

Keeping Homes Fire Safe

The Fire Department for the City of New York (FDNY) and the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) want you to know how to keep you, your home, and your building fire safe!

Whether you're a tenant or property owner, make sure you're aware of these six safety rules:



1. Close the Door

When escaping a fire in your home, always close the door as you make your exit. Closing the door saves lives. If doors are left open, flames and smoke from a fire can travel more quickly.

All residential buildings with 3 or more apartments must have self-closing doors. **Self-closing doors** automatically close after they have been manually opened. Do not tamper with the self-closing hinge or block self-closing doors, and make sure your apartment door opens from the inside without a key.

If you live in a building with 3 or more apartments and your apartment door is not self-closing, notify your property owner. If the issue is not corrected, register a complaint by calling 311.



2. Maintain Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Working detectors are a critical component of fire safety. Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors save lives by quickly giving you an early warning. If a carbon monoxide alarm sounds, you should get out immediately and call 911. If a smoke alarm sounds, execute your escape plan.

Property owners are required to provide and install at least one approved and operational smoke and carbon monoxide detector in each apartment. Tenants are responsible for maintaining the detectors, including testing and replacing batteries.

If you do not have operational smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, notify your property owner. If the issue is not corrected, register a complaint by calling 311.



3. Have an Escape Plan

An escape plan is important to keep you safe in the event of a fire. Everyone in your household should help make the plan and practice it regularly. Know if you live in a fire proof or non-fire proof building, which will help you determine if you should stay in your apartment or get out.

Property owners must post escape plans on the inside of every apartment door, common area, and distribute them to each unit, to new tenants, and annually during fire prevention week.

If you do not have a fire escape plan, visit fdnysmart.org for tips on how to develop an easy to remember plan should you find yourself in your home during a fire.

For a list of upcoming fire safety events with HPD and FDNY: nyc.gov/hpdevents.
For more information on the fire safety campaign: nyc.gov/keepinghomesfiresafe.





4. Clear Exits

Help your family escape from fire, and help first responders quickly access your apartment, by keeping exits free and clear of clutter or storage on fire escapes, hallways, and entrance doors including roof doors.

It is illegal to install key-locked window gates on fire escapes and double-cylinder locks on apartment doors which can trap residents inside an apartment in the event of a fire.

If there are obstacles that block your exits that do not belong to you, notify your property owner. If the issue is not corrected, register a complaint by calling 311.



5. Keep Your Kitchen Safe

Keep the area around your stove clear of towels, papers, and potholders. Stand by your pan and never leave cooking food unattended, and enforce a kid-free zone around your stove.

Property owners must provide stove knob covers for gas-powered stoves where they know or reasonably should know that a child under the age of six resides, unless there are no compatible knobs for the stove. Changes to the law beginning in January 2023 require property owners to provide tenants with annual notice regarding the tenant's ability to request, in writing, either stove knob covers or permanent stove safety knobs with locking mechanisms for gas-powered stoves.

If you have a child under the age of six in your apartment or you would like stove knob covers, request them from your property owner. If the property owner does not provide stove knob covers, register a complaint by calling 311.



6. Heat Your Home Safely

When using an electric space heater, never use an extension cord. Extension cords can overheat if used for large current appliances like space heaters, refrigerators, and air conditioners.

GIVE SPACE HEATERS SPACE! Heaters should be placed at least three feet from any combustible material such as bedding and furniture. Inspect space heater electrical cords for damage before each use.

Only use equipment that has the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) mark. Turn off or unplug the space heater whenever you leave the room or go to sleep. Look for space heaters with automatic shut-off features.

Never use the kitchen oven or gas range to heat your home. This improper use can result in dangerous levels of carbon monoxide, causing severe illness and possible death.

Property owners are legally required to provide heat and hot water to their tenants. If you are a tenant without heat or hot water, contact your property owner first. If your property owner is unresponsive, register a complaint by calling 311.