



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What Policymakers Need to Know About Disclosure in Real Estate Transactions

What is Tobacco Smoke Residue?

Tobacco smoke residue is the mixture of chemicals left behind on clothes, skin, furniture, walls, and other surfaces after someone smokes.^{5,10,18} It is also known as “**thirdhand smoke**”. People can be exposed to this residue through their skin, by breathing polluted air, and by ingesting contaminated objects.^{17,24}

The chemical residue can linger indoors for years after smoking has stopped.¹³ It embeds in and re-emits from carpets, furniture, fixtures, and HVAC systems, as well as from structural elements and building materials, including floors, walls, doors, cabinets, and insulation. Existing professional cleaning methods cannot remove deeply embedded residue, and **remediation may require complete renovation**.^{14,25}

The mixture of pollutants in tobacco smoke residue is **toxic to humans**, especially children, containing **more than 25 chemicals listed in California’s Proposition 65**.^{11,23} In human studies, exposure has been shown to cause DNA damage, increase cancer risk, impair cell repair, and worsen lung function.^{8,16,21} In animal studies, tobacco smoke residue was found to slow wound healing, increase “bad” cholesterol, impair liver function, and cause lung inflammation and hyperactivity.^{3,4,6,9,27}

Tobacco Smoke Residue in Home Sales



Seller disclosure of tobacco smoke residue in a home is not required in CA.



Tobacco smoke residue decreases home value and hurts the real estate market.⁷



Tobacco smoke residue is not included in the CA Residential Environmental Hazards Guide.

Evidence for Policymakers to Consider

Support for Disclosure of Tobacco Smoke Residue

96%

of CA residents want to know if the home they are about to buy contains tobacco smoke residue.²⁶

91%

of CA real estate agents support requiring disclosure of tobacco smoke residue in home sales.

53%

of CA appraisers support including evidence of tobacco smoke residue in appraisal reports.

100%

of Seller Property Questionnaires, used by members of the California Association of REALTORS, include smoking and vaping history.

Need for Education on Tobacco Smoke Residue

73%

of CA real estate agents support adding tobacco smoke residue to the CA Residential Environmental Hazards Guide.

86%

of CA residents agree tobacco smoke residue contains dangerous chemicals.

73%

of CA real estate agents agree tobacco smoke residue contains dangerous chemicals.

45%

of CA real estate agents incorrectly believed tobacco smoke residue is already included in the CA Residential Environmental Hazards Guide.

88%

of CA appraisers agree tobacco smoke residue contains dangerous chemicals.

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