



# Apartment Safety

A Factsheet on Living Safely in Your Apartment

## What to Do if There's a Fire in your Apartment.

- Get out of the apartment.
- Once out – STAY OUT! Do not go back in for ANY reason.
- Call 9-1-1 from a safe location.
- Give the dispatch as much accurate information as you can.
- Use your fire escape plan. Go to the designated family meeting place.
- Try to let neighbors know to get out. Help elderly folks or families who have many children.
- Have someone meet the fire trucks when they arrive, if it can be done safely.
- Keep the fire lanes open.
- If you can't get out, use a phone to stay in touch with 9-1-1 dispatchers. Shine a flashlight or wave a sheet out the window to alert firefighters that you're trapped.
- Stay calm.

Finally, *pools pose a separate hazard* for people who live in apartment complexes.

Pools must be fenced, and the gates must close and latch on their own. If children use the pool, an adult must always be inside the gate, in the pool area, constantly watching the children.

## Tips for Living Safely in Apartment Buildings

### ■ **Make sure you have smoke alarms that work.**

The Fire Code requires working smoke alarm(s) in every apartment unit. Existing apartments require smoke alarms in the hallway outside sleeping areas. Newly constructed apartments now require them IN the sleep room, as well. Remember to test the smoke alarm(s) ~~batteries~~ once a month, and replace the batteries once a year.

### ■ **The apartment complex is required to have a fire extinguisher within 75-foot travel distance.**

It is recommended that each tenant has their own fire extinguisher in their apartment.

- **Ordinance states that no person shall use a barbecue grill, hibachi, chimena or other device or appliance producing an open flame for the purpose of cooking or warmth on any common walkway or on or below any balcony, porch or rooftop, made of combustible material.**
- **City Ordinance states that no person shall store propane tanks with a water capacity greater than 2.5 City pounds on a combustible balcony or in the interior area of a multi-family/multi-story building.**

When in use, barbecues should be located on ground level and be a minimum of 10 feet from buildings, structures and 15-foot from covered walkways or roof overhangs.

### ■ **Don't park in front of fire hydrants and don't park in fire lanes.**

Respecting the fire restrictions may literally save your life. When friends visit, be sure to remind them to park only in appropriate parking areas.

### ■ **Never leave smoking materials burning. Never smoke in bed.**

In 2001, the most common cause of apartment fires was careless disposal of smoking materials.

■ **Have a fire escape plan. Practice it.**

Know at least two ways to get out of your apartment. Pick a family meeting place outside the apartment building. Don't use elevators (they may take you right into the fire).

■ **Make sure there's a number on your apartment door.**

If there isn't, contact management.

■ **Keep a copy of your apartment number and apartment building number, inside your apartment, near the phone.**

The information will then be handy for babysitters, and it will be there if you panic.

■ **Complex owners and managers need to be sure gated driveways are accessible to firefighters.**

75-percent of multi-housing complexes are now gated. Work with the fire department to make sure access requirements are met.

■ **Don't run extension cords under carpets or from unit-to-unit.**

They can easily overheat. Extension cords are for temporary use only. They are not to be used as a substitute for permanent wiring.

■ **Get acquainted with the elderly folks in your building.**

If there's a fire, they may have extra difficulty getting out. You may be able to help them, or you can direct firefighters to the elderly person's apartment.

**For More Information**

**Contact:**

**City of Medina Fire Department**

**330-725-1772**

