

A p a r t m e n t

SAFETY NOTES

SPOKANE FIRE DEPARTMENT



MARCH 2010



Emergency medical services

Fire Departments respond to more than fires! Over 80% of the 9-1-1 calls to Spokane Fire Department require the skills of our firefighters as Paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians.

Two things that your staff and tenants can do to better assure they are prepared for a medical emergency: (1) to make sure that everyone has a current listing of their physicians, medications, and allergies, and (2) encourage staff and key tenants to update their CPR skills.

For the past many years, the Inland Northwest Chapter of the American Red Cross has distributed the "Vial of Life" 35mm film canisters that contain the forms for critical medical information. The Vials are intended to be stored in the refrigerator. Limited quantities of these Vials are available at the Red Cross building, 315 W. Nora, by calling Valeta Biggs at (509) 326-3330, Ext. 223.

The File of Life © is a similar program that provides a compact plastic pocket with magnet to hold the medical information list on the refrigerator. It can include a notification sticker that can be placed on a front door. These kits cost less than \$1 apiece but provide an easily identifiable and conveniently located alert. For ordering information, contact the nonprofit File of Life © Foundation at www.folife.org.



Several local agencies have created their own medication lists with the key information that paramedics need: legal name, date of birth, medication by name, dosage and purpose, allergies, primary physician, emergency contact and hospital of choice. It is a good idea for tenants to keep spare copies of this information so that they can be given to the paramedics and transported with the patient to the hospital.

Medical listings are not just for persons who are elderly or chronically ill. EVERYONE should have this information readily available in their wallet and on their refrigerator. While no one plans to have a medical emergency, 4 out of 5 of the fire department sirens heard on any day represent EMTs and paramedics responding to a 9-1-1 call for medical help.

In addition to assuring that critical medical history is quickly available for emergency personnel, it is wise to have persons in the apartment complex confident of using CPR skills.

Spokane Fire Department offers free CPR classes at neighborhood fire stations throughout the year. These classes run from 7 PM to 10 PM on Tuesdays through Thursdays at three different stations throughout the City of Spokane. You just need one three-hour class to complete the American Heart Association's "Family and Friends CPR" training.

To find the location of current classes, either call (509) 625-7061 or visit www.spokanefire.org.



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS RETURNS

We turn the clocks ahead on March 14th. Change your clock and check your detectors! Make sure they are less than 10 years old.

Supplement ionization alarms (for quick-flaming fires) with photoelectric units (for slow-burning, smoldering fires) or gradually replace them with dual-sensor detectors. Test to make sure all batteries are properly installed and working.

ROADBLOCKS to QUICK RESPONSE

In many medical emergencies, every second of response time counts.

- Yield to emergency vehicles. Pull to the right.
- Keep fire lanes cleared at the building site.
- For large-scale complexes, provide a map at the entrance showing the exact location of the units.
- Maintain easy-to-find, easy-to-read addressing on the main buildings and on each individual unit.
- Have a process in place so that emergency personnel can gain access to interior units without having to tear down doors.

You can sign up for this monthly newsletter, ask a fire-related question or suggest a specific safety topic by contacting Jan Doherty at jdoherty@spokanefire.org or by calling 625-7058.

Access this edition of Apartment Safety Notes as well as back issues at www.spokanefire.org under "Prevention".