

THE CITY OF SUMMIT

N E W J E R S E Y

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News Release

For immediate release

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Summit Fire Department Issues Fire Safety Tips for College Students

SUMMIT, NJ, August 5, 2025 – The City of Summit Fire Department is issuing a series of campus fire safety tips for college students to use during the school year. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), from 2018 to 2022, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated annual average of 3,331 structure fires in dormitories, fraternities, sororities, and other related properties. These fires caused annual averages of 3 civilian deaths and 21 civilian injuries.

“Going away to college is an exciting time for students and their families, but with new independence comes new responsibilities,” explains Fire Chief Eric Evers. “For most students, the last fire safety training they received was in grade school, so it is important they review their fire risks and prevention actions to stay safe away from home.”

The following safety tips from the NFPA can be used to ensure a fire-safe environment on and off campus.

Housing

- Look for fully-sprinklered housing when choosing a dorm or off-campus housing.
- Make sure each bedroom and living room and every level of your housing has a smoke alarm. For the best protection, all smoke alarms in your dorm, apartment, or house should be interconnected so that when one sounds, they all sound.
- Test all smoke alarms at least monthly and never remove batteries or disable the alarm.
- Learn your building’s evacuation plan and practice all drills as if they are the real thing. If you live off campus, have a fire escape plan with two ways out of every room.
- Make sure your housing has carbon monoxide detectors installed outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. Many off-campus houses are older and were built prior to these detectors being required.

Cooking and Electrical Safety

- Check with your local fire department for any restrictions before using a grill, fire pit, or chiminea.
- If a fire starts in a microwave, keep the door closed and unplug the unit.
- Check your school’s rules before using electrical appliances in your room.
- Never use an extension cord with large appliances like a refrigerator. Don’t overload outlets.
- Only use surge protectors or power strips that have internal overload protection.

Smoking

- Use deep, wide ashtrays. Place ashtrays on something sturdy and hard to burn.
- Don’t smoke when you have been drinking or are drowsy.
- After a party, check for cigarette butts, especially under cushions. Chairs and sofas catch on fire fast and burn fast.

For more information and fire safety tips, please visit www.cityofsummit.org/fire.

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