

CONSIDER THESE 20 QUESTIONS BEFORE SIGNING A RENTAL AGREEMENT!

- Are smoke alarms installed and working?
- How old are the smoke alarms?
- How often are the smoke alarms checked and batteries changed?
- Are there at least two ways to exit your living space and your building?
- Do the upper floors have a fire escape or ladder available for each bedroom? (if there are multiple floors)
- Are the living unit doors rated for fire?
- Are fire extinguishers available and working?
- Do you know how to use a fire extinguisher?
- Were the fire extinguishers inspected within the last year?
- Is a sprinkler system installed?
- Is the electrical wiring adequate?
- Is the building regularly inspected by the local fire department or college emergency management office for safety?
- What is the owner's policy and method for correcting safety problems in the building?
- Has there ever been a fire in this building? If so, identify the cause.
- Does the residence have a gas or electric stove/oven?
- Do you know how to use the appliance(s) correctly?
- Where is the nearest fire hydrant on the street?
- Who is responsible for keeping the property cleared in the winter season?
- Has the city received any safety complaints regarding this building?

Adapted by Off-Campus Housing Services with permission from the National Association of State Fire Marshals

FIRE SAFETY AFTER YOU'VE MOVE IN...

BE PREPARED

SMOKE DETECTORS

- Test each smoke detector once per month by pressing the "test" button until you hear a chirp.
- Do not use an open-flame device to test the detector, as you could burn yourself.
- Never "borrow" a battery from a smoke detector for another use. A working smoke detector can double your chances of surviving a fire.

KITCHEN SAFETY

- Never leave cooking unattended.
- Turn pot handles inward on the stove so that you won't accidentally bump into them.
- Keep cooking area clear of combustibles.
- If grease catches on fire in a pan, cover it with a lid to smother the flames, and turn off the heat. Leave the lid on until it cools. DO NOT throw water on steaming or burning grease!

CANDLES

- Never leave a burning candle unattended.
- Don't display candles near exits or in windows.
- Make sure candles are in secure holders on a surface that does not burn and are away from any flammable materials.

SMOKING SAFETY

- Do not leave cigarettes unattended.
- Make sure cigarettes are disposed of safely.

SPACE HEATERS

- Keep portable heaters at least three feet away from any flammable materials.
- Never leave heaters on when you leave the residence or when you go to sleep.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

- Don't overload your electrical outlets.
- Make sure you do not run electrical cords under rugs.
- If an electrical appliance is smoking or has an unusual smell, unplug it immediately and have it serviced before using it again.
- Do not tamper with your fuse box.
- Replace any electrical cord that is frayed or cracked.

CARING FOR CHILDREN

- Children under 5 are naturally curious about fire. Many play with matches and lighters. Tragically, children set over 18,900 house fires per year. Take the mystery out of fire play by teaching your children that fire is a tool, not a toy.

CREATE AN ESCAPE PLAN

- Draw up a floor plan of your home, making sure to determine a way to escape out of every room.
- Go over your plan with your roommate(s) so that everyone knows how to escape in case of a fire.
- Physically walk through each escape route.
- Decide on a meeting place outside the residence where everyone will meet once they escape.

IN CASE OF FIRE

- Escape FIRST, then call 911. Do not re-enter the building until the fire department says it is safe to do so.
- Crawl low if there is smoke. Cleaner, cooler air will be near the floor.
- Feel any door before opening. If it is hot to the touch, do not open the door.
- Always use an exit stair, not an elevator.
- Elevator shafts may fill with smoke or the power may fail, leaving you trapped.

IF YOU GET TRAPPED

- Keep the doors closed.
- Signal for help by hanging an object out the window to attract attention.
- If there is a phone in the room, call 911 and report that you are trapped, making sure to give your exact location within the residence.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

- Only use a fire extinguisher if the fire is small and has not spread from the spot at which it started. If the fire cannot be put out, leave immediately and call 911.
- Be sure to always call the fire department, even if you think the fire has been put out.