RESIDENCE HALL
FIRE & LIFE SAFETY
GUIDE
Tips for a Successful Year
Living in Campus Housing

This guide serves as an important reference for all students living in campus housing. The enclosed guidelines and policies are designed to reduce the risk of fire and to help ensure you are maintaining a safe and compliant living environment. Please review the contents and take time to ensure that your personal belongings, room furnishings and room set-up follow the guidelines outlined in this brochure.

Don’t Become a Statistic

Firefighters respond to an average of 3,810 fires in college residence halls and Greek housing each year. Since 2000, campus fires have resulted in 122 fatalities and millions of dollars in property damage. According to FEMA, the vast majority of these fires could have been prevented through awareness and education.

Know what to do if there’s a fire...

1. Pull the fire alarm, if possible.
2. Call 911 and Campus Safety & Security to report the situation.
3. Remain low if encountering smoke.
4. Evacuate the building using your closest exit and close all doors behind you.
5. Do NOT use elevators during evacuation!

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why do we have residential fire & life safety checks?
A: Residential halls and apartments are a communal setting, and thus need to have rules in place to ensure that everyone is safe and comfortable. The University has identified items and behaviors that are dangerous to the community, and the checks allow staff members to identify violations, and work with students to address them.

Q: Who performs the checks?
A: All checks are performed by Residence Life, Campus Safety & Security and/or Environmental Health & Safety staff.

Q: When do these checks happen?
A: Checks will occur on a monthly basis. The New York State Office of Fire Prevention & Control also will inspect residential spaces once a year.

Q: What happens if a violation is found?
A: If a violation is found, you may be subject to fines, and the item in violation may be confiscated. Repeat and serious violations are also subject to a Dean of Student Inquiry.

Q: My violation has been there since the previous check and no one has said anything. Why am I being fined now?
A: Sometimes violations are missed during checks. It is unfortunate, but it does happen, and it does not exempt you from being fined when the violation is discovered.

More Questions?
Ask your RA, RD or EHS Department (315-268-2362).
Can I have this in my room?

**Electrical Equipment**
- Extension cords
- Multi-plug adaptors
- Surge protected powerstrip with a reset button

- **No "Daisychaining":** Do not plug a powerstrip into another powerstrip. Instead, purchase one with a longer cord.

- Bulbs exceeding max listed wattage
- Lamps w/no shade; Bulbs extending beyond shade
- Cords creating tripping hazards

**Decorating**
- Candles & incense (even if not burned)
- String lights in contact w/combustibles & over doorways
- Window coverings not meeting NFPA standards

- Curtains, tapestries or other materials hanging from ceiling or sprinkler pipe
- Excessive door/wall decorations

**20% Rule:** No more than 20% of a wall or door area may be covered in combustible materials such as posters and decorations.

**Consequences for Non-compliance**

**$50 Fine & Unauthorized Items Confiscated**
- Unburned candle or incense
- Obstructed egress
- Door unable to fully open
- Unapproved use of electrical equipment
- Combustibles too close to heat source
- Storage in hallway
- Items attached to/stored too close to ceiling or sprinkler system
- Lamps with excessive wattage for fixture

**$100 Fine & Unauthorized Items Confiscated**
- Burned candle or incense
- Dirty stove or oven
- Tampering with a fire door, fire extinguisher or emergency lighting
- Unauthorized cooking appliances
- Failure to vacate during alarm activation

**$250 Fine, Assignment & Dean Referral**
- Tampering w/ CO, fire or smoke detector
- Smoking or vaping inside a building
- Presence of explosives/incendiary device
- Intentional fire alarm activation
- Failure to report a fire

**Prohibited Items**

These items cannot be stored or used in any residence hall space:

- Lava lamps
- Hoverboards
- Flammable liquids (i.e. gas, lighter fluid)
- Fire arms
- Space heaters
- Air conditioners
- Smoking (including vaping) within 30 ft from building

**Approved Items**

Feel free to bring and use these items in your residence hall space:

- TV
- DVD player
- Freestanding fan
- Game system
- Computer
- Small stereo
- Non-halogen lamp
- Iron with auto shut-off
- Candle warmers

**Cooking Appliances**

- Toaster & toaster ovens
- Crockpots
- Grills (must be at least 10 feet from building)
- Microwave
- Refrigerator (under 5 cu ft)
- Coffee maker (with auto shut-off)

- Microwaves, refrigerators and coffee makers must be plugged directly into an electrical outlet.

**Storage**

- Items stored in hallway/stairwell
- Excessive trash/combustible waste
- Blocking/covering emergency equip
- Storage too close - ceiling & sprinkler (must maintain 24”)
- Obstructed egress from room/exit
- Items stored behind door

**NOTICE:** This document is not a comprehensive listing of all health and safety violations, prohibited items and consequences for non-compliance. Please refer to our website (https://intranet.clarkson.edu/administrative/dehs) or ask your RA if unsure about a policy or item.