

**Fire Safety in Your Apartment Building
A Guide for Owners and Resident Managers
by State Fund Compensation Insurance**

A safe building can increase worker productivity and lower the cost of business operation. Accidents and illnesses can be reduced, or even eliminated, through informed planning and education.

Often, we are too busy filling vacancies, dealing with problem tenants, repairs and replacements to think about the apartment community's safety.

The Safety and Health Services Department of State Fund has produced these articles to assist you in your loss control efforts. Distribute them to your current resident managers and consider purchasing a binder and saving these valuable monthly tips for future reference and newly hired resident managers.

You are responsible for fire prevention at your apartment building for your safety and that of your workers and resident manager. The best way to prevent fire is to be on the lookout for possible fire hazards.

Be aware of potential fire hazards. Report hazardous situations and know the location of fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment that is available to you. During an actual emergency, protect yourself. If it is not safe for you to get involved, don't.

If you're ever confronted with a fire keep your cool, but think fast and act with caution. When a fire is discovered, size it up fast. Knowing when to try to control the fire yourself and when to call for help is essential.

In case of fire, follow the company's fire response procedures. The important thing is to know what to do and do it fast. The exact order to do the things depends on the established company procedures.

Sound the alarm and evacuate the area. Call the emergency numbers you've been given, and give the details about the fire (location, how it started etc.). Never hesitate to call the fire department, even if the fire seems minor and you manage to put it out before firefighters arrive. The quicker the alarm is sounded; the sooner firefighters can attempt to get it under control. Have someone meet and tell the fire fighters where the fire is. They can lose valuable minutes if they have to find it themselves.

You're responsible for preventing fires, but you aren't obligated to fight major fires. Fight the fire only if you can do it safely with proper extinguishing materials at hand. In general, never join in the fire fighting unless the firefighters request your help.

Warn others immediately. Warn anyone in the area so they can get to safety. This is especially important in case of indoor fires. Most people die from smoke, poisonous

gases and panic. Panic is usually the result of not knowing what to do. If there is an escape plan, adapt it to the emergency.

Most fires start small, but they can rage out of control in a few minutes. It's important to know where the fire extinguishers are located and how to operate them properly. Distinguish before you extinguish. Choose the correct extinguisher for the type of fire (paper/wood, grease/gas/flammable liquids, electrical). If you are not trained or authorized to use an extinguisher, don't try. The time you waste in figuring out an extinguisher could mean the difference between minor damage and a major disaster.

Review fire safety procedures often so you'll know what to do. Act with caution. Sound the alarm. Warn others in the area. Evacuate and stay back unless you're asked to help. In case of fire, being informed and prepared can keep you and your tenants safe from injury.

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