



Smart Sensor Reduces Fire Risk For Housing Authority In Historic City

The **Saratoga Springs Housing Authority (SSHA)** was established in 1952 and has two primary locations. The first housing complex is the Stonequist Apartments, constructed in 1970 and is a 10-story high rise located just blocks from downtown Saratoga Springs and the heart of the business district. The second one consists of two-family sites, Jefferson and Vanderbilt Terraces, which are located just a few blocks from the historic Saratoga Race Course. The SSHA provides safe, decent housing for elderly families, persons with disabilities on fixed incomes as well as working families who are moving towards self-sufficiency. The staff is dedicated to meeting the needs of local families, while assisting the community by offering long-term goals for affordable housing. The SSHA currently provides assisted housing for over 500 families in the city of Saratoga Springs; and is a pillar in the community.

With 176 apartments located in Stonequist, it was important for the SSHA to keep residents safe from fire hazards. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers housing and urban development laws to help accomplish this. A recent ruling included the HUD's Rule RIN 2577-AC97, which requires each Public Housing Authority (PHA) to implement a smoke free policy that prohibits the use of "prohibited tobacco products" in all public housing living units, indoor common areas in public housing, and in PHA administrative office buildings. In order to enforce this rule and stay compliant with the smoke free policy, SSHA was looking for a way to catch perpetrators quickly and efficiently. In fact, the housing authority experienced a fire last year due to a resident falling asleep while smoking and knew it had to find a fire safety solution to mitigate any further risks to the community.

FAST FACTS

Customer

The Saratoga Springs Housing Authority (SSHA)

Industry

Public Housing

Geography

New York

Number of Apartment Units

176

Use Case

HALO's installed in Residential Units

The Issue

Enforce HUD's smoke free policy throughout their housing buildings by identifying individuals who are smoking and vaping in the facility with the ability to provide proof of the infraction.

How we helped

The HALO Smart Sensor provides real-time alerts and notifications to indicate smoking and vaping events.



“This has now given the industry an easy way to enforce non-smoking policies and provide proof of who is not following the rules and smoking on premises.”

- Paul Feldman, Executive Director at Saratoga Springs Housing Authority



HALO COMES TO THE RESCUE

After doing their due diligence, SSHA knew it had found the right smoking/vaping sensor solution from IPVideo Corporation, a New York-based security company that develops unique event driven AI security and safety solutions that utilize video, audio and sensor technology to effectively mitigate false positives, confirm incidents, accelerate response and deliver long term actionable intelligence. Their HALO IoT Smart Sensor was a breath of fresh air for SSHA who had some residents that had breathing issues and could not inhale any type of smoke. With a strict no smoking policy in place throughout the various communities, it was important that the SSHA had a way to enforce it while staying in compliance with the HUD non-smoking mandate. *“The HALO IoT Smart Sensor is a real game changer for the public housing industry,”* states Paul Feldman, Executive Director at Saratoga Springs Housing Authority. *“This has now given the industry an easy way to enforce non-smoking policies and provide proof of who is not following the rules and smoking on premises.”* A big challenge for the housing industry is accusing someone of smoking without concrete proof. Having the ability to get alerts and notifications from the sensor allows the housing authority to talk to the person smoking and try to deter them from doing it again.

KEEPING IN COMPLIANCE WITH HUD MANDATE

In early 2023, the SSHA installed 12 HALO devices in some of the top floor apartments and already received multiple alerts for six different apartments. This has allowed them to take control of smoking and/or vaping on premise and stay compliant with the HUD ruling. HALO allowed staff members the ability to deal with the problem directly by speaking to individuals who were breaking the rules and convince them to stop smoking and vaping inside their units. Without the sensor device, there was no way for the management team to have proof of the culprits and mitigate fire risks.

In 2020, SSHA began the development of two new affordable housing projects. The Promenade, is a 63-unit project comprised of a 4-story building with 1- and 2-bedroom apartments behind the Stonequist Apartments, and three townhouse style buildings comprised on 1, 2- and 3-bedroom units which face West Circular Street. The second project is called the SRDI Project and consists of two (2) twelve-unit buildings located within the grounds of our Terrace properties.

As we move forward, SSHA will continue to install additional HALO devices throughout the housing authority. *“It’s like having an expert witness on the stand in a courtroom,”* states Feldman. Over the years, HALO has become known for its broad range of applications such as gunshot detection, keyword alerting, air quality monitoring, vaping, smoking, etc. and continues to be known in the industry as an IoT Smart Sensor going beyond just vaping. *“The need for security while maintaining individual privacy is in high demand,”* states David Antar, President at IPVideo Corporation. *“We are happy that we can help the housing authority industry stay compliant with non-smoking mandates and create a safer environment for residents and staff.”*

