

Fires in Residences - Advice for Residents

24th September 2008, minor amendments 08/10,05/11 and 08/12.

Please read this advice and try to remember the essential features. Taking the correct action during a real fire will go a long way to saving lives and preventing property damage.

Look around you

Look for and remember where the following are located in relation to your study bedroom;

- the nearest fire alarm call point (a push button behind a glass panel in a small red box mounted on the wall, usually near exits)
- the nearest fire extinguisher
- any alternative exits, in case the one you usually use is impassable in a fire
- the fire extinguisher and/or fire blanket in your kitchen.

Be prepared for emergencies

- read the instructions on the wall of your study bedroom on what to do in the event of fire
- know when and how to call the Fire Service and 24-hour Security
- ensure that fire doors, including kitchen doors, are kept shut at all times – this means that they must not be wedged open by any means
- do not tamper with fire extinguishers. Do not use them as doorstops.
- do not interfere with fire detection equipment, alarm sounders or call points. Report any irresponsible person who does. This is a criminal offence for which the Police will prosecute.
- do not attempt to fight a fire - evacuate to safety.

Prevent fires from starting

- Please note that smoking is banned in all buildings across campus including all Halls of Residence
- do not leave pans or other frying oil unattended and watch for overheating - the oil can ignite spontaneously. Chip pans are banned
- do not use lighted candles or any other burning devices in residences, they are banned and the room detectors will activate the alarms
- ensure that your own electrical appliances are in a safe condition. You should hold a valid PAT Certificate from a competent electrical

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contractor. In cases where possible electrical danger is identified the University may remove the appliance or require you to have it repaired forthwith by a competent electrical contractor. Flexible leads must not be trapped under furniture and must not be a tripping hazard

- do not overload socket outlets
- do not use aerosol containers/sprays in close proximity to smoke detectors.

If you have any doubts about electrical safety ask for the advice of the Department of Health and Safety, tel. 734257. If a fire is caused by your defective equipment you may be liable for the damage caused.

If a fire starts, know what to do

SOUND THE ALARM TO WARN OTHERS

TAKE STEPS TO CONTAIN THE FIRE ONLY BY CLOSING DOORS BEHIND YOU

LEAVE THE BUILDING BY NEAREST SAFE ROUTE

CALL THE FIRE SERVICE 9-999

CALL SECURITY 888 or on mobile telephone 01782 733004

Dial using the nearest telephone, where it is safe to do so, 9-999 to alert the Fire Service. A follow on call should then be made by ringing 24-hour Security on 888 to advise them of the situation as they may not be aware of the alarm sounding.

Be aware of all the following before any fire event

- especially at night, shout and bang on doors as you leave to alert other residents who may not have heard the warning alarm.
- if a cooking pan containing fat or oil catches fire, do not move it and do not use water. Turn off the heat, if it is safe to do so and leave the building, closing all doors behind you. (**Remember chip pans are banned**)
- do not use water extinguishers on electrical appliances
- if a fire starts in a study bedroom, sound the alarm, leave at once and shut the door. This will effectively contain the fire until the Fire Service arrives.
- do not delay or return to the building in an attempt to rescue possessions. Most materials emit toxic gases when they burn and lethal concentrations can build up in a couple of minutes.

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- if you are unable to leave your room because of fire or smoke, ensure that your door is shut until you are rescued. The door is designed to withstand fire until your rescue is effected.
- if you suspect there may be a fire in another room which is occupied, **do not open the door**, because a sudden explosion of flame may be released as fresh air is admitted.
- if a person's clothes catch fire, make them lie down and roll on the floor - this will protect their head from the flames. Use a blanket or duvet to try to smother the flames but take care not to set fire to yourself.
- on leaving the building, go straight to the assembly point outside identified on your wall mounted fire notice.

Fire drills

During the academic year a number of fire drills will be arranged to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable residents are aware of what action they should take when the alarm sounds. It is the policy of the University that you **MUST** leave the building immediately by the nearest safe exit. **Do not wait for anybody to tell you to get out, this is *your* responsibility.** Fire Stewards will not enter bedrooms to evacuate students.

Note

Information and advice on what to do in the event of a fire has been published in various University handbooks. This document supersedes all advice contained within these handbooks

Minor amendments August 2010, May 2011, August 2012