

OFF CAMPUS HOUSING- HOW TO MAKE ENLIGHTENED DECISIONS



Too frequently students and parents alike fail to properly investigate off campus dwellings.



[creativecommons.org/bowlinggreen@walk2campus](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

There are a few simple measures that can be taken to help ensure better safety outcomes: 1) insist on **fully sprinkled** residences with at least 2 ways out, **hardwired smoke detectors** and, **integrated smoke and fire alarm systems** for leased buildings; 2) At the very least single rooms in existing houses should be equipped with **interconnected hardwired smoke alarms** which are throughout the building a serviced fire extinguishers in the kitchen; 3) Verify that each dwelling is **legally sanctioned** by the municipality or agency responsible for the issuance of Rental licenses or Property Leases;

4) Check with the **local Building Authority and the Fire Marshal** to determine what kind of track record your potential landlord has with regard to code violations and penalties; 5) Always read your lease and know your rights; 6) Exercise good judgment; 7) Not sure? ASK!!!

Take the time to follow this link for ED Comeau's Campus Fire Watch and a related Fire House Magazine article by Susan Nichol:

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/11129796/campus-fire-safety-as-important-as-location>

Campus Fire Safety and Off-Campus Checklist

The [NFPA](#) and the [Center for Campus Fire Safety](#) has developed a safety checklist for students seeking off-campus housing accommodations and critical information helpful for any residence.

Finally if you simply have additional questions or concerns or find yourself committed to a lease agreement which violates local code and municipal ordinances implemented for your protection, please contact [The Catholic University of America Housing Services](#), [The Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs / Office of the Tenant Advocate](#), and/or, [The District of Columbia Fire Marshal's Office](#).

For on Campus Safety concerns follow this link to resources at the [Department of Environmental Health and Safety](#).