

# APARTMENT & CONDOMINIUM FIRE SAFETY

Multi-Unit & Multi-Level Living



**MISSISSAUGA**  
*Fire and Emergency Services*

*Leading today for tomorrow*



## If you live in a multi-unit and multi-level apartment or condominium...

It is important that you know what to do in case of fire. This brochure is intended to provide you with general guidelines on emergency procedures. These procedures are a compilation of information from the Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal and Mississauga Fire and Emergency Services. It should be noted that these procedures may not be appropriate or applicable for every apartment or condominium building.

If you're in doubt or have any questions please contact your building management team or Mississauga Fire and Emergency Services at 905-896-5908.

**Please Note:** If you have a **disability** that would prevent you from evacuating the building on your own, or would require assistance during a future emergency...

You should contact and discuss this with the building management team beforehand, and ask that they record this in the building's **Fire Safety Plan** under "*Persons Requiring Assistance*".

For additional fire safety information, please see our supplemental brochure:

**Protect Yourself From Fire**  
*Practice the Three Lines of Defence*

## WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF FIRE

### If there is a fire in your unit

- Tell everyone in your unit to leave immediately.
- Close doors behind you. Do not lock.
- Pull the fire alarm on your floor and yell "**FIRE, FIRE, FIRE**".

- Leave the building using the nearest safe exit or exit stairway.
- Call the fire department at 911 when you are safe.
- Meet firefighters at the front entrance and tell them where the fire is.

## When you hear the fire alarm

### To leave or to stay in the building... the decision is *yours*.

Most of the time the best thing to do in a fire is leave the building as soon as possible. But in some cases you may not be able to leave and you may have to stay in your unit. In either case you must act quickly.



No matter what your decision you must protect yourself from the smoke.

If you encounter smoke or fire conditions, call 911.

## If you decide to leave the building

### Check the door to your unit.

- If smoke is entering from around the door, do not open it. Protect yourself from smoke inside your unit as described later on in this brochure under the section *If you remain in your unit*.
- If there is no smoke, feel the door for heat and if none, brace yourself and open the door a little. If you see smoke or feel heat, close the door quickly and protect yourself.
- If the corridor is clear, take your keys, lock your door and go to the nearest safe stairway.



### Do not use the elevators

- Open the nearest stairway door carefully.

If there is **no smoke**, use the stairway to leave the building.

If there is **smoke**, do not enter. Close the door. Go to another stairway and open the door carefully. If there is no smoke here, use this stairway to leave the building.

If there is smoke, do not enter. If there are other stairways, try them.

If there are not, return to your apartment and protect yourself from smoke.

### **When you are inside the stairway**

If you find smoke on your way down the stairs, leave that stairway as soon as you can. In some buildings, some doors leading from the stairways may be locked.

But at least every five floors the doors will not lock so you can leave the stairway.

- Use another stairway if it is clear of smoke.
- If you can't use another stairway, return to your unit if you can, or go into a smoke free corridor and bang loudly on a unit door until you find a place to take shelter and call 911.

### **NEVER go to the roof.**

Smoke usually rises to the top of the stairway. Doors opening onto the roof are usually locked and you could be trapped.

- Remember, wherever you are, if there is smoke, get low below it even if you have to crawl. There air is cleaner near the floor.



## **If you remain in your unit**

### **You must protect yourself from smoke.**

Stay in your unit until you are rescued or until you are told to leave. This may take a long time.

Do not try to leave your unit a long time after the alarm has sounded. The longer you wait, the more risk there is that heavy smoke will have spread into stairways and corridors. Your chances of survival are less.

### **Keep smoke from entering your unit**

Use duct tape to seal cracks around the door and place wet towels at the bottom. Seal vents or air ducts the same way.



### **If smoke enters your unit**

- Telephone the fire department at 911 and tell them where you are, and then move toward the balcony if safe. Close doors behind you.
- If you don't have a balcony, go to the most smoke-free room, close the door and seal it with duct tape and towels. Open the window for fresh air.
- Show your rescuers where you are by hanging a sheet from the window or balcony.
- Keep low to the floor where the air is cleaner.
- If your building is equipped with a voice communication system, listen for instructions that may be given.



## **DID YOU KNOW THAT...**

- Unattended cooking is the leading cause of residential fires. Stay in the kitchen and pay attention to what you're cooking.
- Candle fires are on the rise. Keep candles away from combustibles and never leave them unattended.
- Smoke is the leading cause of death in residential fires. Make sure your smoke alarm(s) are working by testing monthly.
- The smoke alarm in your unit is not connected to the building fire alarm system, it notifies only you of a fire in your unit.
- Not all fire alarms automatically notify the fire department. Buildings under 18 metres (6-7 storeys) normally do not.

## **In case of any emergency call 911.**

- Contrary to popular belief, our aerial ladders do not reach every floor. You should not rely on them for rescue. Follow the proper emergency procedures.
- Your unit is fire separated from the rest of the units and corridors by a fire separation. This means that fire should not normally penetrate your unit but smoke can, be prepared to protect yourself from smoke.
- Self closing door devices are designed to keep smoke and fire from spreading outside your unit. If so equipped, do not disable them.

## **For further information, please contact**

Mississauga Fire and Emergency Services,  
905-896-5908 or visit us on our website  
**[www.mississauga.ca/fire](http://www.mississauga.ca/fire)**