

A p a r t m e n t

SAFETY NOTES



SPOKANE FIRE DEPARTMENT

September 2011

READY.....



September is designated as National Emergency Preparedness month. The message is particularly poignant for those who weathered the strike by Hurricane Irene last month or struggled through the blizzards, floods and tornadoes that disrupted the lives of millions of Americans this past year.

OR NOT!

Closer to home, disaster hit on a smaller scale with nearly one hundred persons in the City of Spokane left homeless by residential fires this summer. In fact, fire consumes the majority of resources available through our Inland Northwest Red Cross each year.

How prepared is your management staff for any type of major emergency? What are your current response plans should your units be impacted by fire, a chemical spill in the neighborhood, a major power outage or winter storm system?

Help with emergency planning is available online at multiple sites, including www.ready.gov/business. Their simple Business Emergency Plan is a guideline to help you collect key information before any type of large-scale emergency occurs in your rental properties. This includes employee emergency contact information, computer security and back-up, records back-up, shelter-in-place procedures, evacuation plans with a designated assembly site, contact information for key suppliers or contractors and a designated company / building spokesperson.

Here are some key questions:

- Would every tenant be alerted to an emergency in your building? How do you manage the fire alarm system or emergency messaging so that persons who are deaf or who have hearing loss know what is happening? How do you communicate emergency information to tenants who do not speak English well?

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- Do tenants have individual backup plans in place if they depend on a power supply for maintaining an oxygen system or electric wheelchair?
- Do tenants keep an extra supply of water on hand in the event of an emergency? The standard recommendation from FEMA is to store 3 gallons per person per day for three days.
- Do staff and tenants have a “Go Bag” ready with extra medication, flashlight, toothbrush, family contact numbers, or a pet’s leash, food and carrying case?
- Have you met with neighboring businesses or agency partners to share emergency plans or figure out potential resources?

For additional resources to help your staff and tenants become well prepared for any emergency, check the following sites:

- www.ready.gov,
- www.spokaneprepares.org,
- www.spokaneredcross.org,
- www.homesafetycouncil.org.



Renter’s Insurance: Educational Outreach

We realize there will be long term consequences for individuals and families who have suffered significant losses from apartment fires in Spokane this summer.

If you have concerns about your tenants recognizing the need for renter’s insurance, please consider becoming part of a special committee that will work with Spokane Fire Department to better inform tenants and landlords of the importance of this type of protection.

If you have an interest in this topic or a comment / suggestion on renter’s insurance, please call Jan Doherty at (509) 625-7058 or contact her ASAP at jdoherly@spokanefire.org.

ALERT SPOKANE

Spokane County updated the Emergency Notification System last year so emergency responders can now alert specific homes and businesses within a targeted area where there is an immediate risk. This ENS, known as **ALERT** Spokane, has been commonly compared to a type of “reverse 9-1-1”. The programmed message gives the situation and brief instructions on whether to evacuate, stay inside away from windows or listen to local radio or TV for additional emergency information.

Initially just landline phones were connected to **ALERT** Spokane. Now you are encouraged to also register your cell phone, Voice over Internet Protocol and e-mail addresses. To register, go to www.alertspokane.org.

You can sign up for this monthly newsletter, ask a fire-related question or suggest a specific safety topic by contacting Jan Doherty at jdoherly@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”.



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