



Residence Hall Safety Pennsylvania State University Commonwealth Campuses

Welcome to Penn State! Your safety throughout the year is important to us. For your safety, please review the following.

FIRE SAFETY

All residence halls at the Penn State Commonwealth Campuses are provided with smoke detectors and sprinklers, and fire drills are conducted regularly. Although the frequency of fires at Penn State is low, you need to be prepared in the event a fire occurs. Being prepared includes knowing fire prevention measures, and building fire evacuation routes and procedures.

Be Prepared For a Fire

Before an emergency occurs, students should:

- Review fire emergency exit locations, evacuation routes, and outside meeting locations for your residence hall.
- Review locations of fire extinguishers and fire alarm manual pull stations.
- Do not tamper with, disable or block fire alarms or smoke detectors.
- Don't hang anything from sprinkler pipes or nozzles.



When an Alarm Sounds

In the event of an emergency, please follow these guidelines:



- When an alarm sounds, **remain calm**. Leave the building immediately. Feel the doorknob and spaces around the door with the back of your hand. If it is warm, **don't open it**. If it's cool, open it slowly. If smoke pours in the room, close the door immediately. Instead, if you can do so safely, use window to escape or summon help by yelling. Keep window closed if smoke enters room through it.
- Grab only the clothing needed for the existing weather conditions.
- If you have to escape through smoke, stay low and crawl keeping your head 1 to 2 feet above the floor where the air will be cleanest.

- **Leave the building by the nearest EXIT.**
- Use stairways only. **Do not use elevators** during a fire.
- If you are trapped in your room by fire or smoke, call **911** using the phone in your room or a cell phone and notify the emergency responders of your location.
- Gather in the outside meeting location for your building at least 50 to 100 feet from building, and don't stand on roadways or in parking lots where emergency vehicles may travel.
- Never re-enter the building for any reason, even if alarms are silenced. Wait until University Police, the Fire Chief, or Environmental Health and Safety personnel have given permission before re-entering the building.



Fire Prevention

To minimize the fire hazard in residence halls, the following items **are not permitted**:

- Candles, incense burners, potpourri or other open flame devices.
- Halogen floor lamps.
- Cooking appliances not provided by the University.
- Smoking is not permitted in any University building.



ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Residence hall rooms have limited electrical capacity. To keep you safe and to make sure that electrical devices operate properly, practice good electrical safety:



- Do not overload electrical outlets, power strips or extension cords.
- Do not use cracked, frayed or damaged electrical cords or appliances.
- Use a power strip with a ground plug and an over-current protector.
- Do not connect multiple extension cords or power strips together. Be wary of electrical cords and outlets that get hot to touch. If an electrical outlet becomes so hot you cannot leave your hand on it, you have a potential fire hazard. Unplug all appliances and notify your Resident Assistant (RA) immediately.
- Never run electrical cords across traffic paths or under rugs or furniture.
- Do not hang or tack/nail electrical cords around the room.
- Make sure that appliances, electrical cords, etc. are certified by an independent testing lab such as UL.
- Keep liquids away from electrical items like computers and other electronic equipment.
- Never cut off grounding pin. Never bend, file or cut a grounding pin from a three-pronged cord to plug an appliance into a wall outlet.
- Use light bulbs with the correct wattage for lamps. Never exceed the recommended wattage.
- Contact your RA immediately if the circuit breaker to your room trips. This could indicate that you have too many items plugged into your electrical outlet, or it could indicate some kind of electrical problem.
- When plugging or unplugging an item, be careful not to touch the metallic prongs with your fingers. Do not try to reach behind desks or beds where you cannot see the electrical outlet.
- Turn off lights and electronics when leaving your room. This helps reduce electrical hazards and unnecessary energy use.



NEEDLE/SYRINGE DISPOSAL

If you are diabetic or take other medications by injection, sharps (needle disposal) containers are available at your Campus Health Center. Please help keep our housekeeping staff safe by not putting needles and syringes in the regular trash.



Once again welcome to Penn State. We need your help and that of your fellow students so that you will have a safe and enjoyable year. Finally, please keep your room locked at all times, even when you're sleeping, and especially when you're gone. This will help keep you safe and protect your possessions. If you have any questions, please speak to your RA.