

THE SAFETY OBSERVER

Safety Information for Employees

FIRE PROTECTION

EQUIPMENT

Inspection of emergency equipment should be completed by property staff on a monthly basis. Smoke detectors within each apartment unit should be tested each time the maintenance staff visits a unit. All fire protection systems are to be checked at least annually by a licensed inspector. All fire extinguishers are to be re-charged as recommended by the inspector and/or local fire regulations.

If there are fire hydrants located on your property, you will need to determine if they are owned by the property or if they actually belong to the local jurisdiction (i.e. county, city, utility company, municipality, etc). If your property owns the hydrants, then you are responsible for having them tested per the local fire code. Your local Fire Marshall will know who owns them, and how often they must be tested. If they are owned by a government agency, then that agency is responsible for testing. Remember to document all information when researching who the responsible parties are.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

If there is a fire, or other serious emergency, you won't have time to go look-up what you need to do. The lights might go out or smoke can quickly thicken impairing your vision. You must know what to do and where to go without thinking twice. Being prepared for a fire can make the difference in the extent of damage, and in life or death.

Every property needs to have their Emergency Action Plan already in place. In order to be prepared, specific duties must be assigned to each associate in advance so everyone knows what roll they are to play. Assigning duties at the time of the emergency will just cause confusion to a time-sensitive situation, and crucial responsibilities can be missed. Contingencies for absentee employees must be considered. The Property Manager or Assistant must determine who will need to perform duties assigned to an employee who is not available.

Here are some of the steps when responding to fire:

1. Sound the alarm!! If there is not a pull station, your voice will have to do. Yell "FIRE" as loud and repetitive as you can to get attention.
2. Evacuate the building.
3. If you have been properly trained to use a fire extinguisher, you may attempt to put a small fire out.

All other employees are to:

- Remain calm.
- Stay at your designated posts, and be available for any supervisor's instructions.
- Keep residents and guests together at the designated evacuation location. Do not allow them to retrieve items from their car, or leave the scene. Make sure they are not in the way of emergency personnel.