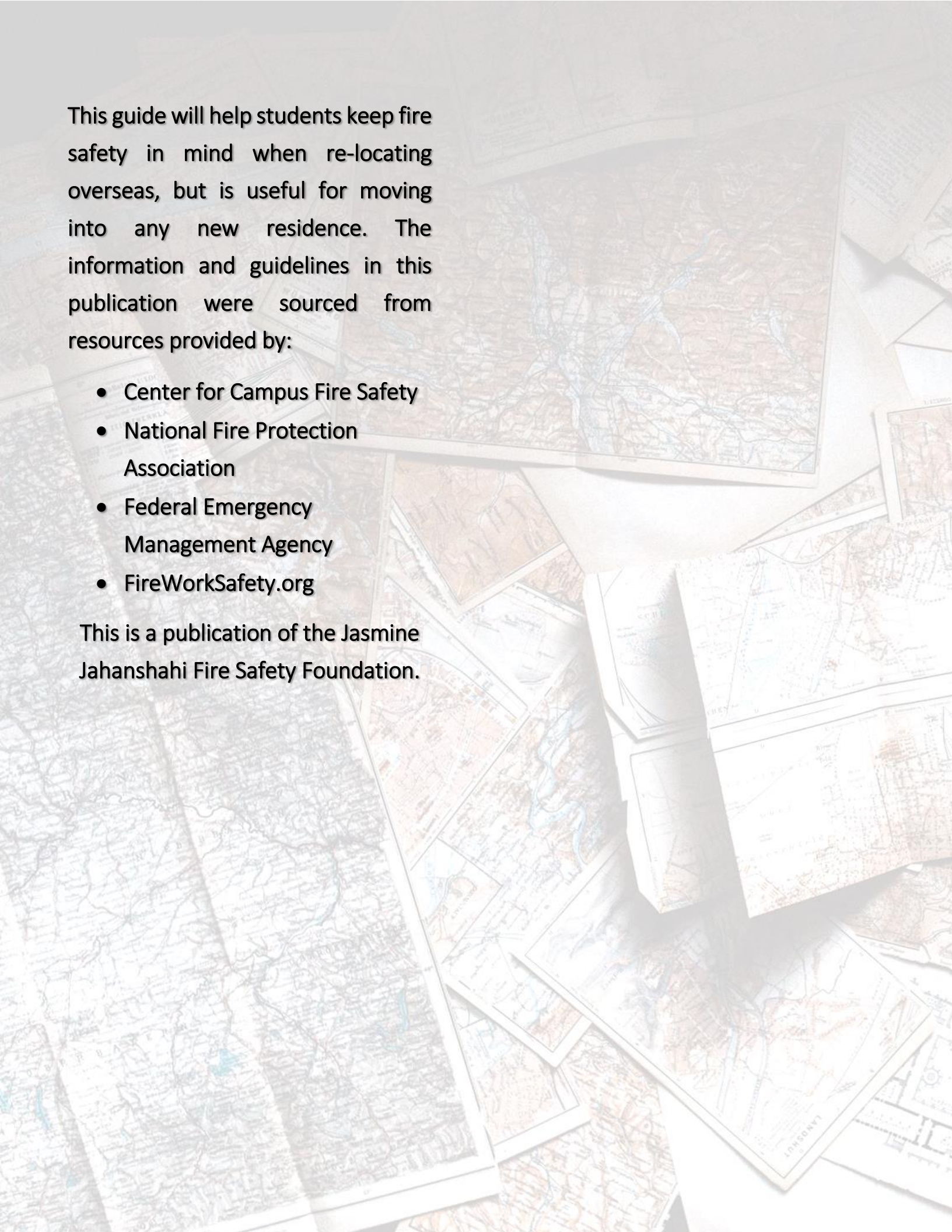


FIRE SAFETY ABROAD:
BE AWARE AND PREPARE



THE JASMINE JAHANSHAH
FIRE SAFETY FOUNDATION

The background of the page is a collage of various maps and documents. There are several topographic maps with brown and green shading, and some street maps with blue lines for roads and water. The maps are layered and slightly offset from each other, creating a sense of depth. The overall color palette is muted, with a lot of browns, greens, and blues.

This guide will help students keep fire safety in mind when re-locating overseas, but is useful for moving into any new residence. The information and guidelines in this publication were sourced from resources provided by:

- Center for Campus Fire Safety
- National Fire Protection Association
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- FireWorkSafety.org

This is a publication of the Jasmine Jahanshahi Fire Safety Foundation.

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“TRAVEL IS THE ONLY
THING YOU BUY THAT
MAKES YOU RICHER.”

ANONYMOUS



INTRODUCING

Every year, over 300,000 U.S. college students choose to experience life in another country. While these travelers prepare to navigate new cultures, languages, and hazards, few learn about the risk of fire-related dangers overseas. Landlords in many countries are not required to install smoke detectors or fire escapes in numerous countries, and it is difficult for first responders to reach many urban and rural dwellings worldwide. The Jasmine Jahanshahi Fire Safety Foundation makes it easy to **be aware and prepare!**

In April 2011, an apartment fire in Paris took the lives of four ambitious exchange students, killing five total and injuring dozens more. The building was not equipped with smoke alarms to warn the residents, or fire escape ladders to safely escape. The Jasmine Jahanshahi Fire Safety Foundation was created to honor the memory of one of those students by protecting future travelers from similar tragedies.

Use this guide to assess the safety of your home abroad and learn how to avoid and escape a residential fire. Jasmine Jahanshahi was a fearless traveler who was determined to make the world a better place. We hope to prepare generations of students who share her sense of adventure and global responsibility to keep her legacy alive for decades to come.



LIVING

Moving is difficult whether it's down the street or to another continent. Student housing overseas ranges from dorms and apartments to hostels and host families. This guide lays out all the variables you should consider to prevent a fire in your new home. Open communication about safety with friends, hosts, and landlords is key to applying all of these fire prevention strategies successfully.

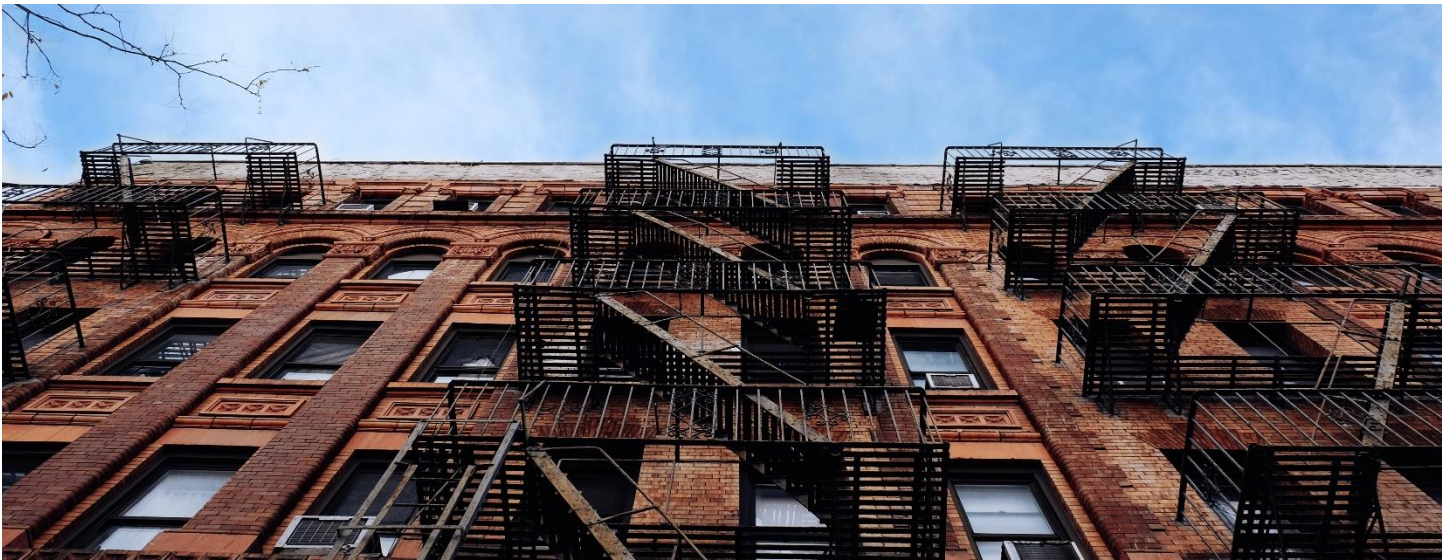
ASK THE LANDLORD

- Is this a licensed rental unit?
- Does my home have a working smoke alarm?
- Do you supply a working fire escape ladder for upper floor apartments?
- Is the home equipped with a usable fire extinguisher?
- Do you have the appliances inspected every year?
- Does the home have a carbon monoxide detector?

RESIDENTIAL CHECKLIST

The following checklist accounts for fire and life safety covering structural issues, egress, and equipment such as smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and fire escapes. Use this list to assess your new or potential residence and discuss any discrepancies with your landlord, housing director, or host family. Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need help finding equipment.





FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY EQUIPMENT

- Smoke detectors are installed and working** (minimum of one located adjacent to each sleeping area). If not, either contact your landlord about installing one or install one yourself. Test smoke detectors on a monthly basis if a testing button is present. “Chirping” indicates a low battery. We recommend getting a smoke detector with a 10-year lithium battery and an emergency light.

Ionic or Photoelectric?

There are two types of smoke alarms available; ionic and photoelectric. According to the Center for Campus Fire Safety, “photoelectric smoke alarms generally respond faster to smoldering smoke conditions and ionization smoke alarms generally respond faster to flaming fire conditions, both types provide adequate protection against fire.” Combination models are also available. Ionic smoke detectors are prohibited in some countries due to the small amount of radiation they emit. Check which kind of smoke detector is most appropriate for your residence and pack it when you travel.

- Fire extinguishers are present and charged.** Instructional videos are available online. If you are trained to use a fire extinguisher it can be a valuable safety tool for extinguishing small fires before they get out of hand. If you don’t know how to use an extinguisher, or if the fire seems too large, don’t try to extinguish it, just get out!
- There are two exits from any room.** If you live above the first floor, make sure your residence has an accessible fire escape ladder or purchase a portable escape ladder. There are many different models of fireproof compact escape ladders in various lengths. Contact us if you need help finding one that’s right for you. Develop an escape plan and practice it.
- Are fire alarms and exit signs visible (in multi-unit apartment buildings)?
- Are carbon monoxide detectors installed and working?

EXITS AND EXTERIORS

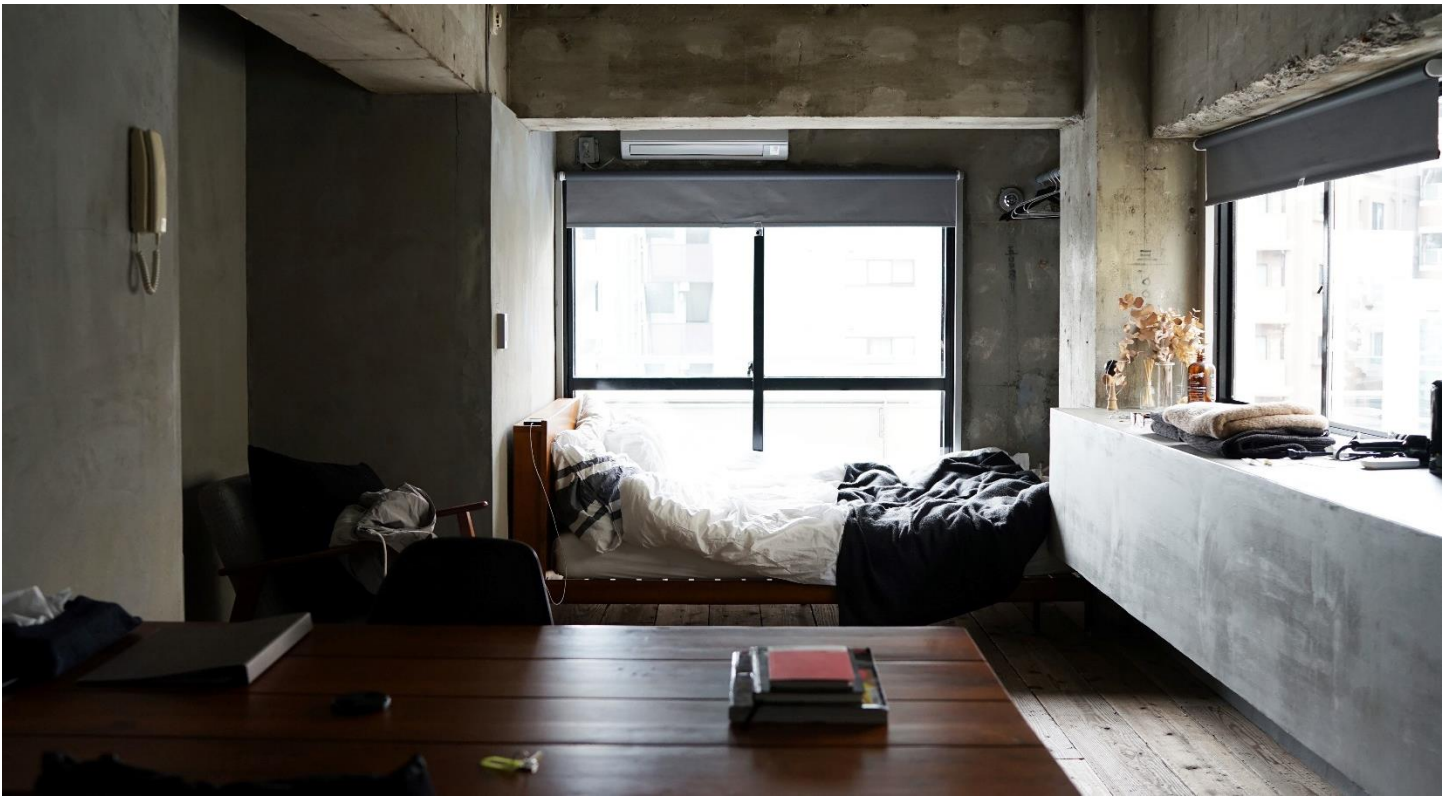
- The building exterior and adjacent properties are clean and well maintained
- All doors, stairs and fire escapes are unobstructed and in good condition
- There are at least two ways out from any level or floor of the building
- The building address is visible and clearly marked (for emergency responders)
- Outdoor areas are free of flammable debris and furniture designed for interior use
- Flammable liquids are not stored in building
- Exit signs and emergency lights are in place and working properly

Tip: If you live above the seventh floor of an apartment building, fire truck ladders will not be able to reach you. Buildings off of the street may also be difficult for emergency responders to reach.

LIVING ROOM AND COMMON AREAS

- All furniture, linens, and draperies are made of fire-resistant material
- All interior walls and ceilings are in good condition
- All exit doors are unobstructed and providing sufficient means of egress
- Electric outlets on each wall have covers and are in good condition
- All wall electrical switches work easily (not sparking or warm to touch) and light fixtures work properly
- Hallways and common areas are illuminated
- Smoke detectors are in each hallway leading to bedrooms
- Carbon monoxide detectors are located on each floor containing bedrooms
- Windows operate easily and without bars or barriers
- All exit routes are clear and doors work freely
- Exit doors free of locking devices that may interfere with exiting (no keys required)
- Dryers, chimneys, wood stoves and all home heating systems should be professionally inspected and cleaned annually





KITCHEN

- Electric outlets on each wall have covers and are in good condition
- All wall electrical switches work easily (not sparking or warm to touch); light fixtures work properly
- Appliances provided appear to be clean and in good working condition
- Appliance electrical cords are in good condition
- Kitchen exhaust and kitchen surfaces are free of grease
- Hot and cold water turns on and off without leaks
- Sink works properly (no leaks under sink)
- Windows operate easily, exit route is clear, doors work freely

BEDROOM

- Mattress, furniture, linens, and drapery is made of fire-resistant material
- Interior walls, ceiling and floor are in good condition (no signs of leaks)
- Outlets have covers and are in good condition
- All wall electrical switches work easily (not sparking or warm to touch); light fixtures work properly
- Smoke detector is present near bedroom and operating (press button to test)
- At least one window operates easily and is not obstructed by bars
- Door works freely, latches and locks are functional (no keys required to exit)

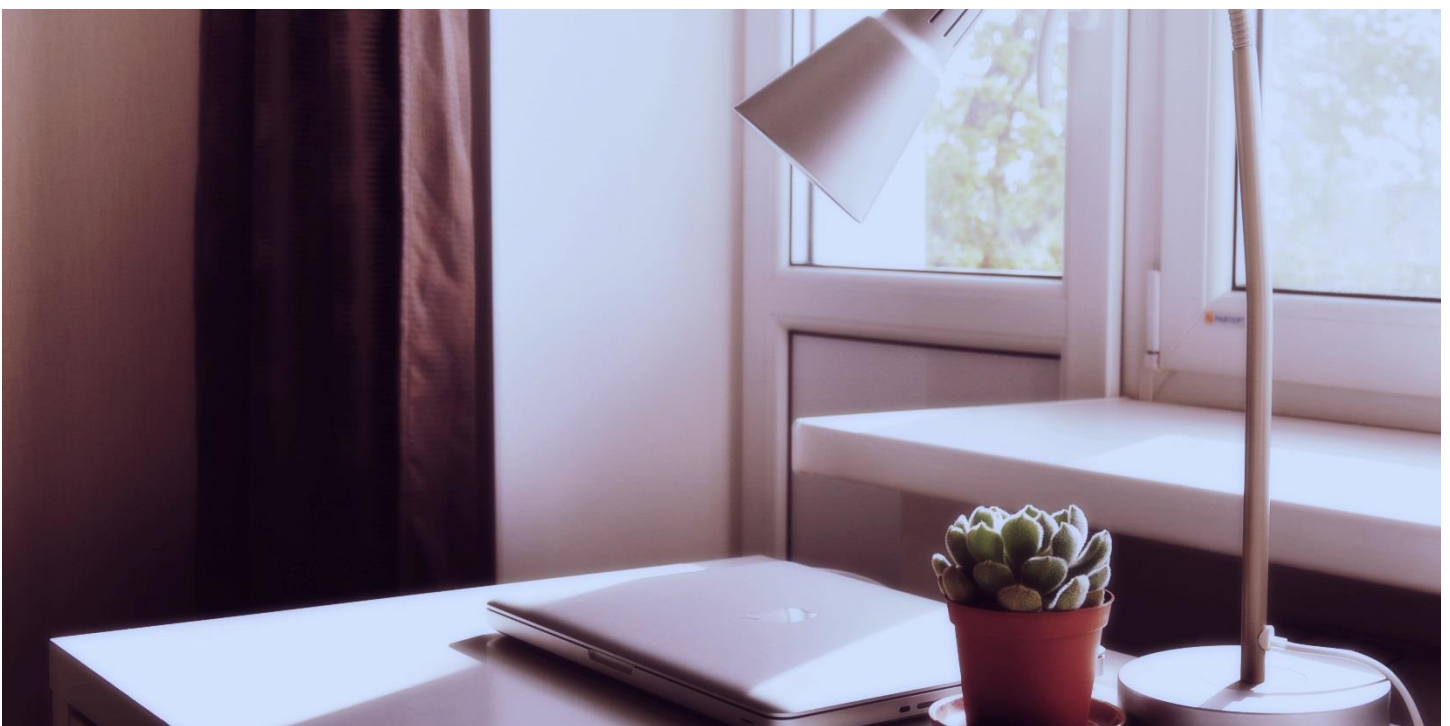
Tip: NEVER smoke in bed!

WIRING

Home electrical fires account for an estimated 51,000 fires each year, nearly 500 deaths, more than 1,400 injuries, and \$1.3 billion in property damage (esfi.org). Follow these tips to mitigate your risk of electrical fire in your home:

- Do not overload extension cords, power strips or outlets
- Use a power strip with an overcurrent protector: A power strip with an over-current protector shuts off power automatically if there is too much current being drawn.
- Know how much is too much: All appliances indicate how much wattage is consumed when operated on the appliance or in the manual.
- Be wary of electrical outlets that get too hot to touch. Unplug all appliances and notify landlord or resident assistant immediately.
- Do not connect multiple extension cords together. Extension cords are a temporary fix and should not be used as a long-term solution when you need another outlet.
- Do not route cords under doors or carpets.
- Look for the Underwriters Laboratory (UL) mark on all electric appliances to guarantee rigorous safety standards. Inspect wires for wear and exposure.
- Never bend, file or cut a grounding pin from a three-pronged cord to plug an appliance into a wall outlet, and do not use an adapter from three prongs to two.
- Never use staples or nails to attach cords or cord bundlers to a surface
- Use light bulbs with correct wattage for lamps
- If you are traveling abroad, find out what kind of power cords are used in your host country, and make sure you have an approved adapter if necessary.

From campusfiresafety.org





COOLING + HEATING

- If you need a portable air conditioning unit, choose a unit which is the proper size & energy for your home. As a guide, a 20x20 foot room requires 10,000 btu/hour, and a 1,200 square foot home requires 23,000 btu/hour.
- Check the electrical circuit to be sure it can supply the necessary energy.
- Clean and inspect your air conditioner and heater, especially the vents where air circulates.
- Keep things that burn at least 3 feet away from space heaters.
- Turn off space heaters when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Don't use space heaters to warm linens or dry clothing.
- When buying space heaters, look for devices with automatic shut off features and heating element guards.
- Inspect AC units and heaters for the UL mark, and make sure wires aren't worn or frayed.
- If you're using a fireplace, make sure the chimney and flue are professionally maintained and use a sturdy screen to prevent sparks and embers from escaping.
- Be alert to the danger signs that signal a carbon monoxide problem in your fireplace such as the absence of a draft in your chimney, soot falling into the fireplace, or small amounts of water leaking from the base of the chimney, vent or flue.
- If you're using a wood burning stove, keep doors closed unless loading or stoking the fire. Be sure wood stove chimney connectors are installed.
- Never use cooking stoves, grills or ovens to heat your home. They are a fire hazard and can cause carbon monoxide poisoning.

COOKING

- Cook only where rules allow and stay in the area while cooking.
- Do not cook with heat or flame if you are intoxicated or drowsy.
- Never plug more than one high-wattage appliance into a single outlet.
- Keep surfaces clean of grease.
- Never pour water or flour on a cooking fire - use baking soda instead. If the fire is contained to a pot, slide the lid over the pot to smother the fire. If there is a fire in your oven or microwave, turn the oven off and keep the door closed to smother the fire.
- Wear short or close-fitting sleeves. Loose clothing can catch on fire.
- Keep towels, pot-holders, and other flammable materials away from heat and open flame.
- Keep a fire extinguisher near your cooking area and be sure you know how to use it.





GRILLING

- Use the grill at least 10 feet away from your home or any building.
- Never leave the grill unattended, especially when young children or pets are nearby.
- Never use gasoline or kerosene to light a charcoal fire.
- Never attempt to restart a flame by adding additional lighting fluid to an already-lit grill, as this can cause a flare-up.
- Dispose of charcoal away from kids and pets, and douse it with water.
- When grilling use insulated, flame-retardant mitts or long-handled barbecue tongs and utensils. Avoid wearing loose clothing.
- For gas grills, check the grill hoses for cracking, brittleness, holes and leaks. Check the tubes leading into the burner for any blockages from insects, spiders, or grease.

From campusfiresafety.org

CELEBRATING

Parties and holidays are meant for enjoyment and togetherness, but some of our most beloved traditions such as candles and fireworks increase the danger of fire-related emergencies. According to FEMA, 40% of residential fire deaths are tied to alcohol impairment. Follow these guidelines to keep your loved ones safe while you're celebrating:

EVENTS

- Know two ways out when you go out to a party, nightclub, or large-scale event.
- Avoid over-crowded areas.
- Make sure doors and hallways are clear when the event is your own.
- If smoking is allowed at your party, provide ashtrays to contain ashes.
- After a party, be sure smoking materials are fully extinguished and disposed in a metal container. Double-check furniture and linens for smoldering ashes.

CANDLES

- Keep candles and incense away from curtains, flammable materials and unstable surfaces.
- Candles should never be left burning unattended or when you're going to sleep.
- Keep candles in a sturdy holder away from high-traffic areas.



HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

- Carefully monitor jack-o-lanterns with burning candles and do not leave them unattended.
- If you purchase a Christmas tree, needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needle should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch.
- Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut too long, has probably dried out, and is a fire hazard.
- Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks.
- Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly.
- Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.
- If you are using an artificial tree, make sure it is manufactured from flame-resistant materials.
- Keep open flames away from Christmas trees and other decorations.
- Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up.
- Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe.
- Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet.
- Make sure to periodically check the wires - they should not be warm to the touch.

FIREWORKS

- Obey all local laws regarding the use of fireworks.
- Know your fireworks; read the cautionary labels and performance descriptions before igniting.
- A responsible adult SHOULD supervise all firework activities. Never give fireworks to children.
- Alcohol and fireworks do not mix. Save your alcohol for after the show.
- Wear safety glasses when shooting fireworks.
- Light one firework at a time and then quickly move away.
- Use fireworks outdoors in a clear area; away from buildings and vehicles.
- Never relight a “dud” firework. Wait 20 minutes and then soak it in a bucket of water.
- Always have a bucket of water and charged water hose nearby.
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket or shoot them into metal or glass containers.
- Do not experiment with homemade fireworks.
- Dispose of spent fireworks by wetting them down and place in a metal trash can away from any building or combustible materials until the next day.

From fireworksafety.org

TRAVELING

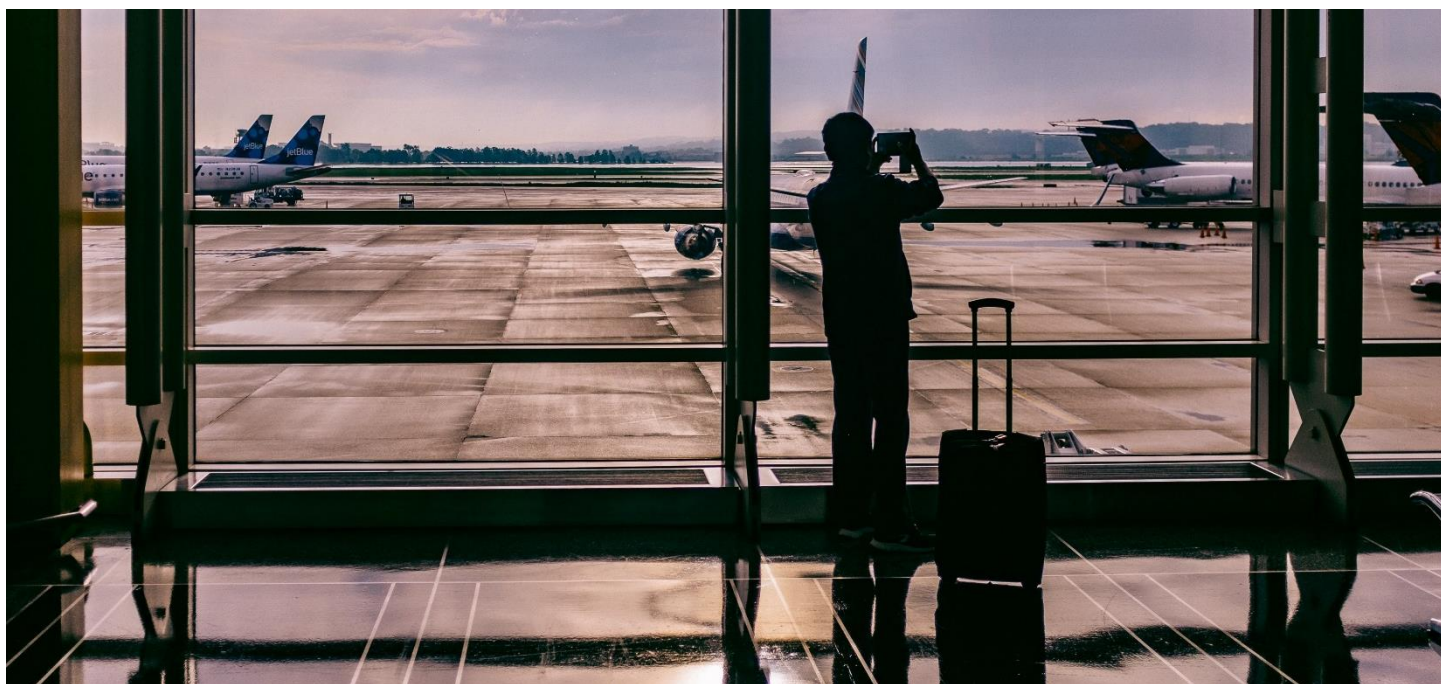
There are so many variables to consider when you're visiting a new place for an extended period. Whether you're staying with a friend, host, or hostel, the checklist starting on page three is a great overview of building safety. Here are some other factors to consider:

- If you are traveling outside the United States, make sure you know the local emergency number(s).
- Be aware of your rights as a renter and a non-citizen.
- Pack a smoke detector and flashlight in your luggage.
- Avoid rooms and buildings that are overcrowded.
- Look for at least two exits from every room you're in, public and private.
- Check for fire and smoke alarms in any building you visit.
- Assess windows and doors for locks, bars, or other barriers wherever you are.
- If you're above the first floor, locate stairwells, fire escapes, and emergency ladders.

HOSTELS, HOTELS, AND MOTELS

- When making your reservations, ask if the hotel or motel has smoke alarms and fire sprinklers.
- Read the fire evacuation plan carefully. If one is not posted in your room, request one from the front desk.
- Know where smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, stairs, and/or fire escapes are located.
- Locate the two exits from your room.
- Count the number of doors between your room and the exits. This will assist you in the need of an emergency evacuation.

From campusfiresafety.org





WORKING

If a fire broke out in your workplace, would you know what to do? Follow these tips to prevent and escape fire hazards in the workplace:

- Know the location of the nearest fire alarm; know how to use it and be familiar with its signal.
- Learn the location of the two nearest exits from your work area.
- Count the doors, desks, work stations, etc. between your work space and the nearest exit in case of smoke or power failure.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Your employer has several responsibilities pertaining to occupational safety:

- Conduct regular mandatory fire drills at least twice a year.
- Post building evacuation routes throughout workplace buildings.
- Employees with special needs should be included in the emergency planning process.
- Fire exits and doorways should never be blocked or locked. Promptly report any signs of malfunction or blockage to building management.

If your employer is not fulfilling all of these obligations, discuss your concerns with them or report negligence to a higher authority.

SURVIVING

The key to successfully escaping a fire is to *be aware and prepare*. **This information can only help you if you know it before a fire breaks out.** It only takes a minute for a room to be engulfed with fire, smoke, and toxic gases. Become familiar with these survival strategies and share them with your friends:

- Your smoke detector should provide early warning if a fire breaks out, but also be aware of smells, smoke, or loud noises.
- Evacuate immediately. Call the fire department or 911 AFTER you've left the building.
- Have an escape plan and know two ways to exit the building from your room.
- Don't search for people or try to gather belongings. Knock on doors and yell "fire" as you leave.
- Stay low to the ground for the freshest air.
- Before you try to leave your room, feel the door with the back of your hand. If the door feels warm, do not attempt to open it. Opening the door may cause smoke to rush in by creating a draft.
- If you encounter smoke or flames on your way out, immediately return to your room.
- If you must remain in your room, stuff the cracks around the door with soaked towels, rags, bedding or tape and cover vents to keep smoke out. Turn off any fans or air conditioner.
- If there is a phone in the room where you are trapped, call the fire department again to tell them exactly where you are located. Do this even if you can see first responders outside.
- Wait at a window and signal with a flashlight or by waving a sheet. If possible, open the window at the top and bottom, but do not break it. You may need to close the window if smoke rushes in.
- If you do attempt to open the door, brace your body against the door while staying low to the floor and slowly open it a crack to check for the presence of smoke or fire in the hallway. If there is no smoke in the hallway or stairwells, follow your building's evacuation plan.
- Always use a stairwell, never an elevator. The elevator could stop at the floor of the fire.
- If you are staying in a hotel room, be sure to take your room key with you in case fire blocks your escape and you need to re-enter your room.
- If you don't hear the building's fire alarm, pull the nearest fire alarm "pull station" while exiting the floor.
- Once you are out of the building, STAY OUT! Tell the fire department if you know of anyone trapped in the building.

From campusfiresafety.org



SHARING

We hope that the information in this document has given you peace of mind as you embark on your exciting adventure. If you wish to thank us, the best way to do so is to share this life-saving information with friends and family.

We can't carry out our work alone – we need your help! If you are interested in working with us, have a specialization that can help further our mission, or would like to request materials to share with students, please get in touch!



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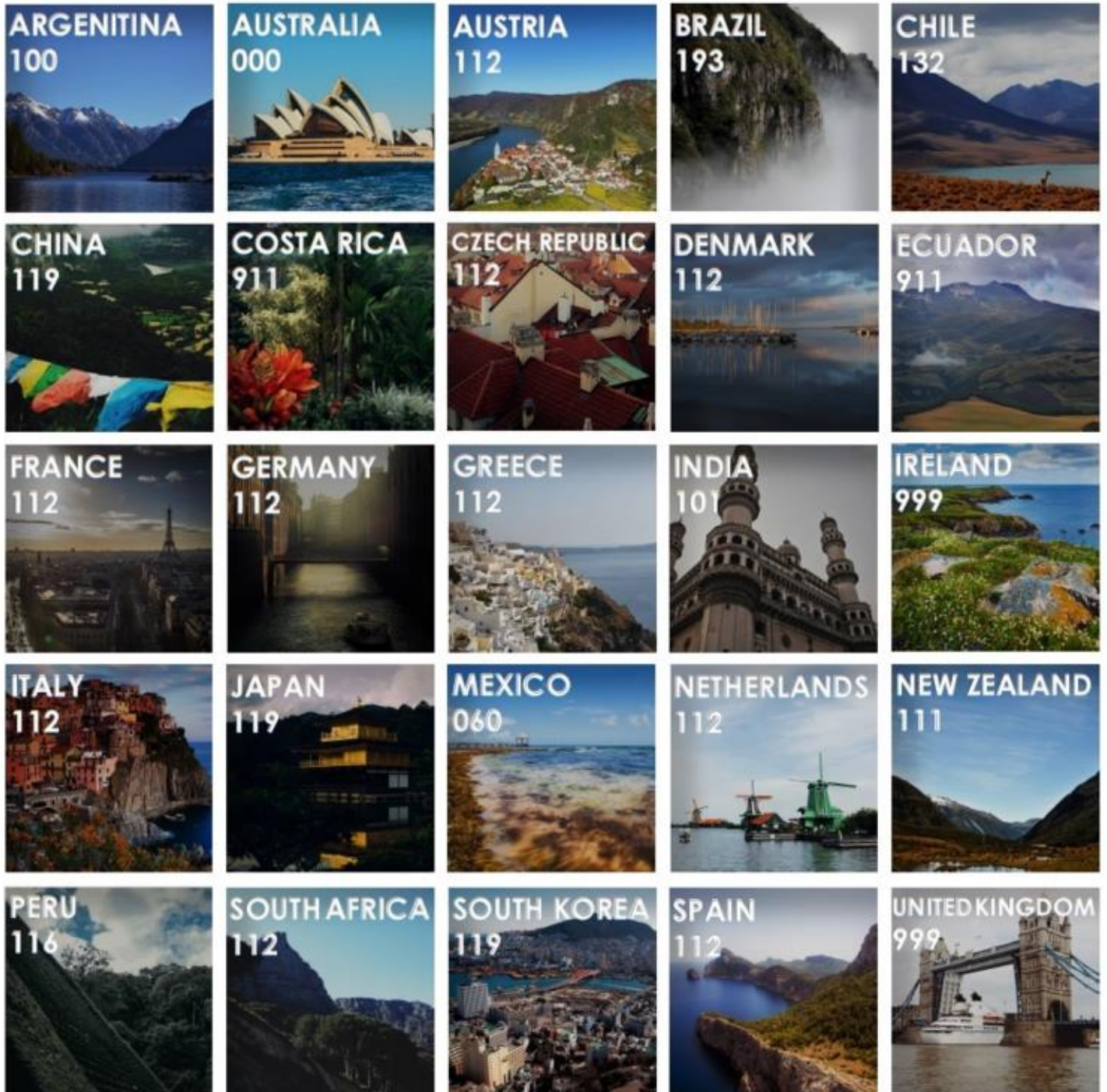
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KNOW THE EMERGENCY NUMBER WHEREVER YOU TRAVEL!

THE PHONE NUMBER FOR EMERGENCY RESPONDERS VARIES IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES. MAKE SURE YOU KNOW THE LOCAL EMERGENCY NUMBER AND CHECK FOR A SMOKE DETECTOR AND AT LEAST TWO FIRE ESCAPE OPTIONS ANYWHERE YOU STAY. THE JASMINE JAHANSHAHI FIRE SAFETY FOUNDATION OFFERS FREE ORIENTATION MATERIALS AND SUBSIDIZED FIRE SAFETY EQUIPMENT LIKE SMOKE DETECTORS, FIRE EXTINGUISHERS, AND ESCAPE LADDERS.

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