



## Fire Safety for First Time Renters

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For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — It is an exciting time for students who are moving into their first suite or apartment, but there are many fire risks within a home that first time renters should be aware of and take precautions to prevent.

“Many apartment fires that we attend could have been prevented,” notes Victoria Fire Prevention Officer Debbie Turner. “Renters need to know that a fire could happen to them, and what they need to do to make their new home safe from fire.”

A publication titled, *Fire Safety Basics for Students Living in Off-Campus Housing*, provides helpful, possibly life-saving tips for new renters. The brochure educates students and parents on basic ways to minimize fire risk in off-campus housing, and covers a variety of fire safety items such as security, over-crowding at parties, clear exits, electrical safety, cooking and smoke alarms. Cooking is the number one cause of home fires in British Columbia. When combined with first-time chefs, the risk increases.

With a possible record-breaking number of students enrolled at the University of Victoria this fall – many of whom may be living away from home for the first time – fire safety is paramount.

Below are some fire safety tips for first time renters:

1. Make sure a room or suite has a working smoke alarm and install new batteries upon moving in. A smoke alarm is the best early warning system in case of a fire.
2. Keep a flashlight with working batteries beside the bed. Most fires occur at night.
3. Ensure windows open easily and access is not blocked inside or outside.
4. Know two ways out of every room, making sure all exit routes are clear of storage.
5. Be prepared for fire risk posed by neighbours. All renters should have tenant insurance. Parents of students living away from home should contact their home insurance carrier and confirm whether their children’s contents are protected when renting.

To download a copy of the *Fire Safety Basics for Students Living in Off-Campus Housing* brochure, visit: [www.victoria.ca](http://www.victoria.ca) and click on What’s New?

— 30 —

### For More Information:

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