

CHICAGO FIRE DEPARTMENT

RESIDENTIAL HIGH RISE FIRE SAFETY



► *HIGH RISE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS*

Several recent fires in high rise apartment buildings have renewed interest in fire safety on the part of the public, and in particular, apartment dwellers themselves. For this reason, the Chicago Fire Department has developed this guide for all residential high rise tenants if a fire emergency should arise.

Since high rise buildings are of fire-resistant construction and possess reliable enclosed stairways, fires are generally confined to individual apartment furnishings or possibly the contents of one floor. For these reasons, it is important to understand that fire in a residential high rise building is no cause for panic. The Chicago Fire Department responds to all residential high rise building alarms with a heavy complement of equipment and firefighters, experienced in rescue and fire control operations. Upon arriving, this force will promptly affect necessary rescues, confine and control the fire and ventilate the smoke from the building.

It must be realized that if a fire occurs in your apartment or a neighboring apartment, it will most likely be necessary for you to seek safe refuge as soon as possible; therefore, it is extremely important that you become well acquainted with the stairways provided in your building and the procedures to follow in case of fire.



ADULT FIRE SAFETY

▶ Fire or smoke near your apartment ▶

- Call the Fire Department immediately. State the address (do not use vanity addresses), the floor, the apartment number and what you have seen. Don't assume that someone else has already called.
- Before you attempt to leave your apartment, feel the door with the back of your hand. If the door feels warm to the touch within five seconds, **DO NOT OPEN IT**. This indicates the presence of a dangerous fire condition in the corridor.
- If the door is not warm to the touch, carefully open it a few inches to check for the possible presence of smoke in the corridor.
- If you determine that the corridor can be used, alert occupants of the other apartments on your floor and proceed to the closest exit stairway. Close, but do not lock, your apartment door. Close the stairway door behind you. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO USE THE ELEVATORS!**
- If your apartment door is warm or if there is heavy smoke in the corridor, keep the door closed. Use a wet towel to seal the cracks around the door and any other place where smoke appears to be entering.
- If smoke enters your apartment, open a window slightly. In apartment shaving windows which cannot be opened, remain close to the floor.
- However, the possibility exists that fire from the outside may spread to your apartment through the window. If this condition occurs, close your windows and attempt to remove any combustibles at once, i.e. drapes, shades, etc.



Always call 9-1-1 in cases of emergency.

KNOW YOUR BUILDING

- Each occupant should be familiar with the location of all exit stairways on his/her floor. In addition, occupants should plan in advance what to do if the closest exit stairway cannot be used during a fire emergency.
- Following the above steps together with careful pre-fire planning will greatly increase your chances of surviving a fire in your building. Since no two fires are alike, plan carefully and learn your building layout so that you can change your exit plan as conditions warrant.