

CAMPUS SECURITY AND FIRE SAFETY

Required by Higher Education Opportunity Act

Overview

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110-315) became law in August 2008. It requires all United States academic institutions to produce an annual fire safety report outlining fire safety practices, standards, and all fire-related on-campus statistics which occur in residence halls. The following public disclosure report details all information required by this law as it relates to the Muskingum University.

Fire Safety Improvements and Upgrades

The Muskingum University Physical Plant contracts a private fire safety inspector to evaluate the fire alarm systems each year. Any upgrades, repairs, or revisions are made after evaluating the contractor's recommendations.

Student Housing Fire Drills

Fire drills are conducted at least twice a semester for all student housing facilities. Fire drills consist of mandatory supervised evacuations of a building for a potential fire. The fire drill is conducted with the Muskingum University Police Department, the Student Life Office, the Physical Plant, and the local fire department. The first supervised fire drill is conducted within the first ten days of the beginning of the semester as mandated by the Ohio State Fire Marshal's Office.

Evacuation route maps are posted in each resident room displaying the closet exit. Fire drills are discussed with students at first year seminar classes and during student orientation.

Students who fail to leave the building within the designated time frame during a fire drill are documented and referred to the Student Life Judicial Affairs Coordinator.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are assigned dormitory rooms according to their specific needs as determined by the Admissions and the Student Life Office.

Reporting a Fire

To ensure the safety of all residents, students reporting a fire should contact the Muskingum University Police Department or 911. If the fire is no longer a potential danger they should contact the Area Coordinator for the building or a Student Life Professional which will report the incident to the officer on-duty.

Fire Safety Education

The Student Life policy on fire safety states any fire, of whatever origin or size, must be reported by calling 911 or the Muskingum University Police Department in order to ensure the safety of all residents.

The Student Life policy on evacuation from student housing facilities is provided in the student handbook and is discussed with the students when they move into the facility. The Police Department Director also discusses and emphasizes fire safety in residence halls during first year seminar classes.

A fire safety inspection is conducted by the Student Life Office once a month to ensure all students are abiding by all fire and safety regulations.

In case of a fire alarm sounding, the evacuation procedures are as follows:

- Secure your room (window and door).
- Immediately leave the area.
- Leave everything behind.
- Exit the building in an orderly fashion.
- Do not use elevators.
- Walk and do not run.
- Keep calm.
- Move away from the entrances and building once outside to allow emergency personnel unimpeded access to the building.
- Do not re-enter the building until advised to do so by university staff.

Precautions to take in case of a fire:

- Become familiar with the nearest exits and emergency routes from your room and hall.
- Have a backup route in mind in case your direct route is blocked.
- Practice your escape route.
- Check to see if your door is hot or has smoke around it before exiting your room. If so, go to the window and yell for help so firefighters can evacuate you.
- Shut your door tightly when you leave.
- Exit the building and follow the directions of emergency personnel or university staff.
- If you are the first to discover the fire, pull the nearest alarm as you exit the building and yell "fire" as you leave.
- Thick smoke may make it difficult to see so stay low to the floor.
- If you are aware of a student with a disability in the building, alert emergency personnel as soon as they arrive.
- Do not remain in close proximity to the building. Remain in designated locations until the building is cleared for re-entry by emergency personnel or university staff.
- If you are able to use a fire extinguisher in your hall without endangering yourself, please do so. However, your safety is our first concern. Do not attempt to extinguish a fire if your personal safety becomes threatened.

Fire Safety Regulations for Residential Facilities

The Student Life fire safety regulations as listed in the student handbook:

- Smoking is not permitted in any residential facility. These facilities include all areas of the residential complex including residence halls, fraternity, sorority, social club houses, program houses, townhouses, other university apartments, the Walter Chess Center, and the adjacent bridge. Smoking is not permitted in the common areas (bathrooms, hallways, lounges, stairwells, etc.) of any residential facility. Smoking shall also be prohibited within twenty-five feet of all residential building entrances, exits, air intakes, and operable windows.
- Possession of any open heating element, open flames, or ignition points (heaters, burners, hot plates, sandwich presses, George Foreman grills, toaster ovens, halogen lamps, candles, incense, potpourri pots, etc.) or any unapproved appliances (no air conditioners, microwaves [other than micro-fridge units], televisions, or reception systems requiring wiring outside the room, etc.) is prohibited. However, residents can use the following small food appliances: small coffee pot, popcorn air popper, and under-counter refrigerator up to 33 inches tall or 3.2 cubic feet in size.
- Cooking outside of a designated area is prohibited, including exceeding the provisions that students may only cook popcorn (not requiring oil or flat plate popper), hot beverages, or re-heating already prepared food in a micro-fridge unit.
- Possession of extension cords or multi-outlet adapters is prohibited (surge protector strip plugs are permitted to help protect equipment and reduce malfunctions).
- Possession of any propane grill or tank inside or outside of any residence hall, fraternity, sorority, social club house, program house, townhouse, or university apartment is prohibited.

Smoking Policy

Muskingum University prohibits smoking within twenty-five feet of all residential building entrances, exits, air intakes, and operable windows.

Fire Log

The Muskingum University Police Department maintains a fire log that records any fire that occurred in an on-campus student housing facility and includes information such as the nature, date, time, and general location of the fire. The log also includes all other fires that have occurred on-campus.

The fire log entry shall be recorded within two business days of the receipt of information.

The fire log for the most recent 60 day period shall be open to public inspection during normal business hours. Any portion of the log older than 60 days will be available within two business days for public inspection.

Definitions

Fire – Any instance of an open flame or other burning in a place not intended to contain the burning or in an uncontrolled manner.

Fire Drill – A supervised practice of a mandatory evacuation of a building for a fire.

Fire-related Injury – Any instance in which a person is injured as a result of a fire, including an injury sustained from a natural or accidental cause while involved in fire control, attempting rescue, or escaping from the dangers of the fire. The term person may include students, faculty, staff, visitors, firefighters, or any other individuals.

Fire-related Death – Any instance in which a person is killed as a result of a fire, including death resulting from a natural or accidental cause while involved in fire control, attempting rescue, or escaping from the dangers of a fire, or deaths that occur within one year of injuries sustained as a result of the fire.

Fire Safety System – Any mechanism or system related to the detection of a fire, the warning resulting from a fire, or the control of a fire including: sprinkler or other fire extinguishing systems, fire detection devices, stand-alone smoke alarms, devices that alert one to the presence of a fire (i.e., horns, bells, strobe lights), smoke control and reduction mechanisms, and fire doors and walls that reduce the spread of a fire.

Value of Property Damage – The estimated value of the loss of the structure and contents, in terms of the cost of replacement in like kind and quantity, including: contents damaged by fire, related damages caused by smoke, water, and overhaul. This does not include indirect loss (i.e., business interruption).