

Smoke-Free Lodging: Dakota County  
Association for Nonsmokers-MN  
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#### LAKEVILLE COMFORT INN GOING SMOKE-FREE IN ALL GUEST ROOMS

The Comfort Inn in Lakeville will host a gala grand re-opening as a 100% smoke-free establishment on June 28, 2010. The Comfort Inn is the first of Dakota County's hotels to adopt a smoke-free policy for all guest rooms while working with the *Smoke-Free Lodging: Dakota County* program. The new policy is part of a larger push to make the hotel a "green" property. To celebrate the new smoke-free policy a grand re-opening celebration will be held at the Comfort Inn on June 28 from 5:00 pm-7:00 pm. The celebration will include food and music and is free and open to the public.

"Going smoke-free is a logical step in going green," according to Comfort Inn, Lakeville owner Sunny Bhakta.

89% of hotel guests prefer a smoke-free hotel according to a 2008 J.D. Power and Associates survey. However, only 16% of hotels in Minnesota offer a smoke-free environment for their guests. The majority of hotels still allow smoking even though the majority of their guests do not smoke. Smoking rooms are often located next to nonsmoking rooms and/or share the same ventilation system, which means that secondhand smoke can transfer easily from room to room.

The Dakota County Smoke-Free Lodging program promotes 100% smoke-free policies for lodging establishments. In order to increase the number of lodging establishments with smoke-free policies, Smoke-Free Lodging educates tourism industry professionals and lodging managers, owners, and key staff about the benefits of 100% smoke-free buildings. Dakota County Smoke-Free Lodging also assists lodging establishment, owners and managers to create and promote a smoke-free policy for their property.

“Smoke-free policies are good for the health of employees and guests. They are also good for business,” stated Bernadette Chlebeck, Smoke-Free Lodging Program Coordinator. “They decrease cleaning costs, protect the owner’s investment, and provide an important marketing tool. The majority of guests prefer to stay in a smoke-free environment, which is something most hotels simply do not provide.”

For more information on the Comfort Inn, Lakeville celebration, please contact Sunny Bhakta at 952-898-3700 or [sunnybhakta@hotmail.com](mailto:sunnybhakta@hotmail.com). For more information on the *Smoke-Free Lodging: Dakota County* program please contact Bernadette Chlebeck, Program Coordinator, at 651-646-3005, [bc@ansrmn](mailto:bc@ansrmn), or visit [www.mnsmokefreehotels.org](http://www.mnsmokefreehotels.org).

*Smoke-Free Lodging* is a program of the Association for Nonsmokers—Minnesota. The program was created at the request of Dakota County Public Health with funding from a Tobacco-Free Communities Grant from the Minnesota Department of Health Office of Tobacco Prevention and Control.

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