

# A p a r t m e n t

## SAFETY



## NOTES

SPOKANE FIRE DEPARTMENT

April 2012

# Who has YOUR PLAN?

As building managers and tenants change locations, who has the “Master Plan” for fire safety for each of your buildings?

Since each rental building has its own unique construction and residents, the fire department does not provide a generic emergency plan of “one size fits all”. It is critical for everyone managing a rental property to be familiar with all of the most important features of the building’s fire escape plan.

Here are “30 Questions” to help you review your planning and policies!

- What type of alerting system protects the building and residents? Is there a monitoring service for the alarm system? How does it work?
- What type of smoke detection device (i.e. ionization, photoelectric or photo-ion) is installed in each unit? How old are the detectors? Are detectors battery-operated or hardwired? Does any tenant need strobe or vibrating devices to assure they know there is an emergency?
- Is there a sprinkler system? Who services it? Does it only cover the common areas or is it also installed inside every unit?
- What is the exact address of the unit? Can the addressing be clearly viewed from the street?
- Is there sufficient room for large fire engines or ladders to get close to the building?
- Where are the hydrants located for your building?
- Where are the fire extinguishers and when were they last serviced?
- Do you have a Knox Box the firefighters can access to get keys for your building? Are the keys current?
- Are exit paths clearly marked? Are hallways always safe pathways to escape? Are fire doors always closed? Is any exit blocked for any reason?
- Is there a written plan clearly showing how tenants are to escape the building and re-gather outside in a safe meeting place? Is there an elevator system? Can all tenants handle the stairs or do some need to “shelter in place”?
- Does every tenant know the fire escape plan? Is each tenant capable of exiting their room and reaching the meeting place?
- Who is responsible for meeting the firefighters and directing them to individuals who may have difficulty independently exiting the building?
- In the event of a fire, once the building is evacuated, who else needs to be notified?
- What are the fire prevention policies for each unit? Are there written agreements regarding smoking materials, holiday decorations, fireworks, barbecue usage or clutter?
- Do all the tenants have renter’s insurance?

**Question #31: How did YOU do?**



# AGNES KEHOE PLACE: BUILDING IN THE SAFETY



Engine 15 gets a tour of the Agnes Kehoe Place during the Grand Opening

Congratulations to the collaborative team from Spokane Housing Authority, the Beacon Development Group, SMR Architects, Coffman Engineers, Walker Construction and various funders who have re-shaped the old Hillyard High School into 51 beautiful and affordable apartments for low-income residents!

The extensive remodeling effort includes multiple safety features, from fire sprinklers to elements installed on the stoves that will prevent cooking fires. The Safe-T-element<sup>®</sup> is a cast-iron plate installed over each burner on an electric stove. Even when a burner is turned on high, the temperature of the plate will not go above 662 °F.

Fat or oil can ignite at 698 °F. The Safe-T-element<sup>®</sup> automatically turns the element off when it reaches 662 °F and therefore eliminates a potential grease fire. At the same time, it improves the cooking by better controlling the even spread of heat. It also makes it easier to clean burners, prevents pans from scorching and increases the lifespan of the stove.

Cooking fires are the #1 cause of residential fires in North America and account for over 40% of all apartment fires. Seniors are the highest risk group. A significant number of people who have died in cooking-caused fires had fallen asleep prior to the fire.

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Access this edition of Apartment Safety Notes as well as back issues at [www.spokanefire.org](http://www.spokanefire.org) under “Prevention”.

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](mailto:jdoherly@spokanefire.org) or by calling (509) 625-7058.



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