

# Apartment fire safety begins with a plan.

## Don't Let Your World Go Up in Smoke.



If you live in an apartment or condominium you need to know how to get out quickly if a fire starts. Follow these steps to stay safe.

### Building Fire Safety

- ☐ Don't prop open exit or stairway doors. These are installed to slow the spread of heat and smoke if there is a fire.
- ☐ Speak to your apartment manager if you see a damaged smoke alarm, fire extinguisher or an emergency light that has burned out.



#### Make sure your apartment has working smoke alarms.

Have a smoke alarm inside each sleeping room. Test them every month. Replace the batteries every year. Tell your apartment manager if you think there is a problem with one of your smoke alarms.

### Stay Calm

**In the event of a fire, stay calm. Move to the exit as you have practiced. Call the fire department once you are outside.**

- ☐ If your door feels warm to the touch, do not attempt to open it. Call 9-1-1 and tell the dispatcher your apartment number and that you can't open your door.
- ☐ Stuff the cracks around the door with towels, rags, bedding, or tape. Cover vents.
- ☐ Wait at a window and signal for help with a flashlight or by waving a white cloth.
- ☐ If your apartment door is cool to the touch, open it slowly. Stay low and check for smoke or fire in the hallway. If the hallway is safe, follow your building's evacuation plan.
- ☐ Never use an elevator to escape a fire. Always use the stairs.

### Be Prepared

**Create an escape plan. Discuss how you will get outside. Practice your plan.**

- ☐ Count the number of doors there are between your apartment and the nearest fire exit. Memorize the number in case you have to find the exit in the dark.
- ☐ Know where all the exit doors and stairs are on your floor.
- ☐ Learn your building evacuation plan if you have one. Create and practice an escape plan for your own apartment.

### Wait Outside for the Fire Department

**Once you are outside, move away from the building. Give firefighters and fire trucks plenty of space.**

- ☐ Stay outside. Do not go back inside for any reason.
- ☐ If you think someone is still inside, tell firefighters where you think they are.
- ☐ Wait until firefighters tell you it's safe to go back inside.



# Fire Alarms in Apartment Buildings

Large apartment buildings are built to keep people safe from fire. Fire alarm systems detect smoke and fire. They will warn residents of danger.

- » The fire alarm system has many parts that work together. Some of the parts are out of sight. In a fire, smoke detectors sense smoke and activate the fire alarm. Manual fire alarm boxes allow people to sound the alarm. When the fire alarm system activates it will warn residents of danger.
- » Everyone in the building should know where to find the manual fire alarm boxes (alarm boxes on the wall with a pull bar). Most are found within five feet of an exit door.
- » If there is a fire, pull the manual fire alarm box handle on your way out of the building.
- » When the system senses smoke or fire, a loud horn or tone will sound. Everyone must know what this sound means and how to react.
- » Leave the building right away if you hear the sound of a fire alarm. Stay outside at your meeting place until you are told the building is safe.
- » Treat every fire alarm as an emergency. When the alarms sounds, get outside.
- » Only use a manual fire alarm box if there is smoke or fire. Frequent false alarms are a problem. People might ignore the sound if they hear too many false alarms. False alarms also put firefighters at risk.

## Escape 101

Know the locations of all exit stairs from your floor. If the nearest one is blocked by fire or smoke, you may have to use another exit.



If the fire alarm sounds feel the door before opening. If it is hot, use another way out. If it is cool, use this exit to leave.

Close all doors behind you as you leave. Take the key to your apartment in case you are not able to get out of the building.

If fire or smoke is blocking all exits, return or stay in your apartment. Keep the door closed. Cover cracks around the door with towels or tape. Call **9-1-1** and let the fire department know you are trapped. Signal from the window by waving a flashlight or light-colored cloth.

**Meet with your landlord or building manager to learn about the fire safety features and plans in your building.**



**Your Source for SAFETY Information**

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