Housing Fire Safety Requirements

**Appliances** — Every electrical appliance must be UL-listed and may only be used in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions for that appliance. Any appliance not specifically listed for use “where exposed to the outside elements” is prohibited on an outdoor balcony or patio. All appliances (e.g., cooking, portable heaters) with exposed heating elements are prohibited. Microwaves must be 750 watts or less and refrigerators must be 5.0 cubic feet or less and must be plugged directly into wall outlets. Heat producing cooking appliances (e.g., toasters, electric grills, water boilers, coffee makers, rice cookers, etc.) must be used in the kitchen areas only. Burned food may activate the building fire alarm and the resident responsible may be financially liable for the costs of the response to the alarm, including fire suppression.

**Extension cords and power strips** — All extension cords must have the following components: 1) Must be three-pronged; 2) Must be UL Listed; 3) Must be plugged directly into a wall outlet (not another extension cord or power strip); 4) Must be sized adequately to handle the load and; 5) Power strips must be circuited and have an on/off switch. Extension cords may only be used on a temporary basis and not as a substitute for permanent wiring. A power strip with a built-in breaker may be used in place of an extension cord for low-draw appliances (generally 600 watts or less). Some examples of appliances with low wattage that can be used with power strips include, laptop computers (40W-120W), 25” televisions (150W), clock radios (7W), gaming consoles (195W) and curling irons (90W). Multi-plug, non-circuit, adaptors and extension cords can create fire hazards and are not allowed. Flexible wiring (i.e., circuited power strips and extension cords) shall not be extended through walls, ceilings, floors, under doors or floor coverings, or be subject to environmental or physical damage. Wiring, including but not limited to electrical, telephone, cable, or computer wiring, from apartment to apartment or from room to room is prohibited.

**Decorations** — Decorative materials are not permitted in corridors. Do not obstruct exit signs, fire alarms, extinguishers, sprinkler heads or hose cabinets with decorative materials. Decorations of any kind are not to be affixed or adhered to any ceiling.

**Evacuation** — Evacuation maps may not be removed or altered. Take time to familiarize yourself with the evacuation plan for your residence. It is each resident’s responsibility to evacuate to designated assembly areas when the fire alarm sounds. Failure to evacuate immediately is dangerous and a violation of the California Fire Code.

**Fire doors and exit corridors** — Residents should not bypass or disable safety design features by propping doors or blocking latches. No items (including trash, furniture, decorative materials, etc.) may block or obstruct exit corridors and exit doors.

**False fire alarms and tampering with fire equipment** — False alarms (pulling fire alarm stations without cause, tampering with smoke detectors, etc.) are violations of the California Fire Code and can be punishable by up to 6 months in jail and/or $1,000 fine. It is also a misdemeanor to tamper with, cover or interfere with fire alarm pull stations, smoke and heat detectors, fire extinguishers, hoses, fire sprinkler systems, EXIT signs, and emergency lighting. Hanging items on, damaging, dismantling, deactivating, covering, or otherwise altering smoke detectors, heat detectors, sprinkler heads or any fire/emergency equipment is prohibited. Smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes, is prohibited on campus and can activate smoke detectors causing the fire alarm system to activate.

**Flammable, explosive or corrosive substances** — Storage or use of any flammable liquids, fireworks, compressed gas canisters, photo developing chemicals or corrosive materials (in any quantity) is prohibited in or around the residential facilities. No vehicles or machines with flammable or corrosive materials can be brought into or stored in or around the residential facilities.

**Halogen lamps** — Halogen lamps are prohibited since they can create enough heat to cause fires.

**Open flames** — Use of candles, charcoal grills, incense, tiki torches or any other open flames are prohibited in or around the residential facilities. Propane gas for BBGs may not be stored in or around any residential facility. Gas BBGs may be used 25 feet away from residential buildings.

For more information, contact EH&S Fire & Life Safety, (858) 534-3659.