Fire Alarms in Apartment Buildings

Large apartment buildings are built to keep people safe from fire. Fire alarm systems detect smoke and fire. They will warn residents of danger.

- The fire alarm system has many parts that work together. Some of the parts are out of sight. In a fire, smoke detectors sense smoke and activate the fire alarm. Manual fire alarm boxes allow people to sound the alarm. When the fire alarm system activates it will warn residents of danger.
- Everyone in the building should know where to find the manual fire alarm boxes (alarm boxes on the wall with a pull bar). Most are found within five feet of an exit door.
- If there is a fire, pull the manual fire alarm box handle on your way out of the building.
- When the system senses smoke or fire, a loud horn or tone will sound. Everyone must know what this sound means and how to react.
- Leave the building right away if you hear the sound of a fire alarm. Stay outside at your meeting place until you are told the building is safe.
- Treat every fire alarm as an emergency. When the alarms sounds, get outside.
- Only use a manual fire alarm box if there is smoke or fire. Frequent false alarms are a problem. People might ignore the sound if they hear too many false alarms. False alarms also put firefighters at risk.

Escape 101

Know the locations of all exit stairs from your floor. If the nearest one is blocked by fire or smoke, you may have to use another exit.

If the fire alarm sounds feel the door before opening. If it is hot, use another way out. If it is cool, use this exit to leave.

Close all doors behind you as you leave. Take the key to your apartment in case you are not able to get out of the building.

If fire or smoke is blocking all exits, return or stay in your apartment. Keep the door closed. Cover cracks around the door with towels or tape. Call **9-1-1** and let the fire department know you are trapped. Signal from the window by waving a flashlight or light-colored cloth.

Meet with your landlord or building manager to learn about the fire safety features and plans in your building.

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