

Fire Safe Off-Campus Housing

What To Look For and Ask?

Some WSU students reside in off-campus living arrangements. These living arrangements do not offer the same standard approaches that WSU housing does but rather may be customized based on zoning laws and housing codes. This section will attempt to break down how to assess the safety of an off-campus residence and ways that you can proactively ensure your safety when living off-campus.

Building Safety Features



Smoke Detectors

Although fire sprinklers may not be a requirement for off-campus housing, smoke detectors are a requirement. Smoke Detectors are early warning devices that indicate when a fire is developing. They can be triggered through the automatic detection of smoke.

An essential component of the fire alarm apparatus, smoke alarms detect low levels of smoke through [ionization or photoelectric processes](#). Upon detection, they emit a loud alarm designed to alert those inside the structure of the danger.

Smoke detectors can be set up in a multitude of configurations. Some are 'networked' detectors. This configuration allows for all local detectors to trigger after a single detector is activated. This allows for rapid notification of an entire area's inhabitants of potential danger.

Another way that detectors are set up is the singular configuration. I

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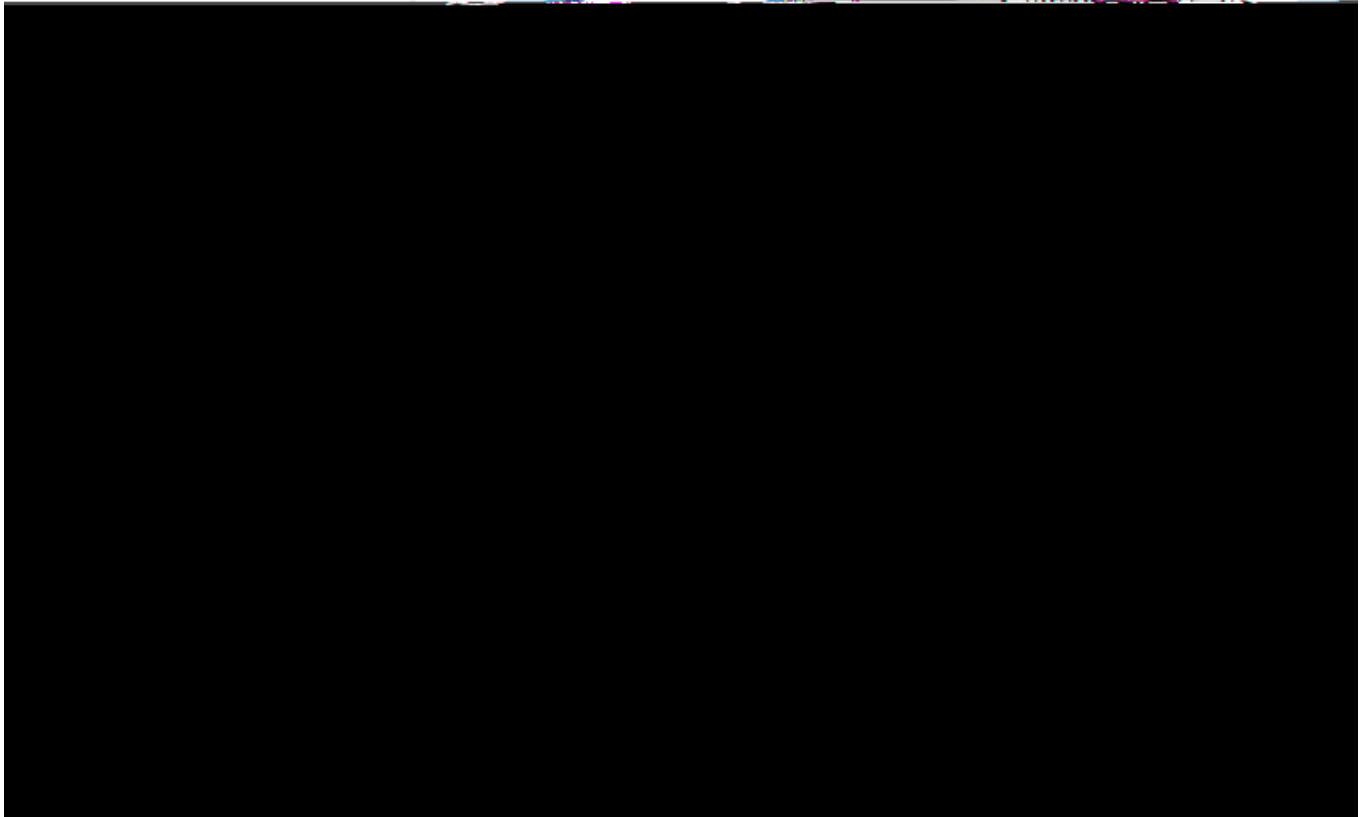
- You do not cook if you have been drinking, am too tired to function, or have taken medications or drugs that make you feel drowsy.

Resident Escape Plan

When living off-campus, you will not have access to the same evacuation plans that all on-campus residents have access to. Instead, you will need to take the initiative to create your own Resident Escape Plan. You can create and implement this plan by following these simple steps:

- Draw a map of your home showing all walls, doors, and windows. (Feel free to ask your landlord if they have a floor plan you can use).
- Draw arrows from every room and hallway that illustrate where someone can exit the home from anywhere within it. Use one color for a primary evacuation route and a different color for a secondary route.
- Draw arrows from the home's exits to a safe area where the home's inhabitants can gather when there is an emergency. (Use markers like trees, light poles, or mailboxes to help guide where to go!)

Here is a rudimentary example that shows these steps in action. Note that your diagram does not have to be absolutely spot-on with a ruler, getting the general idea across is the important part!





Once you have created an evacuation plan, it is important that you see it in practice! Make sure to practice evacuations both during the day and at night at least twice every year. Also, practice using your primary and secondary evacuation routes. Finally, when evacuating make sure to close doors behind you to limit the spread of a fire.

More Information

[Campus Fire Safety - Know Your Escape and Practice It \(PDF\)](#)

[NFPA - Escape Planning \(PDF\)](#)

Setting Up Your Living Space

Once you move into your new residence, it is important that you take steps to minimize the dangers you may face. First and foremost you should check if there is anything defective or in need of repair in your residence. Upon discovery, you should notify your landlord immediately to make the appropriate repairs and replacements.

As you move in furniture and belongings, there are several priorities you should abide by when setting up your housing configuration:

- Make sure that none of your furniture or belongings are blocking exits to rooms or the home.
- Make sure that you are not hanging anything from fire sprinklers.
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