



Fire & Electrical Safety Guide for Residence Halls

Ensuring that residence halls are as safe as possible is everyone's responsibility. We encourage you to review the information below so you can prepare for – and help prevent – emergencies.

What to Do in a Fire Emergency

If a Fire Alarm Sounds

Take all fire alarms seriously and evacuate the building immediately using the nearest fire exits and proceed to a safe distance away from the building. In an alarm situation, evacuation is not optional.

If you suspect a fire

If you see a fire, smell smoke or are otherwise made aware of a fire in the building, go to the nearest fire alarm pull-station and activate the alarm. Evacuate the building and proceed to a safe location away from the building. Call 911.

If you are blocked by smoke or fire

Stay in your room, close the door and dial 911. Let the dispatcher know where you are. A rolled up towel (soaked in water if possible) at the base of the door helps to prevent smoke from entering the room. If your phone is not functioning, hang a sheet or light-colored towel out your room's window to let emergency crews find you more quickly. If you have a cell phone, dial 763.1131 for DPS dispatch.

Prepare for Emergencies

Be prepared. Take a moment now to identify the nearest fire exits. Read the evacuation sign on the back of your room's door; visualize and practice your escape route.

Locate Fire Extinguishers

In case of a fire, your only job is to pull the fire alarm and get out of the building. However, there are fire extinguishers on every corridor and it is a good idea to acquaint yourself with their locations.

Keep Fire Doors Closed

Fire doors are designed to prevent fire or smoke from spreading through the residence hall; never prop or wedge these doors open. Some halls have fire doors that automatically close and latch in the event of a fire. These doors are labeled and should be left in their normal position.

Do Not Tamper with Firefighting Equipment

Tampering with, inappropriately discharging, or vandalizing any firefighting or detection equipment (smoke detectors, sprinklers, hoses, pull stations, etc.) endangers your life and the lives of others. Promptly report any damaged fire-fighting equipment to the Department of Public Safety at 763.1131.



Keep Smoke Detectors Working

The smoke detector in your room is hard-wired to your hall's alarm system and has a battery-powered backup. Do not endanger lives by tampering with, deactivating, covering, painting or removing batteries from your smoke detector.

Never Raise a False Alarm

Pulling a false alarm can lead other residents to the assumption that all alarms are false and dissuade them from evacuating the building. This seriously endangers lives in the event of a real fire. Pulling a false fire alarm is against state law. Residents found responsible for a false alarm will have their residence hall contract terminated and will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Follow Electrical Safety Guidelines

- All residence hall rooms are wired with a standard voltage of 120.
- Be sure that all electrical appliances or equipment, including cords and power strips are Underwriters Laboratories UL certified to help prevent power outages and fire hazards.
- Don't use too many appliances at the same time; overloaded circuits may result in loss of power in the room and increase the risk of fire hazards. Microwaves, hair dryers and similar appliances should not be used on any circuit that habitually trips your room's circuit breakers.
- Use extension cords of 16 gauges or lower and power strips with an integrated (built-in) circuit breaker to prevent potential fire hazards and damage to the building's electrical system.
- Choose power strips with surge protection to help prevent damage to personal property from fluctuations in the flow of electricity.
- Do not alter the prongs of polarized plugs to make them fit an outlet.
- Do not overload electrical outlets. If a wall socket or extension cord is warm to the touch, it is overloaded.
- Do not string together cords, connectors and plugs.
- Do not run appliance or extension cords under carpeting, rugs or furniture, where they can be walked on or pinched. Heat can build up and start a fire. In addition, cords can be frayed and expose wires, which can also result in a fire.
- Never cover lamps with clothing, paper, drapes or other things that can burn.



Remove Prohibited Items from Your Room

The items listed below have resulted in safety hazards, fire or life-threatening situations at U-M or other college campuses. Consequently, possession of any of these items in any resident halls room is considered a serious breach of the residence hall contract:

- Air conditioners (except those installed by University Housing)
- Appliances with an exposed heating element
- Any open flames
- Candles
- Coffeemakers without an automatic shutoff
- Cut trees, branches or greens
- Drug/smoking paraphernalia
- Electric blankets
- Electric skillets
- Explosives
- Firearms
- Fireworks
- Fog machines
- Grills
- Halogen lamps or bulbs
- Heating pads without automatic shutoff
- Hot-oil popcorn poppers
- Hotplates
- Incense
- Irons without automatic shutoff
- Oil lamps
- Microwaves (more than 800 watts)
- Refrigerators (more than 5.5 cubic foot capacity and/or amperage draw of more than 1.5)
- Sleeping pods
- Slow cookers and “hot pots”
- Space heaters
- Sunlamps
- Toasters
- Toaster ovens
- Warmers for candles or oils
- Warm-mist humidifiers
- Waterbeds or water-chairs

See [Community Living at Michigan](#) for more information about prohibited items.