

# September 2017

## Campus Fire Safety

Week 1: Fire Safety For College Students

Week 2: Smoking

Week 3: Carbon Monoxide Safety For RVs And Tents

Week 4: Call 911

Events:

Governor's Day to Serve Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>- Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>

Get Alarmed West Virginia Sept. 16 and Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>

Educator Tips:

If possible, use scene artifacts as teaching opportunities. Use things like sooty smoke alarms with no batteries, old ones that have discolored long past the 10 year mark, a burned door with charring and heavy soot at the top and less damage at the bottom. There are safety messages you can develop based on each of these items.

National Fire Service History:

- September 2, 1888 Baltimore Bldg Collapse (7 FF Deaths)
- September 6, 1896 - MI Opera House Collapse (5 FF Deaths)
- September 20, 1902 - Birmingham Church Fire (115 Deaths)
- September 11, 2001 - Terrorist Attacks (3000+ killed including 343 FF's)

WV Fire Service History:

- September 12, 1907 the Beckley Fire Department was formed by Mayor Dunn and the Common Council.



## Fire Safety For College Students

Going to college is an exciting time for students and their parents. Living in your new “home away from home” not only gives young adults more freedom to make their own choices, but it also puts upon them an increased level of personal responsibility while at school. When it comes to on- and off-campus housing, it’s important for students and parents to keep fire safety top of mind.

### *Campus fire safety by the numbers*

- In 2009-2013, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated annual average of 3,870 structure fires in dormitories, fraternities, sororities, and barracks\*
- In 2009 – 2013 86% of the reported structure fires involved cooking equipment. 83% of fires were specifically reported as contained or confined to cooking equipment\*
- From 2000 - 2015, 89 fires that killed 126 people have occurred on a college campus, in Greek housing or in off-campus housing within three miles of the campus.  
Of these:
  - 76 off-campus fires caused 107 deaths
  - 7 on-campus building or residence hall fires claimed 9 victims
  - fires in Greek housing took the lives of 10 people

### *Campus Fire Safety Tips:*

- Look for fully sprinklered housing when choosing a dorm or off-campus housing.
- Make sure your dormitory or apartment has smoke alarms inside each bedroom, outside every sleeping area and on each level. For the best protection, all smoke alarms should be interconnected so that when one sounds they all sound.
- Test all smoke alarms at least monthly.
- Never remove batteries or disable the alarm.
- Learn your building’s evacuation plan and practice all drills as if they were the real thing.
- If you live off campus, have a fire escape plan with two ways out of every room.
- When the smoke alarm or fire alarm sounds, get out of the building quickly and stay out.
- During a power outage, use a flashlight.
- Cook only where it is permitted.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking.
- Cook only when you are alert, not sleepy or drowsy from medicine or alcohol.

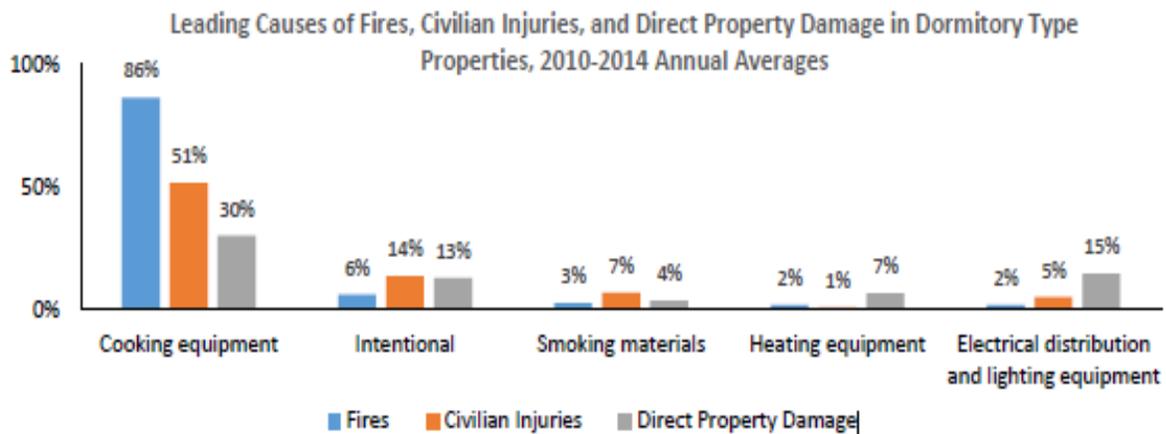
- Check with your local fire department for any restrictions before using a barbeque grill, fire pit, or chimney.
- Check your school's rules before using electrical appliances in your room.
- Use a surge protector for your computer and plug the protector directly into an outlet.



# RESEARCH

## DORMITORY, FRATERNITY, SORORITY AND BARRACK STRUCTURE FIRES FACT SHEET

In 2010-2014, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated annual average of 3,970 structure fires in dormitories, fraternities, sororities, and barracks. These fires caused annual averages of one civilian death, 35 civilian injuries, and \$15 million in direct property damage.





## Smoking

Smoking materials (i.e., cigarettes, cigars, pipes, etc.) are the leading cause of fire deaths in the United States.

- If you smoke, smoke outside.
- Use deep, wide ashtrays on a sturdy table.
- Before you throw out butts and ashes, make sure they are out, and dousing in water or sand is the best way to do that.
- Check under furniture cushions and in other places people smoke for cigarette butts that may have fallen out of sight.
- Never smoke in a home where oxygen is being used.
- If you smoke, choose fire-safe cigarettes. They are less likely to cause fires.
- To prevent a deadly cigarette fire, you have to be alert. You won't be if you are sleepy, have been drinking, or have taken medicine or other drugs.
- Keep matches and lighters up high, out of children's sight and reach.

### *Facts & figures*

- In 2011, there were an estimated 90,000 smoking-material fires in the United States. These fires caused 540 civilian deaths, 1,640 civilian injuries and \$621 million in direct property damage.
- One out of four fatal victims of smoking-material fires is not the smoker whose cigarette started the fire.
- Most deaths result from fires that started in bedrooms (40%), or in living rooms, family rooms or dens (35%).
- Nearly half (46%) fatal home smoking-material fire victims were age 65 or older.





## Carbon Monoxide Safety For RVs And Tents

(courtesy <http://www.carbon-monoxide-poisoning.com>)

Fuel-powered camping equipment can be potentially dangerous to your health. Carbon monoxide poisoning can occur and may even be fatal. Camping usually involves a tent, camper or RV. When combustibles are used within these enclosed quarters without proper ventilation people in close proximity are at high risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. Lanterns, space heaters, portable grills, gas burning appliances, and other fuel-powered equipment should only be lit and burnt outside.

### *Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning*

- Because the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning resemble those of the common cold or flu, they are often initially ignored. Immediate attention should be paid to someone who has been exposed to CO emission and displays the following signs and/or complaints:
  - headaches
  - dizziness
  - weakness or excessive sleepiness
  - nausea and/or vomiting
  - general confusion

### *Treatment*

The key is to respond quickly. Turn off the appliance and open doors and windows in order to ventilate the area thoroughly. Transport the victim immediately to a clinic, hospital, or medical doctor if you suspect that any of the above mentioned symptoms might be due to an exposure to carbon monoxide. Certain individuals are at a higher risk than others.

### *Who Is at Risk?*

Carbon monoxide does not affect all people in the same way. Some age groups are more vulnerable, and individuals with certain conditions can be at higher risk than others.

Children and the elderly, as well as pregnant women, smokers and those with lung problems, and individuals suffering from anemia and other circulatory system problems are at high risk when exposed to CO. In such cases a faster response to CO inhalation is likely to occur and a smaller amount of CO will be sufficient to induce poisoning.

There are other important factors to keep in mind. When you are camping at high altitudes, the effects of carbon monoxide are heightened and consequently, more care is required. Also, when alcohol or drugs are ingested the negative effects of CO inhalation are intensified.

Anyone in a high risk category should be made aware of the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, and also be well-informed on the ways of handling the situation if it occurs.

#### *How to Avoid or Reduce the Risk*

Adequate ventilation in your tent, camper, RV, and any other enclosed areas is important. When using gas burning units such as the portable stove in your RV, or gas lanterns in your tent, a conscious effort should be made to keep the door or windows open.

Camping in cold weather is especially dangerous for carbon monoxide poisoning because there is a frequent need for heating units and a strong tendency to stay inside due to the weather. Choosing other alternatives like electrical or battery-operated models is highly recommended.

There is pressure for manufacturers of fuel-powered camping equipment to be more proactive with regard to the potential health hazards of their products. Some are working with the Consumer Product Safety Commission to design models that produce less carbon monoxide. There is also a push for all units to distinctly display warning labels and consumer information.

However the best defense against the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning is to educate the public on responsible use. Helping individuals to recognize the symptoms and know how to react can save many lives.

Enjoy your camping trip by being aware of the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning. Limit the risk in order to ensure that your family and friends are safe.

## STAY SAFE WHILE CAMPING

■ Don't ever take a barbecue into a tent. Even when they cool down, they can give off enough carbon monoxide to kill.

■ Don't use any fuel-burning appliances to heat your tent or awning.

Stoves and barbecues are not designed for heating badly ventilated spaces.

■ Don't cook inside a tent.

Even supposedly fire-resistant tents can burn.

■ Don't use naked flames such as candles and lighters inside a tent. Use a torch instead.

■ Don't rely on a carbon monoxide detector to keep you safe. They may be useful at home, but they are not designed for the conditions found in a tent or awning.

The image shows the words "CALL 911 NOW" in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The letters are filled with a vibrant rainbow gradient, transitioning from red on the left to purple and blue in the middle, and back to red on the right. The background is solid black, making the colorful text stand out prominently.

## Call 911 In Emergencies

(courtesy [www.911.gov](http://www.911.gov))

An emergency is any situation that requires immediate assistance from the police, fire department or ambulance. Examples include:

- A fire
- A crime, especially if in progress
- A car crash, especially if someone is injured
- A medical emergency, especially symptoms that require immediate medical attention

*Important: If you're not sure whether the situation is a true emergency, officials recommend calling 911 and letting the call-taker determine whether you need emergency help.*

When you call 911, be prepared to answer the call-taker's questions, which may include:

- The location of the emergency, including the street address
- The phone number you are calling from
- The nature of the emergency
- Details about the emergency, such as a physical description of a person who may have committed a crime, a description of any fire that may be burning, or a description of injuries or symptoms being experienced by a person having a medical emergency

Remember, the call-taker's questions are important to get the right kind of help to you quickly. Be prepared to follow any instructions the call-taker gives you. Many 911 centers can tell you exactly what to do until help arrives, such as providing step-by-step instructions to aid someone who is choking or needs first aid or CPR. Do not hang up until the call-taker instructs you to.

If you dial 911 by mistake, or if a child in your home dials 911 when no emergency exists, do not hang up—that could make 911 officials think that an emergency exists, and possibly send responders to your location. Instead, simply explain to the call-taker what happened.

*Calling 911 Tips:*

**IS A PERSON HURT OR IN DANGER? - DO YOU NEED THE POLICE, FIRE OR AMBULANCE?**

Have you ever wondered whether to call 9-1-1? Since 9-1-1 is for emergencies only, it helps to understand when to call and when not to call. An emergency is any serious situation where a law enforcement officer, fire fighter, or emergency medical help is needed right away. If you are unsure of whether your situation is an emergency, go ahead and call 9-1-1. The 9-1-1 call taker can determine if you need emergency assistance and can route you to the correct location.

**IF YOU DO CALL 9-1-1, EVEN BY MISTAKE, DO NOT HANG UP THE PHONE.**

9-1-1 call takers are trained to get the most important information as quickly as possible to get help on the way to an emergency situation. In an emergency situation, allow the call taker to ask you all the questions they need in order to get help there in the timeliest manner before you hang up or leave the phone. If you happen to call by accident, stay on the line until you can tell the call taker that you called by accident and there is no emergency. This saves the call taker from having to call you back and confirm there is no emergency or possibly sending police with lights and sirens to check your address for an emergency.

**WHEN CALLING 9-1-1 DO YOUR BEST TO STAY CALM AND ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS.**

Staying calm can be one of the most difficult, yet most important, things you do when calling 9-1-1. It is very important that you stay as calm as possible and answer all the questions the 9-1-1 call taker asks. The questions 9-1-1 call takers ask, no matter how relevant they seem, are important in helping get the first responders to you as fast as possible.

**HELP THE 9-1-1 CALL TAKER HELP YOU.**

Listen and answer the questions asked. By doing this, it helps the call taker understand your situation and will assist you with your emergency until the appropriate police, fire or medical units arrive.

**KNOW THE LOCATION OF THE EMERGENCY.**

The wireless 9-1-1 caller must be aware that the 9-1-1 center that answers the call may not be the 9-1-1 center that services the area that the wireless caller is calling from. Look for landmarks, cross street signs and buildings. Know the name of the city or county you are in. Knowing the location is vital to getting the appropriate police, fire or EMS units to respond. Providing an accurate address is critically important when making a wireless 9-1-1 call.

**TEACH YOUR CHILDREN HOW TO CALL 9-1-1.**

Be sure they know what 9-1-1 is, how to dial from your home and cell phone, and to trust the 9-1-1 call taker. Make sure your child is physically able to reach at least one phone in your home. When calling 9-1-1 your child needs to know their name, parent's name, telephone number, and most importantly their address. Tell them to answer all the call takers questions and to stay on the phone until instructed to hang up.

**PRANK CALLS TO 9-1-1 WASTE TIME AND ARE ILLEGAL IN MOST STATES.**

Be sure all members of your household are aware that prank or harassing calls to 9-1-1 will be dealt with by local law enforcement agencies.

**POST YOUR ADDRESS CLEARLY AND PROMINENTLY AT YOUR ENTRANCE AND ON YOUR HOME.**

Posting your 9-1-1 address at the driveway entrance and on your home will alleviate any confusion as to whether emergency responders have the correct location. Try using something reflective or illuminated so that it can be seen in the evening as well as during the day.

**DO NOT ASSUME SINCE YOUR MAILBOX IS MARKED YOU HAVE POSTED YOUR ADDRESS -** mailboxes are not always at the entrance of a driveway and usually are not marked clearly on both sides. Several cities and counties have ordinances for posting 9-1-1 addresses - check with your local ones. And always report missing street signs when noted - these not only help others find your home but are essential to emergency response personnel.

**KNOW THE PHONES YOU OWN.**

Educate everyone about the phone system in your home as well as your cell phone. Children may need to use the devices in an emergency and will need to know how to operate them.