

156 EGREMONT ST. N., MOUNT FOREST, A SKYLINE LIVING PROPERTY

This low-rise building managed by Skyline Living is located in Mount Forest, Ontario about 70 KMs north-west of Guelph in Wellington County.

As a property management firm, Skyline Living is extremely supportive of smoke-free housing. Their award winning property manager, Richard Izawa explains “Healthy living and going smoke-free is part of our goal in this business; it creates a better environment. “ They have developed smoke-free policies in a number of their properties including some recent, new buildings.

As a leader in this area, Richard contacted the on-site manager at their Mount Forest property about the potential for it to go smoke-free in Fall 2015. At first, the manager was reluctant because almost half of the residents were smokers. However, after good tenants started to consider leaving due to smoking and safety concerns, she began to see the advantages of a smoke-free property. Her buy-in to the concept at the building level was a critical step towards putting the policy in place successfully, according to Richard.

Working with Richard, the building manager surveyed the residents about the idea of going smoke-free. The results helped them understand that some residents were apprehensive regarding the policy. About 50% of the respondents to the survey were supportive and the rest were either non-committal or opposed.

To move forward, working with Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health, Skyline Living staff organized a residents’ meeting that included regional Fire Chief and Health Promotion experts, to outline the benefits and the practicalities of the policy. They stressed that the policy would be grandfathered (affecting only new tenants) and could take a while but eventually, the building would be completely smoke-free.

From Richard’s perspective, this is another good example of how a smoke-free policy can be implemented using the right process. He points out that, “it can be done—even in properties with a lot of smoking.”