FIRE SAFETY BULLETIN

Off-Campus Housing Fire Safety Summary



Department of Environmental Health and Safety — Office of Fire Safety

St. John's University's Fire Safety Office is providing the following basic fire safety and prevention information for our resident students living in off-campus housing that is neither owned nor leased by the University. Everyone should understand basic fire safety and implement certain fire prevention measures that can ultimately save lives.

- Make sure your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms are properly installed and working. If not, contact your landlord. Change smoke alarm and carbon monoxide alarm batteries at the start of each semester.
- Know all possible exits from your room or residence. There should be at least two ways to exit your bedroom and building. Be sure that exit pathways, stairs, and doors are maintained and free from obstructions.
- Make a fire escape route plan and practice this plan with your roommates and housemates. Keep furniture clear of windows and doors for quick exiting.
- Perform a home inspection for fire and safety hazards.
- Implement good fire safety practices:
  - DO NOT overload electrical outlets. Electrical power cords, extension cords, and power strips, and especially their rubber insulation, should be in good working order and free from any defects. Use only UL-listed electrical equipment.
  - Avoid using lighted candles and never leave a lit candle unattended.
  - Keep your cooking areas clean and uncluttered. Cook only where it is permitted and never leave cooking unattended.
  - To the extent possible, avoid using space heaters and halogen lamps. If this equipment is present, it should be maintained free and clear of clutter and flammables.
  - Smoking should only occur outdoors. Thoroughly extinguish all smoking materials before placing in a dedicated refuse receptacle.
  - If smoking occurs indoors, never smoke in bed. When smoking, use a sturdy, non-tipping ashtray. After parties, check furniture cushions for smoldering cigarette butts. Be careful not to empty smoldering ashtrays in the trash. Clean up immediately after parties, and take all trash outside.
  - Be careful when consuming alcohol. Alcohol consumption is a major factor in fire deaths.
- In the event of a fire emergency, remove yourself to safety as quickly as possible and alert others to the emergency.
- If you have to escape through smoke, get low to the floor and go under the smoke to avoid breathing toxic smoke. Before opening a door, feel the door and doorknob. If it's hot, use your second means of egress. Use the stairs. Never use an elevator during a fire. If you are trapped, call the Fire Department (dial 911) and describe your location. Seal your door with wet towels or rags and signal from your window. Open windows slightly at the top and bottom. If you have a mobility impairment, alert others of the type of assistance you will need to leave the building.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

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