



SMOKE-FREE MARIN COALITION

**American Cancer
Society**

**American Lung
Association**

**Marin County Tobacco
Related Disease
Control Program**

**Bay Area Community
Resources**

**Marin Pharmacists
Association**

**Marin County Office of
Education**

Marin Link

**Asian Advocacy/
Community Action
Marin**

**American Heart
Association**

Public Health Institute

**Families 4 Safer
Schools**

**Community Partners
and concerned citizens**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mill Valley Raises the Bar in North Bay Smoke-free Environmental Protections

San Rafael, CA. After several years of anticipation, Mill Valley's residents sharing walls with neighbors affected by tobacco smoke, electronic smoking device vapor and marijuana smoke will breathe easier, thanks to a new ordinance approved by the Mill Valley City Council on October 19. Mill Valley Councilmember Gary Lion first introduced the idea five years ago, and diligently shepherded the effort through to its conclusion. The ordinance provides protection for everyone living in multi-unit housing, which comprises 24% of Mill Valley's housing units.

The Smoke-Free Marin Coalition applauds the Mill Valley City Council for its unanimous vote to protect all of its residents from drifting smoke and smoking related fires," said Jennie Cook, Chair of the Smoke-Free Marin Coalition, "They deserve an "A+" for the work they did on these progressive public health protections."

Councilwoman Jessica Sloan described her experience with living next to smokers, whose cigarette caused a fire in her apartment building. The fire could have taken her life and that of her five year old daughter, had they been home at the time, she said about her burned unit. "Mill Valley raised the bar in providing protections for all residents from drifting smoke and fires that can be caused by smoking and electronic smoking devices," said Bob Curry, Director of Marin County's Tobacco Related Disease Control Program at the County Health Department. Linn Walsh, Assistant to the Mill Valley City Manager, was instrumental in the development and vetting of the ordinance, with Mill Valley residents and multi-unit housing owners and managers in two community workshops and mass mailings.

All new units will go smoke-free November 19, and existing units have up to a 12 month transition period. Multi-Unit housing complexes in other Marin jurisdictions with similar ordinances did not utilize the optional 'one-year wait' but established smoke-free policies sooner to prevent health and safety issues. The ordinance restricts smoking in all new and existing individual dwelling spaces of Multi-Unit Residences and includes private balconies, porches and decks and also creates a 20 feet smoke-free buffer zone from doorways, windows, or other openings into an area in which smoking is prohibited. Ordinance provisions declare nonconsensual exposure to smoke occurring on or drifting into residential property a nuisance. Smoking is also prohibited in hotel and motel rooms. Bob Curry at the County offered encouragement for smokers: "We have nonjudgmental compassion towards those who are addicted to nicotine in tobacco and electronic smoking devices. We offer affordable programs to help those who want to quit." For cessation programs, visit: <http://www.bacr.org/programs/tobacco/21-tobacco-education-cessation>.