FIRE SAFETY AND EVACUATION IN GROUP RESIDENTIAL SOCIETIES

GROUP RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS/SOCIETIES AND THEIR VULNERABILITY:

While buying a house facilities are always on top of our priority list, but we forget to perform due diligence on the Safety and Security features and one of the most important feature is Fire and Life safety. It is very much important for a Society to have Fire-fighting and Safety equipments such as Fire-extinguishers, Fire Alarm System and Fire Hydrant System to mitigate the risk of Fire. Multi-occupancy social housing accommodates some of the most vulnerable in Society, with a number of people living with disability. There is also a large portion of people who are either elderly or living with some illness. As a result the residents of these societies are at a higher risk of Fire as they may be more likely to forget about Fire Hazard (e.g. leaving food on the hob), be able to detect Fire Alarm (e.g. Hearing Disability) or may find it difficult to escape in the event of Fire.
WHAT IS YOUR ROLE TO PREVENT FIRE?

If you are occupying one of the floors of High Rise Residential Building, have you ever thought Fire Hazard around you? A little care and awareness on your part can avoid a major disaster and may save precious lives and property. Remember: Fire Prevention is your best Fire Protection. As you know, “Fire is easy to prevent but hard to fight”, you must therefore prevent Fire.

“SOME USEFUL TIPS TO PREVENT FIRE”

Always keep match-sticks away from children. Always throw match-sticks after putting it off in Dust-Bin or Use Gas Lighter.

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<th>NEVER</th>
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<tr>
<td>Throw burning match sticks,</td>
<td>Throw match sticks after putting it off in</td>
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<td>Its dangerous</td>
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Do not smoke on the Bed and always dispose cigarette butts in Ash-tray.

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<td>Smoke in bed, It’s dangerous</td>
<td>Use ashtray while smoking</td>
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Do not light Diyas (Earthen Lamps) near curtains, racks and cloths.

Never use naked wires in socket

Always Keep Safer distance between Portable Heaters and Clothes
Never allow children enjoy crackers alone. Always burst crackers in the supervision of elders.

Never refill hot or burning stoves

Do not make unauthorized electrical connections and overloading of electrical appliances and use proper fittings and right place for socket.
Never use Water to extinguish Electrical Fire, always cut off main power supply and use ABC/CO2 type Fire Extinguisher.

React immediately to a Fire Alarm.

Always use utensil lifters for lifting hot utensils.

NEVER
Use water on Electrical Fire
ALWAYS
Cut off main Power Supply & use Fire Extinguishers

NEVER
Relax after noticing the Fire Alarm
ALWAYS
Attend Fire Alarm immediately

NEVER
Use cloth for lifting utensil from Burning Stove
ALWAYS
Use insulated lifter for lifting utensil for your safety
SMOKE ALARMS FOR HEARING IMPAIRED PEOPLE

For people who cannot hear conventional smoke alarm, there are special devices available, which make use of Vibrating Pads or Flashing lights instead of audio signals. The Vibrating Pad Alarms are particularly useful for deaf and blind peoples.

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF FIRE

- If possible, close the door of the room, where the Fire is. Close all doors behind you as you leave. This will help delay the spread of fire and smoke.
- Before opening a closed door use the back of your hand to touch it and don’t open if feel hot—the Fire will be on the other side.
- Get everyone out as quickly as possible. Don’t try to pick up valuables. Make your way out, as safely as you can and try not to panic. It will help you to plan your escape route now rather than waiting until the Fire reaches you.
- Contact the Fire-Brigade. Clearly state the address of the Fire Spot.
- Never go back into the house until the Fire officer told you it is safe to do so.

### PLAN YOUR ESCAPE ROUTE

**In case of “Fire” in your home, would you know what to do?**

- Draw a map of your home. Show every room door, and window and the location of Fire Safety Arrangements.
- Mark and easy way out of each room. Then find a second way out.
- Make sure everyone knows where to find door and window keys.
- The best escape route is your normal way in and out of your home so keep it clear.
- Think of difficulty you may have getting out, for example in the middle of the night.
- Choose a second escape; you will need to find a room to wait in until the Fire Service arrive.
IN CASE ESCAPE ROUTE IS BLOCKED

- Get everyone into one room, with a window that opens, and shut the door.
- Put cushion and bedding around the bottom of door to block out smoke.
- Open the window and call for help or Dial 101.

IF YOUR CLOTHES CATCHES FIRE

- Don’t run around, you will fan the flames and make them burn faster.
- Lie down and roll around. It makes it harder for the fire to spread and smother the flame.
- Smother the flame with heavy material, like a coat, blanket or a fire blanket.

Stop.

Drop.

Roll.

REDUCE THE RISK OF FIRE

- Last thing at night-You are far more likely to be killed or injured in a fire during the night. Get used to checking your home before going to bed.
- Turn off and unplug all electrical appliances unless they are designed to leave on like refrigerator etc.
- Turn off the regulator of LPG Cylinder.
SAFETY TIPS FOR SURVIVAL IN THE EVENT OF FIRE

WHAT TO DO?

✓ Stay Calm, Don’t Panic and Don’t Run.
✓ Raise alarm and alert everyone in your premises.
✓ Escape first and then call for help.
✓ Use only escape routes since they are built for the purpose.
✓ If you see smoke as you escape try another escape route.
✓ If you have to escape through smoke, crawl low to your exit.
✓ Keep your head 1 or 2 feet above the floor. That’s where the air will be cleanest.
✓ Never go back to the building for any reason until it’s safe to do so. If someone trapped inside, tell the Fireman.
✓ After reaching the point of safety Call Fire Brigade or dial 101.

WHAT NOT TO DO:-

✓ Never stand up in a Fire, always crawl low under the smoke and try to keep your mouth covered with wet cloth or handkerchief.
✓ Never go back to a burning building for any reason.
✓ Teach children not to hide from Fireman.
✓ Don’t secure open Fire and Smoke Check Doors as they limit the spread of Fire when in closed position.
✓ Don’t be tempted to clutter the stairs, corridors and lobbies as they are your escape routes.
✓ Don’t shout or run here and there. This tends to cause panic to others.

FIRE AND EVACUATION DRILLS

Carrying out a Fire Drill in your housing complex would involve the following three steps:-

✓ Planning the Fire Drill
✓ Executing the Plan
✓ Assessing the outcome
PLANNING

- Fix a date and time for the drill that will suit everyone in the society. A good weekend or a public holiday will be preferable.
- Inform all the members of the housing society about the importance of the drill, as many might think it’s just a game.
- Plan how each member in every home will escape from their rooms, starting with the bedrooms. If possible, plan two escape routes from each house; in case the first route is blocked due to some reason. For instance, the second route may be to go out a window, or stand at a window where fire-fighters can see the member.
- No excuses should be allowed for not participating. Everyone must leave the building during the drill period. Even babysitters, frequent visitors or overnight guests should be included.
- Decide where every member will meet once they are outside.
- Ask residents to lock their doors as usual while running out of their home during the drill.
- Allocate two persons to coordinate the drill; one person for creating the smoke to blow the fire alarm and the other person to keep track of the time taken by each family to arrive at the meeting point.
- Make a list of all the family members present in each family so that it would be easy to track the exit of all the members of the society.

EXECUTING

- At the determined time, ask one of the coordinators to create a smoke by lighting an incense-stick or some paper near any of the smoke sensors. The objective is to start the fire alarm in the building.
- Once the alarm sounds, everybody in their homes should proceed promptly to the outside of the building by means of the nearest exit. Ensure that everyone reaches the desired meeting point within 3-4 minutes. If some people are unable to do so, make them do the drill again.
- Ensure everyone in each household can open all doors and windows.
- All members should proceed to the designated meeting place outside.
- Once all people have reached the meeting place, reset the building alarm system.
- Notify the building occupants that they can return to the building by giving the “all clear” signal.
ASSESSING

- Document every fire drill carried out and note the frequent problems faced. Seek the help of the nearby fire station for solutions.
- Share this document with all the members of the society within 48 hours. Discuss the problems and solutions in details.
- Put a timeline for the necessary actions to be carried and note its effectiveness during the next fire drill.

GOOD HABITS TO FOLLOW

- Test your smoke alarm once a month.
- Carry out a fire drill at least twice a year.
- Ensure that parking is not allowed near Fire Hydrants and that there is enough space for a FIRE VEHICLE to enter the society premises in case of an emergency.
- In a real Fire, get out and stay out. Then call the emergency Fire Brigade number. Do not go back into the building until it has been cleared by the fire brigade.
- Residents can have windows with security bars that have emergency release devices so they can be opened easily from the inside.
- Taking adequate precautions and sincerely participating in Fire Drills can benefit everyone involved. If your housing association is planning to carry out a Fire Drill for the first time then do take the services of an expert who can guide you about it in a step-by-step manner. Also inform your nearest fire station about the exercise and seek any additional help in terms of information or personnel during the event.
IN CASE OF FIRE

DIAL 101

OR

CONTACT THE NEAREST FIRE STATION

FOLLOW FIRE PRECAUTIONS

PREVENT FIRE

Issued in public interest by:-

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CHANDIGARH