



October 2012

## AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SAFETY ENGINEERS Fire Escape Planning for Non-Campus Housing

**Survival is top priority.** Every second counts when a fire occurs and escape plans help save lives if planned effectively. The American Society of Safety Engineers' (ASSE) Fire Protection Practice Specialty suggests these fire escape planning tips for those living in Greek and other non-campus housing.

### How to develop a fire escape plan:

- Draw a floor plan of your house, apartment and floor.
- List all possible exits.
- Note any people who need assistance. This includes those with disabilities.
- Choose a safe meeting place outside the building for all to meet after escaping a fire.
- Include a note in the plan to call the fire department and the college emergency office once outside the building.



### When there's a fire:

- If your clothes catch on fire, cover your face with your hands, drop to the ground and roll over the flames — Stop, Drop and Roll.
- Warn anyone near your area immediately about the fire by loudly shouting.
- Never ignore fire alarms. Exit immediately.
- Before you open a door, feel the top of the door with the back of your hand. Do not open the door if it is hot.
- If the door is hot:
  - Go to the window and call for help. Or, grab a light-colored material such as a towel and wave it out the window to attract attention.
  - Place a blanket or clothing at the bottom of the door to keep the smoke out of the room. Use a wet towel if possible. Smoke can be deadly.
- If possible, close all doors as you leave the building. This will delay the fire from spreading.
- Use the stairway to exit. Do not use elevators. Leave personal items behind.
- Knock on other room doors as you leave the building to alert others and urge them to get out.
- If smoke is present, crawl or remain low to avoid smoke.
- Take short breaths to avoid inhaling smoke, which is deadly.
- Call 911 as soon as possible.
- Don't panic, stay calm.

### For the Disabled:

- It is important to have a buddy system—such as friends near your room or apartment to help in case of an emergency.
- Identify your primary and alternative exit routes and ramps of the building.

Sources include the National Fire Protection Association, [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org); Northwestern University, <http://www.northwestern.edu/risk/safety-procedures/fire-safety/>; Western Washington University, [http://www.wwu.edu/ehs/fire\\_safety/prevention.shtml](http://www.wwu.edu/ehs/fire_safety/prevention.shtml); and U.S. Fire Administration, [www.usfa.dhs.gov](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov). For more information or [copies of the fact sheets](http://www.asse.org/newsroom/safetytips/campusfiretips.php), please go to <http://www.asse.org/newsroom/safetytips/campusfiretips.php>.

**Please contact the Environmental Health and Safety at 898-5126 if you have any questions.**