR COALITION/NETWORK HAS DONE OR IS DOING IN THIS AREA. SHARE A RECENT SUCCESS OR DISCUSS WHAT YOUR GROUP IS WORKING ON NOW IN THIS AREA.

CLOSE BY REITERATING THAT PROHIBITING SMOKING IN MULTI-UNIT HOUSING IS A GREAT WAY TO PREVENT DEADLY FIRES AND PAINFUL BURNS. LET PROPERTY OWNERS KNOW HOW THEY CAN CONTACT YOU IF THEY’RE INTERESTED IN GOING SMOKE-FREE. REMIND TOBACCO USERS THAT FREE HELP IS AVAILABLE TO HELP THEM QUIT BY CALLING 1-800-QUIT NOW.