

Fire & Rescue NSW

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Safe living in high rise buildings

Fact

Every year the fire services responds to many fires in residential buildings of 4 storeys and above. In such buildings, each apartment is designed to give you protection from fires that may occur within another apartment of the building.

The fire services recommend this simple safety checklist for safe living in high rise buildings.

- On every level of the building there is firefighting equipment such as fire hose reels and portable fire extinguishers for residents to use in the case of fire.
- Know where these fire hose reels and portable fire extinguishers are and know how to use them.
- The front door of your apartment should be a certified fire resistant door. Making alterations to the front door can make it unsafe in the event of fire. Check with your building management before making alterations.
- Exit points should be clearly identifiable by an illuminated green and white exit sign. Familiarise yourself with the exit points that are in your building and where they lead to.
- Ensure your apartment has a suitable number of working smoke alarms installed.
- Develop a home escape plan from your apartment, and practise it regularly.
- Never use a lift in the case of a fire. Lifts are not smoke or fire resistant.
- Fire stairs provide a safe environment that will lead you to a safe place away from the building. Never chock open any fire stair doors as this will cause smoke and heat to enter the fire stairs.
- Fire stair doors and external apartment doors are designed to self close every time. Report any problems with these doors to your building management immediately.
- Never leave anything in a fire stair well at anytime!
- Never place burning or hot materials, flammable liquids or oily rags into garbage chutes.
- Sprinkler heads should not be interfered with. Never hang anything (coat hangers included) off sprinkler heads. You and your furniture will get very wet!
- Damage to sprinkler heads, excessive smoke from the kitchen or steam from the bathroom are major causes of false alarms in residential high rise buildings, You may be charged \$500 for the infringement and up to \$130 for an administration fee.

Fire safety tips

If you cannot escape by the fire stairs, do the following:

- Close all windows and doors to stop the smoke entering your apartment.
- Call the fire services on Triple Zero (000) and tell them there is a fire in your apartment block. Tell them your apartment number and that you are unable to get out of your apartment safely, and then follow any advice given to you by the fire service.