Fire and Life Safety Equipment

Fire and Life Safety equipment such as smoke and/or carbon monoxide detectors and fire alarm pull stations (Manor House and Tara buildings 5, 6, 9, 10 and 11) are provided to ensure the safety of our residents. It is important this equipment remains well maintained and functioning at all times.

Smoke detectors are designed to sound when smoke is detected -- and although this can be annoying when cooking, fire codes require the placement of the equipment in the kitchens to detect the first sign of smoke.

Hands Off!
You should never cover the detector, remove it from the ceiling, remove the batteries, twist or attempt to loosen it. These actions are all considered tampering. Residents who tamper with fire and/or life safety equipment will be charged for the labor and materials required to replace, repair or reinstall the equipment. Additionally, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for violating the Student Conduct Code. Students referred to the Office of Student Conduct are assessed additional charges necessary to cover the judicial process.

Preventing Fire Alarm Activation

In order to prevent accidental activation of the fire alarm system, please keep in mind:

- Cooking with extremely hot oil will result in smoke. Try an alternative cooking method, or use a fan and open windows to increase air circulation. And remember: never leave cooking food unattended.
- Candles are strictly prohibited in the apartments. Electric candles are a safe alternative.
- Never store flammable liquids or materials on University property, inside or outside of your apartment. These include items such as gasoline, lighter fluid, motor oil, antifreeze and propane.

We understand that accidental activation of the alarm may happen. It is not our intent to punish residents for these incidents! However if residents abuse this leniency, we will refer them to MU Conduct.

We hope that this information will help eliminate many of the accidental activations!
Each apartment in your community is equipped with an alarm to assist in your protection that detects both smoke and carbon monoxide. This alarm is hardwired into your electrical system and has a battery backup.

FIRE: If you hear three long beeps followed by a voice message indicating fire, a fire has been detected in your apartment, and the red light will flash. If this happens, you should use your judgment on how to best handle the situation. This can be anything from fanning the smoke out of your apartment (if it is limited to a smoke-inducing but non-threatening situation) to calling 911 and evacuating the apartment.

CARBON MONOXIDE: If carbon monoxide is detected, you will hear four short beeps followed by a voice message indicating carbon monoxide, and the red light will flash. If this happens, you should open your windows. If you feel safe doing so, evacuate the apartment and contact maintenance or emergency maintenance from a safe location such as a neighbor’s apartment.

TESTING: You are NOT responsible for testing the smoke detector. If there are any problems with your alarm, such as the unit beginning to “chirp,” you should contact the Maintenance Center. Our staff will inspect and change the battery in your detector semi-annually.

FIRE: When smoke is detected, the nearest detector will sound and the alarm company will notify Residential Life. A member of our staff will be dispatched to your apartment to assess the situation and reset the alarm. In the meantime, you should use your judgment on how to best handle the situation. For example, fanning the smoke from your apartment or extinguishing a small fire. If smoke is detected by a second detector (or by one common area detector) the building alarm will sound. If this happens, the alarm company will notify the Columbia Fire Department and Residential Life that there is an emergency. Everyone in the building must evacuate immediately. When evacuating the building, always use the stairs; never use the elevators.

TESTING: You are not responsible for testing your smoke detector. The detector will notify Residential Life if it requires service. We will also inspect your detector annually.