



FACT SHEET

Program: Student/Residential Fire Safety

RESIDENTIAL FIRE SAFETY AND EVACUATION PLANNING

Fire safety and fire prevention is everyone's responsibility! Exercising good common sense and observing the University's fire safety related rules keeps your House and dormitory safe.

EVACUATION: KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU HEAR THE FIRE ALARM.

- ☑ Familiarize yourself with your primary and secondary emergency exits from your room
- ☑ The location of fire pull stations
- ☑ Your House and Dormitory central meeting location outside the building.
- ☑ In order to account for all building occupants during an evacuation – always check-in with your Tutor/Proctor or emergency personnel.

If the fire alarm is activated you must immediately evacuate the building, a delayed evacuation could result in you becoming trapped by smoke or fire or seriously injured. As a reminder, never use an elevator during a fire emergency.

IF THE ALARM SOUNDS

Do not delay evacuation or assume that this is a false alarm. Immediately begin to exit the building.

- ☑ **Feel the door. If it is hot, DO NOT OPEN it.** Stay in your room. Put a towel or blanket (preferably wet) under the door to keep the smoke out. If your telephone works, call the Cambridge Fire Department at 911. Also, call the Harvard University Police Department at 617-495-1212 to let them know where you are. Attract attention to yourself. Hang a sheet or something out the window.
- ☑ **If the door is not hot, open it slowly**, if smoke and heat fills the hall, close the door, stay in your room, and call for help.
If you can safely leave your room, take your key and close your door behind you as you exit. Exit by the nearest clear exit stairway. Do not use the elevators - it may fail in a fire or be automatically recalled to the ground floor. **Failure to leave when an alarm sounds, unless there are safety reasons for not doing so, is a punishable offense.**
- ☑ **If you encounter smoke** on your way out, stay low and crawl if necessary. You are more apt to find breathable air close to the floor. Cover your nose and mouth with a wet towel or wet handkerchief, if possible.
- ☑ So that you may be accounted for, **go to the predetermined emergency evacuation meeting location.**
- ☑ Do not attempt to reenter the building until the fire department gives permission to do so.



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IF YOU DISCOVER SMOKE OR A FIRE. REMEMBER - R.A.C.E.

RELOCATE - If it is safe to do so, **relocate** people in immediate danger. Be aware of persons who may need assistance.

ALARM - Pull the building fire **alarm** to **alert** others as you exit. Move to a safe location. Call **911** immediately, then call **5-5560**, and report the precise location of the fire.

CONFINE - **Close** all doors to **confine** the fire as you exit if safe to do so.

EVACUATE - **Evacuate** building. Do not use elevators.

FIRE FACTS

Fires in dormitories are more common during the **late evening hours, between 5–11 pm, and on weekends.**

Off campus fatal fire often occur between midnight and 6 AM.

Roughly, six out of seven fires in dormitories are started by **cooking**

Fire spreads fast: The size of a typical fire can double in 30 seconds

IF CASE OF A FIRE CALL – 911 for the Fire Department

Harvard University Police Department (HUPD) (617) 495-1212

Your Room or Suite

To minimize the risk of fire, the following activities or items are restricted or prohibited in your room or suite:

- All types of smoking are prohibited in all areas of Houses and dormitories.
- The use of fireplaces is prohibited in student rooms and suites.
- The use of candles and other sources of open flame are strictly forbidden



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- ☑ Cooking Equipment is prohibited. The City of Cambridge forbid cooking in any room or apartment not equipped with permanent cooking facilities. Harvard designated microfridges are allowed.
- ☑ Halogen lamps are prohibited. The University has prohibited the use of all halogen lamps in all House, dormitory rooms and common areas.
- ☑ Your room has a limited electrical capacity. Do not overload the circuits. Refrigerators, stereo systems and other approved appliances should be plugged directly into wall outlets, never connected to light sockets.
- ☑ Extension cords must be in good condition and of proper rating. Use only Underwriters Laboratory approved extension cords. Cords should not run through doorways, partitions or covered with rugs.
- ☑ Refrigerators require ventilation to operate safely. Do not install them in closets or bathrooms. Do not cover them with blankets, tablecloths or other materials.
- ☑ Air conditioners are allowed only with the written recommendation of a physician and the approval of the Harvard College Accessible Education Office.
- ☑ Any electrical appliance declared unsafe, for any reason, must be removed immediately from College housing.
- ☑ Fireworks, gasoline, propane and other flammable materials, their containers, motor cycles, mopeds and other fuel powered items are prohibited from Houses, dormitories annex, apartments and common areas.

Fire Safety Equipment

Smoke detectors are installed in each dormitory room to provide you with an early warning of a developing fire. Do not obstruct smoke detection devices or hang anything on sprinkler heads or sprinkler piping. Any abuse of, or tampering with fire alarm smoke detectors, fire extinguishers or components of the fire protection systems is strictly forbidden.

- ☑ **Keep Emergency Exit doors within rooms/suites clear at all times.** Do not block on either side by furniture or obstructions of any kind.
- ☑ Keep hallway corridors and stairwells clear and fire doors closed - fire doors are used to control the spread of fire/smoke.
- ☑ Tampering with an alarm or maliciously causing a smoke detector to initiate a general alarm is a violation of Massachusetts law and may be punishable by a fine of up to \$500 or imprisonment.
- ☑ Report potential fire hazards to your building Superintendent/Building Manager.

Fire Drills

The University holds fire drills periodically – we strongly urge your active participation – it could save your life. Fire drills are intended to teach behavior, which can help you survive a fire emergency, prepare you with alternative escape routes and help you understand your responsibilities in the event of a fire.



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In Summary

Additional fire safety information is available in your student handbook and on-line at the Harvard University Environmental Health & Safety website.

If you have a fire safety concern or question, please speak with your Building Superintendent, Tutor or Proctor.