

RESIDENCE HALL SAFETY

Safety for residents, staff, and visitors to the residence halls is the responsibility of the Housing Department. The department reports unsafe hazards or conditions to the Physical Plant for correction. Programs and procedures for the purpose of insuring a safe residential environment administered by Residential Housing shall be as follows:

SAFETY INSPECTIONS

Dorm rooms shall be inspected monthly for fire safety by the resident assistants (RA's). Written reports shall be made and filed within the Residential Housing Office. Prior notice of these inspections shall be made by posting notices of same on the bulletin boards.

There shall be mandatory clean up (by the student) and re-inspection (by the staff) of any safety violations.

Students shall be encouraged to report safety violations and anything that is out of order or missing.

FIRE SAFETY

Although the buildings themselves are fire resistant, the contents (furnishings and personal belongings) are flammable. In addition, all buildings are remote monitored with direct reporting to the Louisiana Tech Police Department as well as the Ruston Fire Department.

Therefore, the program for fire prevention and emergency evacuation shall include the following:

1. Emphasis on fire prevention and safety at all new student orientation sessions and initial house and floor meetings each quarter.
2. Fire training meeting scheduled by Housing Department for staff each quarter.
3. An unannounced fire drill conducted in all residence halls each quarter.
4. Inspection and maintenance of fire safety equipment by Physical Plant.
5. Evacuation plans prominently posted in all residence halls. Copies of these plans shall be submitted to the Environmental Health & Safety Department for evaluation.

FIRE DRILLS

For persons to respond properly when a fire occurs, they shall know there is a fire (alarm), they shall have adequate means of egress (escape), and they shall have a plan of action. A fire drill is needed to test that plan of action.

The purpose of the fire drill is to be able to anticipate what can happen during an actual emergency and also to provide for prompt, effective action.

The goals of the fire drill are to minimize loss of life and personal injury, to protect property with a minimum of damage, and to restore normal operations as soon as possible.

The fire drill also helps to minimize panic and confusion among the occupants who sometimes may change rooms/dorms every quarter.

Unannounced fire drills shall take place at least once a quarter, preferably between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 12:00 midnight. Floor monitors for each dormitory shall fill in the short Fire Drill Report.

These shall be incorporated into the primary Fire Drill Report for each dormitory, copies of which shall be sent to Environmental Health & Safety. (See Section 11 for Fire Drill Report Forms)

Head residents and resident managers have the primary responsibility for fire safety and the development and execution of plans for fire drills and evacuation, which include:

1. Testing the alarm system the day prior to opening dormitories each quarter and summer term. Problems shall be reported to the Housing Department so that they can be reported to Physical Plant.
2. Maintaining flashlights in all buildings to be issued to all resident assistants.
3. Maintaining current fire drill procedures for each resident hall and providing a copy to the Housing Department. The procedure shall include:
 - a. Location of fire alarm call boxes.
 - b. Control panels.
 - c. Explanation of alarm signals, if coded, and how to activate general alarms.
 - d. How to deactivate alarm and reset system.
 - e. Evacuation routes and duties of fire squad members.
 - f. List of fire squad members.
4. Explaining the purpose of the fire drills and procedures for residents to follow at house and section meetings.
5. Removing the building roster, room chart, and pass keys in the event of fire requiring evacuation of the building.
6. Instructing the fire squad each quarter of assigned duties.

Upon completion of selecting the fire squad, a meeting shall be held to explain procedures and plans for fires and fire drills and to inform the squad of the location of alarm boxes, types of signals, location of and how to use fire extinguishers, safe evacuation assembly points (at least 50 feet from the building), procedure to use in accounting for students, all clear signals, and the squad's responsibility to note problem areas for evaluation after fire drills. This meeting shall be held no later than five days after the opening of the building to occupants.

Duties for fire squad members include:

1. Locating and assisting head residents when fire alarms sound.
2. Observing execution of fire drill evacuation.
3. Verifying that building is clear.
4. Advising evacuated students when "all clear" is given for re-entry to the building.
5. Meeting with fire squad for drill evaluation.
6. Submitting Fire Drill Report within 48 hours of drill.

GUIDE FOR FIRE-SAFE CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS IN STUDENT ROOMS

Because Christmas decorations are an extreme fire hazard, the following limitations on decorations are necessary:

1. All decorations shall be fire resistant.
2. Natural Christmas trees are not allowed in residence halls. Because most Christmas trees must be cut well in advance of use, they dry out to a considerable degree and are too combustible for safe use.
3. The use of burning candles is very dangerous and is therefore prohibited.

4. Door decorations or foil shall be suspended from the edges of the door. Remember that tape and other adhesives may cause damage on the door surfaces. Keep electrical decorations away from the metal door frames; do not string lights so that the door could close on the wiring.
5. Check extension cords to insure that they do not have breaks in the insulation. Keep the use of extension cords to a minimum. Use them only for a limited number of small lights, not for appliances. Also, all extension cords must be UL listed.
6. All decorations shall be removed prior to Christmas vacation to facilitate hall cleaning.

From a fire safety viewpoint, metal trees are desirable because they are not combustible. Illuminate metal trees with indirect lighting (remotely located spotlights or flood-lights). Lighting sets placed on the tree may "charge" the tree with enough voltage to burn or fatally injure someone touching it.

Artificial trees made of non-burning materials may be used. Only approved cool bulbs shall be used on lighting strings.

When decorating rooms and room doors, use only noncombustible material such as foil, glass, or metal. Do not use untreated cotton batting, flock, or paper as they ignite easily and burn continuously. Approved for the door decorations are: (1) all foil wrapping paper and (2) small Christmas pictures applied to foil. Doors may be totally decorated if decoration or foil is suspended from the edges of the door.

No cut boughs shall be used in student rooms or on doors. Placing cut tree boughs around a burning candle is extremely dangerous, and therefore is prohibited.

No exit from the individual floors or houses shall be blocked by Christmas decorations.

If a fire occurs, (1) clear everyone out of the building by pulling the evacuation (fire) alarm, (2) call Campus Police at 257-4018, and (3) contact an advisor.