

**FIRE SAFETY PLAN  
PART 1 – BUILDING INFORMATION SECTION**

**BUILDING ADDRESS:** Sigma Phi Epsilon (SPE) - 550 West 113<sup>th</sup> Street

**BUILDING OWNER / REPRESENTATIVE:**

Name: Trustees of Columbia University  
 Address: 535 West 116<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10027  
 Telephone: (212) 854-2797

**BUILDING INFORMATION:**

**Year of Construction:** 1896

**Type of Construction:**  Combustible  Non-Combustible

**Number of Floors:** 4 Above ground 1 Below ground

**Sprinkler System:**  Yes  No

**Sprinkler System coverage:**  Entire Building  Partial (complete all that apply):

Dwelling Units: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hallways: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Stairwells: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Compactor Chute: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other: Basement

**Fire Alarm:**  Yes  Transmits Alarm to Fire Dept./Fire Alarm Co.  No

**Location of Manual Pull Stations:** Each floor by stairwell

**Public Address System:**  Yes  No

Location of Speakers:  Stairwell  Hallway  Dwelling Unit  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Means of Egress** (e.g., Unenclosed/Enclosed Interior Stair, Exterior Stair, Fire Tower Stair, Fire Escapes, Exits):

Type of Egress	Identification	Location	Leads to
Unenclosed Interior	None	Hallway	Front and Back
Unenclosed Interior	None	Basement	Front and Back

**Other Information:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## **Fire safety notice**

**In the event of fire, stay calm. Notify security and follow directions from security or fire department personnel. If you must take immediate action, use your judgment as to the safest course of action, guided by the following information:**

### **YOU ARE IN A COMBUSTIBLE (NON-FIREPROOF) BUILDING**

#### **IF THE FIRE IS IN YOUR ROOM OR SUITE**

- Close door to the burning room and leave the area.
- Make sure **EVERYONE** leaves the room or suite with you.
- Take your keys.
- Close, but do not lock, room or suite doors.
- Alert people on the floor by knocking on doors as exiting.
- Use the nearest stairwell when exiting the building.
- **DO NOT USE THE ELEVATOR.**
- Call 99 once you reach a safe location. Do not assume the fire has been reported unless fire fighters are at the scene.
- Meet members of your suite of floor at a pre-determined location outside the building. Notify security or firefighters if anyone is unaccounted for.

#### **IF THE FIRE IS NOT IN YOUR ROOM OR SUITE**

- Exit your room or suite, first feel the room or suite door and doorknob for heat. If they are not hot, open the door slightly and check hallway for smoke, heat or fire.
- If you can safely exit your room or suite, follow the instructions above for a fire in your room or suite.
- If the hallway is not safe because of smoke, heat or fire and you have access to a fire escape use it to exit the building. Proceed cautiously on the fire escape.
- If you cannot safely exit your room or suite, dial 99 and inform security of your location. Give building name, floor, room or suite number and number of people with you.
- Seal the doors to your room or suite with wet towels or sheets, if possible seal air ducts or other openings where smoke may enter.
- Do not break any windows.
- If possible, open a window and wave a towel or sheet to attract the attention of firefighters.
- In the event smoke conditions worsen before help arrives, get down on the floor and take short breaths through your nose. If possible, retreat to egress away from the source of the flames, heat or smoke.

**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE HALL  
FIRE SAFETY PLAN**

**PART II – FIRE EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

**BUILDING**

**ADDRESS:** 550 West 113<sup>th</sup> Street

**THIS FIRE SAFETY PLAN IS INTENDED TO HELP YOU AND THE MEMBERS OF YOUR FLOOR OR SUITE PROTECT YOURSELVES IN THE EVENT OF FIRE. THIS FIRE SAFETY PLAN CONTAINS:**

- **Basic fire prevention and fire preparedness measures that will reduce the risk of fire and maximize your safety in the event of fire.**
- **Basic information about your building, including the type of construction, the different ways of exiting the building, and the types of fire safety systems it may have.**
- **Emergency fire safety and evacuation instructions in the event of fire in your building.**

**PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ THE FIRE SAFETY PLAN AND TO DISCUSS IT WITH THE MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD. FIRE PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS, AND AWARENESS CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE!**

**IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE,**

**Dial 99 on University Room Phones**

**OR TRANSMIT AN ALARM FROM  
THE NEAREST BUILDING INTERIOR FIRE ALARM BOX**

**BASIC FIRE PREVENTION AND FIRE PREPAREDNESS MEASURES**

These are fire safety tips that everybody should follow:

1. Every room or suite should be equipped with at least one heat or smoke detector. These units are checked periodically to make sure they work. Units equipped with batteries are tested and have batteries replaced when necessary. Report whenever a smoke detector chirps to signal that its battery is low. Battery smoke detectors should be replaced on a regular basis in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendation, but at least once every ten years.
2. Carelessly handled or discarded cigarettes are the leading cause of fire deaths. Never smoke in bed or when you are drowsy, and be especially careful when smoking on a sofa. Be sure that you completely extinguish every cigarette in an ashtray that is deep and won't tip over. Never leave a lit or smoldering cigarette on furniture.

3. Matches and lighters can be deadly in the hands of children. Store them out of reach of children and teach them about the danger of fire.
4. Cooking is not permitted in individual rooms or lounges, it is permitted in kitchens. Do not leave cooking unattended. Keep stovetops clean and free of items that can catch fire. Before you go to bed, check your kitchen to ensure that your oven is off and all electrical appliances are unplugged.
5. Never overload electrical outlets. Replace any electrical cord that is cracked or frayed. Never run extension cords under rugs. Use only power strips with circuit breakers.
6. Keep all doorways and windows leading to fire escapes free of obstructions, and report to the owner any obstructions or accumulations of rubbish in the hallways, stairwells, fire escapes or other means of egress.
7. Window gates are only installed if it is absolutely necessary for security reasons. Columbia University will install only approved window gates. Do not install window gates with key locks. A delay in finding or using the key could cost lives. Columbia maintains the window gate's opening device so it operates smoothly. Familiarize yourself and the members of your suite with the operation of the window gate.
8. Familiarize yourself and members of your floor or suite with the location of all stairwells, fire escapes and other means of egress.
9. With your Resident Advisor and the members of your suite or floor, prepare and emergency escape route to use in the event of a fire in the building. Choose a meeting place a safe distance from your building where you should meet in case you get separated during a fire.
10. Exercise care in the use and placement of fresh cut decorative greens. Live Christmas trees and holiday wreaths are not permitted in residence halls. Do not place decorations in public hallways where they might block egress from your room if they catch on fire. Keep them away from any flame.

## **BUILDING INFORMATION**

### **Building Construction**

In a fire emergency, the decision to leave or to stay in your room will depend in part on the location of the fire.

Residential buildings built before 1968 are generally classified either as "fireproof" or "non-fireproof." Residential buildings built in or after 1968 are generally classified either as "combustible" or "non-combustible." The type of building construction generally depends on the size and height of the building.

A "non-combustible" or "fireproof" building is a building whose structural components (the supporting elements of the building, such as steel or reinforced concrete beams and floors) are constructed of materials that do not burn or are resistant to fire and therefore will not contribute to the spread of the fire. In such buildings, fires are more likely to be contained in the room or space in which they start and less likely to spread inside the building walls to other rooms and

floors. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE BUILDING IS IMMUNE TO FIRE. While the structural component of the building may not catch fire, all of the contents of the building (including furniture, carpeting, wood floors, decorations and personal belongings) may catch on fire and generate flame, heat and large amounts of smoke, which can travel throughout the building, especially if room or stairwell doors are left open.

A “combustible” or “non-fireproof” building has structural components (such as wood) that will burn if exposed to fire and can contribute to the spread of the fire. In such buildings, the fire can spread inside the building walls to other rooms and floors, in addition to the flame, heat and smoke that can be generated by the burning of the contents of the building.

**Be sure to check Part I (Building Information Section) of this fire safety plan to see in which type of building you reside.**

### Means of Egress

All residential buildings have at least one means of egress (way of exiting the building), and most have at least two. There are several different types of egress:

**Interior stairs:** All buildings have stairs leading to the street level. These stairs may be closed or unenclosed. Unenclosed stairwells (stairs that are not separated from the hallways by walls and doors) do not prevent the spread of flame, heat and smoke. Since flame, heat and smoke generally rise, unenclosed stairwells may not ensure safe egress in the event of a fire on a lower floor. Enclosed stairs are more likely to permit safe egress from the building, if the doors are kept closed. It is important to get familiar with the means of egress available in your building.

**Exterior Stairs:** Some buildings provide access to rooms or floors by means of stairs and corridors that are outdoors. The fact that they are outdoors and do not trap heat and smoke enhance their safety in the event of a fire provided that they are not obstructed.

**Fire Tower Stairs:** There are generally enclosed stairwells in a “tower” separated from the building by airshafts open to the outside. The open airshafts allow heat and smoke to escape from the building.

**Fire Escapes:** Many older buildings are equipped with a fire escape on the outside of the building, which is accessed through a window or balcony. Fire escapes are considered “secondary” or alternative means of egress, and are to be used if the primary means of egress (stairwells) cannot be safely used to exit the building because they are obstructed by flame, heat or smoke.

**Exits:** Most buildings have more than one exit. In addition to the main entrance to the building, there may be separate side exits, rear exits, basement exits, roof exits and exits to the street from stairwells. Some of these exits may have alarms. Not all these exits may lead to the street. Roof exits may or may not allow access to adjoining buildings.

Be sure to review Part I (Building Information Section) of this fire safety plan and familiarize yourself with the different means of egress from your building.

## Fire Sprinkler Systems

A fire sprinkler system is a system of pipes and sprinkler heads that when triggered by the heat of a fire automatically discharges water that extinguishes the fire. The sprinkler system will continue to discharge water until it is turned off. When a sprinkler system activates, an alarm is sounded.

Sprinkler systems are very effective at preventing fire from spreading beyond the room in which it starts. However, the fire may still generate smoke, which can travel throughout the building.

University Residence Hall buildings are equipped with sprinkler systems, in corridors, compactor chutes and room areas below grade and boiler rooms. All apartment buildings constructed or substantially renovated after March 1999 will be required by law to be equipped with fire sprinkler systems throughout the building.

**Be sure to review Part I (Building Information Section) of this fire safety plan to learn whether your building is equipped with fire sprinkler systems.**

## Interior Fire Alarm Systems

All University Residence Hall buildings are equipped with interior fire alarm systems that are designed to warn building occupants of a fire in the building. Interior fire alarm systems generally consist of a panel located in a lobby or basement, with manual pull stations located near the main entrance and by each stairwell door, smoke detection in common areas, heat or smoke detectors in all living space, water flow alarms and duct detectors. Interior fire alarm systems in University Residence Hall buildings automatically transmit a signal for a Fire Department response.

**Be sure to review Part I (Building Information Section) of this fire safety plan to learn what type of suppression and detection equipment your building is equipped with. Familiarize yourself with the locations of manual pull stations and how to activate them in the event of a fire.**

## **EMERGENCY FIRE SAFETY AND EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE, FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS OF FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL, SECURITY AND YOUR RESIDENCE LIFE STAFF. HOWEVER, THERE MAY BE EMERGENCY SITUATIONS IN WHICH YOU MAY BE REQUIRED TO DECIDE ON A COURSE OF ACTION TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR SUITE OR FLOOR.**

THIS FIRE SAFETY PLAN IS INTENDED TO ASSIST YOU IN SELECTING THE SAFEST COURSE OF ACTION IN SUCH AN EMERGENCY. PLEASE NOTE THAT NO FIRE SAFETY PLAN CAN ACCOUNT FOR ALL OF THE POSSIBLE FACTORS AND CHANGING CONDITIONS; YOU WILL HAVE TO DECIDE FOR YOURSELF WHAT THE SAFEST COURSE OF ACTION UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES IS.

## **General Emergency Fire Safety Instructions**

1. Stay clam. Do not panic. Notify the Fire Department as soon as possible. Firefighters will be on the scene of a fire within minutes of receiving an alarm.
2. Because flame, heat and smoke rise, generally a fire on a floor below your apartment presents a greater threat to your safety than a fire on a floor above your suite or room.
3. Do not overestimate your ability to put out a fire. Most fires cannot be easily or safely extinguished. Do not attempt to put the fire out once it begins to quickly spread. If you attempt to put a fire out, you **MUST** first transmit the alarm. Make sure you have a clear path of retreat from the room.
4. As you exit the building during a fire, close all doors as you exit to confine the fire. **NEVER USE THE ELEVATOR.** It could stop between floors or take you where the fire is.
5. Heat, smoke and gasses emitted by burning materials can quickly choke you. If you are caught in a heavy smoke condition, get down on the floor and keeping one hand on the wall, crawl to the nearest exit. Take short breaths, breathing through your nose.
6. If you clothes catch fire, don't run. Stop where you are, drop to the ground, cover your face with your hands to protect your face and lungs and roll over to smother the flames.

## **Evacuation Instructions If The Fire Is In Your Room or Suite (All Types of Building Construction)**

1. Close the door to the room where the fire is, leave your room or suite.
2. Make sure **EVERYONE** leaves the area with you.
3. Take your keys.
4. Close, but do not lock the room door.
5. Alert people on your floor by knocking on their doors on you way to the exit.
6. Use the nearest stairwell to exit the building.
7. **DO NOT USE THE ELEVATOR**
8. Dial 99 once you reach a safe location. Do not assume a fire has been reported unless firefighters are on the scene.
9. Meet the members of your floor or suite at a predetermined location outside the building. Notify responding firefighters if anyone is unaccounted for.

## **Evacuation Instructions If The Fire Is Not In Your Apartment**

### “NON-COMBUSTIBLE” OR “FIREPROOF” BUILDINGS:

1. New York State Education Law mandates occupants evacuate buildings upon receipt of a fire alarm. The State Education Law also mandates conducting fire drills in all education facilities. However, the New York City Fire Department recommendation to remain in a non-combustible or fireproof apartment is based on dwellings without automatic fire detection throughout the building, and buildings that do not conduct fire drills. Considering automatic detection in University Residence Hall buildings transmit the earliest possible notification of alarm, your safest action is to evacuate immediately, unless conditions become dangerous while trying to leave.
2. When you exit your room or suite, first feel the corridor door and doorknob for heat. If they are hot, open the door slightly and check the hallway for smoke, heat or fire.
3. If you can safely exit your room, follow the instructions above for a fire in your room or suite.
4. If you cannot safely exit your room or suite, dial 99 and notify Security of your floor, room number and the number of people in your room or suite.
5. Seal the doors to your room or suite with wet towels or sheets, and seal air ducts or other openings where smoke may enter.
6. Open windows a few inches at top and bottom unless flames and smoke are coming from below. **DO NOT BREAK ANY WINDOWS.**
7. If conditions in the room or suite appear life-threatening, open a window and wave a towel or sheet to attract attention of firefighters.
8. If smoke conditions worsen before help arrives, get down on the floor and take short breaths through your nose. If possible, retreat away from the source of the smoke, heat or fire.

### “COMBUSTIBLE” OR “NON-FIREPROOF” BUILDING

1. Feel your room or suite door or doorknob for heat. If they are not hot, open the door slightly and check the hallway for smoke, heat or fire.
2. Exit your suite or room if you can safely do so, following the instructions above for a fire in your suite or room.
3. If the hallway or stairwell is not safe because of smoke, heat or fire and you have access to a fire escape, use it to exit the building. Proceed cautiously on the fire escape.



4. If you cannot use the stairs or fire escape, dial 99 to notify Security of your floor location, room number and the number of people with you.
  - a. Seal the doors to your room or suite with wet towels or sheets, and seal air ducts or other openings where smoke may enter.
  - b. Open windows a few inches at top and bottom unless flames or smoke are coming from below. **DO NOT BREAK ANY WINDOWS.**
  - c. If conditions in the room or suite appear life-threatening, open a window and wave a towel or sheet to attract the attention of firefighters.
  - d. If smoke conditions worsen before help arrives, get down on the floor and take short breaths through your nose. If possible, retreat away from the source of the smoke, heat or fire.