



GUSTAVUS   
GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE  
MAKE YOUR LIFE COUNT™



# College Fire Safety

*Fire Education for Higher Education*



Minnesota State Fire Marshal Division

In association with:



Eden Prairie Fire Department

Edina Fire Department

Elk River Fire Department

Gustavus Adolphus College

Minneapolis Fire Department

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

St. Cloud Fire Department

St. Cloud State University

Savage Fire Department

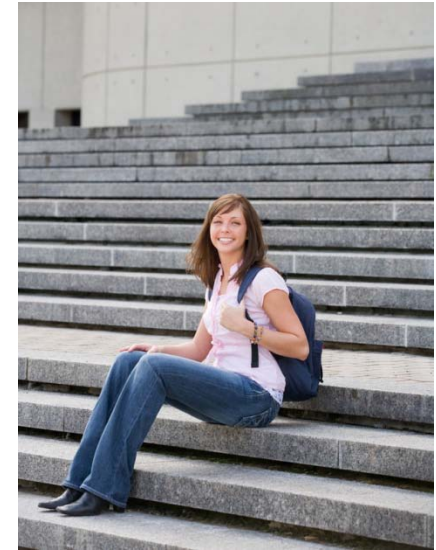
# Presentation Objectives

- To create awareness of campus-related fire deaths and injuries and their common causes.
- To educate students, faculty and staff on how to avoid fires and fire related injuries.
- To inform students, faculty and staff of their personal responsibility toward fire safety and injury prevention.

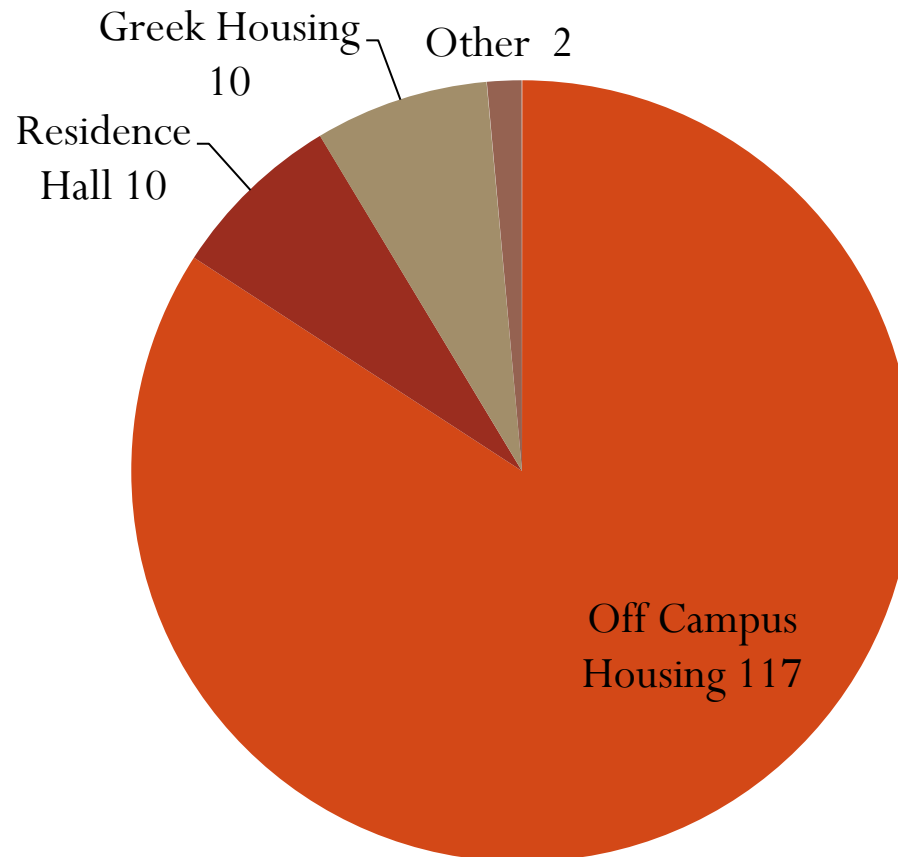


# Introduction

- 3,800 university housing fires occur each year in the U.S.
  - 5 deaths
  - 50 injuries
  - \$26 million in property loss
- 23% occur in September and October.



# National College Fire Fatality Statistics



# College Fire Fatalities

- Over 83% of campus related fire fatalities have occurred in off campus housing.
  - Four common factors in these fires include:
    - Lack of automatic fire sprinklers
    - Missing or disabled smoke alarms
    - Smoking materials
    - Alcohol consumption

**Personal vigilance is the best way to  
avoid and survive fires!**

# Major Causes of College Fires



Cooking



Smoking



Impairment



Electrical



Candles

# Cooking Fires

**A large percentage of Campus related fires originate in the kitchen.**

- Pay attention to what you're cooking!
- Don't cook if you're sleepy or if you're impaired.



# Cooking Fires

- Keep flammable items away from heat sources.



- Clean your stovetop frequently to avoid grease build up.

- Keep flammable cleaners away from heat sources.





# Cooking Fires

## **NEVER PUT WATER ON A GREASE FIRE!**

These pictures show what happens when you add one cup of water to an inch of burning grease



- Always have the matching lid nearby!
  - If you have a small grease fire you can smother it with the lid.

# Smoking Related Fires

- Tips to avoid smoking related fires:
  - Don't smoke inside.
  - Use a proper, heavy ashtray which won't tip easily.  
Don't improvise!



**Smoking is the leading cause of fire deaths.**

# Smoking Related Fires

- Don't smoke in bed.
- Don't smoke when:
  - tired
  - taking medications
  - you've been drinking or are otherwise impaired
- After a party, check cushions for smoldering cigarette butts.



**Cigarettes can smolder for hours.**



# Alcohol Impairment

- Alcohol and drugs lower quick evacuation.
- Alcohol was a factor in campus related fire fatalities.
- Alcohol consumption is a contributing factor in more than 40% of all adult fire fatalities.



# Electrical Safety

- Do not overload electrical sockets.
- Do not run cords under rugs or furniture.
- Avoid putting cords against walls or across doorways.
- Use power strips equipped with overload protection.
- Make sure all power strips and extension cords are tested and approved by a laboratory such as UL (Underwriter's Laboratories).



# Candles

- Many colleges don't allow candles to be used in on-campus housing.
  - State Fire Code: Section 308.3.8 "Group R-2 dormitories. Candles , incense and similar open-flame-producing items shall not be allowed in sleeping units in Group R-2 dormitory occupancies".



# Candles

- Unattended candles are a leading fire cause.
- Keep anything that could burn at least a foot away.
- Don't set the candles on anything combustible.



# Dumpster Fires

- Dumpsters should be located away from the building.

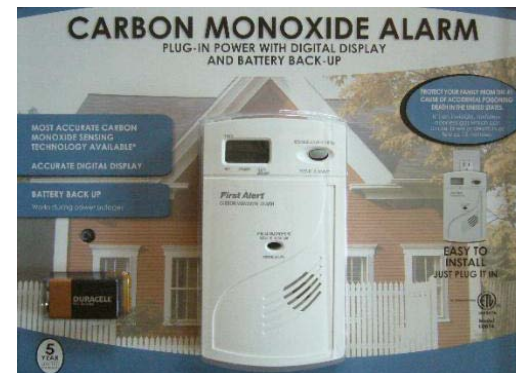


- Pay attention to where you are parking.



# Important Safety Elements

- Alarms
  - Smoke
  - Carbon Monoxide
- Fire extinguishers
- Fire Sprinkler Systems



# Toxic Smoke

- Breathing smoke can kill you!
  - Smoke is toxic.
  - If you must escape through smoke, get low and go under the smoke.



# Smoke Alarms

- Check to make sure there are working smoke alarms.
  - Each level
  - Every bedroom
- Check them once a month.
- Change the batteries once a year.
- Replace the whole detector every ten years.

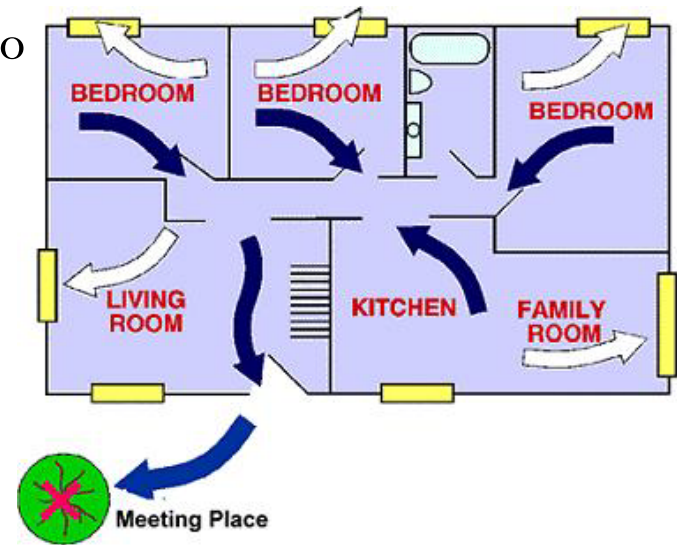


**Take responsibility for your own life!**

**Get them, use them, check them!**

# Smoke Alarms

- Know your escape routes and practice them.
  - You may only have seconds or minutes to escape safely.
  - Take every alarm seriously!
  - Establish a meeting place.
  - Plan two ways out.
- Make sure you can hear the alarm.



**If there isn't a working smoke alarm –  
Don't stay there!**

# Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- Carbon monoxide (CO)
  - Invisible
  - Odorless
  - Colorless gas
- Minnesota law requires carbon monoxide alarms in all homes, within ten feet of all sleeping areas.
- If you're feeling symptoms, get to fresh air and call 9-1-1.



**High levels of CO can be fatal,  
causing death within minutes.**

# Fire Sprinkler Systems

- Check for sprinkler systems.
- Only the sprinkler closest to the fire will activate, spraying water directly on the fire.
- Never hang items on the sprinkler heads or pipes.



**Fire sprinkler systems save lives  
and reduce damage to your property.**

# If you have a fire...

- Call 9-1-1 from outside.
- Report ALL fires to the fire department!
- Don't ignore alarms.
- Once you're out, STAY OUT!



**You never know when it could be a real fire.**

# When considering housing, ask:

- Have there have been any fires?
- Does every bedroom and level have a smoke alarm?
- Are there carbon monoxide alarms near every bedroom?
- Is your living space equipped with an automatic fire sprinkler system?
- Is there on-site management to help in an emergency?





# When considering housing, ask:

## **On Campus Housing:**

- How much fire prevention training does the residence hall staff receive?
- How often are evacuation drills conducted?
- How often are fire safety inspections done?
- How many false alarms happened in the residence halls last year?



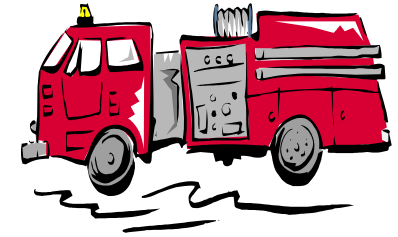
# When considering housing, ask:

## **Off Campus Housing:**

- How many people are living in the house or apartment?
- Is smoking allowed in the house or apartment?
- Are there scheduled evacuation drills?
- Is there a fire escape plan for the building?



# Summary



- There are many ways to reduce your risk of fire:
  - Stay focused when you're cooking.
  - Use candles responsibly, or not at all.
  - Don't overload electrical sockets or misuse extension cords.
  - If you must smoke, be responsible for your smoking materials.
  - If someone is smoking in or near your home, check to make sure that all smoking materials are properly disposed of.
  - Have a fire safety plan and practice it!
  - Have working smoke and CO alarms.
  - Be responsible.

# Resources

- If you have questions about fire safety, inspections, or other fire related issues contact your local fire department.
- For information on renter's rights and landlord responsibilities, contact the State Attorney General's Office  
*[www.ag.state.mn.us](http://www.ag.state.mn.us)*
- Information on renter's insurance, contact:  
*[www.rentersinsurance.net/minnesota.html](http://www.rentersinsurance.net/minnesota.html)*
  - According to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, Minnesota has one of the cheapest rates for renters insurance in the entire nation.



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