



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW SURVEY IN HUNTINGTON BEACH SIGNALS STRONG DEMAND FOR SMOKE-FREE HOUSING IN ORANGE COUNTY

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif. (DATE) — Huntington Beach residents are calling for smoke-free housing, with 84% supporting a citywide policy and 81% saying they would prefer to live in completely smoke-free communities, according to a recent survey conducted by Waymakers. The survey, conducted between December 2025 and January 2026, highlights concerns among residents in apartments and condominiums, where secondhand smoke can enter their homes and impact daily life. It also reflects strong support for smoke-free housing in Huntington Beach and potentially across Orange County.

Secondhand smoke is the smoke released from tobacco products and e-cigarettes that can be inhaled by those nearby. Its impact extends beyond the individual choosing to smoke, increasing the risk of cancer, lung disease, and other long-term respiratory conditions. Every year in the United States, secondhand smoke takes the lives of approximately 41,000 people. There is no safe level of exposure, and children are especially vulnerable, facing increased risks of asthma attacks, respiratory infections, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

“Our team conducted this survey to support Huntington Beach residents and the tourists, including those living in neighboring cities, who love visiting Surf City,” said Dan Gleason, Program Director at Waymakers. “Our goal is to spread awareness about the dangers of secondhand smoke while empowering the city and its residents to take action and protect themselves and future generations.”

Residents report that smoke entering their homes affects daily life, traveling through vents, windows, and shared spaces. Some describe experiencing breathing issues and other health concerns as a result.

“Smoke affects my breathing and often leads to headaches,” one resident shared. Another resident added, “I smoked and vaped on and off and have put it aside, so I understand those who do, but I definitely agree that people should be respectful and aware of others and their surroundings.”

The survey also found that 82% of respondents are bothered by secondhand smoke in outdoor public spaces, underscoring broader community concern beyond the home.

“Exposure to secondhand smoke is a well-established risk factor for lung cancer,” noted Sudarsan Vishnu Kollimuttathuillam, M.D., a medical oncologist and hematologist at City of Hope Seacliff in Huntington Beach and City of Hope Orange County Lennar Foundation Cancer Center in Irvine. “While lung cancer remains a significant concern in Orange County and in the U.S., many cases are preventable, and early detection through appropriate screening can significantly improve outcomes.”

Huntington Beach’s findings reflect a broader shift across Orange County, where several cities have strengthened smoke-free protections. Buena Park adopted a comprehensive smoke-free ordinance in 2023 covering multi-unit housing and public spaces, while Laguna Beach expanded citywide protections in 2017. Manhattan Beach has prohibited smoking in outdoor public places since 2014.



Waymakers representatives are available to discuss the survey findings, community impacts, and what the results could signal for other communities across Orange County considering similar policies. Full survey details are available upon request.

For more information on Waymakers, please visit waymakersoc.org.

About Waymakers

Waymakers is a lifeline for countless individuals throughout Orange County who are seeking hope and healing after experiencing trauma. The staff and volunteers focus on creating an environment where individuals can make choices that lead to strength and stability. Waymakers has been sheltering children, supporting victims, counseling families, resolving conflicts and educating communities since 1972. Learn more at Waymakersoc.org.

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