



# APARTMENT FIRE SAFETY

## 1. KNOW YOUR EXITS

There must be two means of egress (exits) from your apartment building.

Your **primary or first exit** is your apartment door that leads into either an unenclosed (not separated by walls or doors) stairway or through a public hallway to an enclosed stairway that leads to the street.

Your **secondary exit** should be one that leads directly or indirectly to the street level:

- An additional enclosed stairway accessible from the public hallway.
- An enclosed fire stairwell (stairway accessible from the public hallway).
- An outside fire-escape accessible from within your apartment through a window or door.

An elevator is NEVER an acceptable means of exit during a fire.

## 2. KEEP YOUR EXITS CLEAR AND WORKING

Properly maintained fire doors and exits will greatly reduce your chance of being killed or injured in a fire in your building.

- Maintain your apartment door or doors leading into the public hall or vestibule as fireproof and self-closing (tampering with self-closing hinges or blocking self-closing doors is illegal).
- Make sure your apartment door lock can be opened from the inside with a thumb turn (without the use of a key).
- Keep stairways and outside fire escapes free of obstructions at all times. Do not store anything such as baby strollers, bicycles or trash on or under stairways or stairway landings.



## 3. SHOULD YOU STAY OR SHOULD YOU GO?

- A. If you live in a **NON-FIREPROOF BUILDING** and there is a fire, it is usually better (safer) to leave the building immediately.

*Fireproof does not mean that the building is immune to fire.*

While the structural components may not catch on fire, the contents will and generate life threatening heat and smoke.

Generally speaking, in a fireproof building the fire and smoke will be contained to the portion of the building (apartment) where the fire has started.

- B. If you live in a **FIREPROOF BUILDING** and there is a fire, it is usually better (safer) to:
- Stay inside rather than entering smoke-filled hallways, especially if the fire is above your apartment.
  - Keep your door CLOSED.
  - Seal the door with wet sheets or towels.
  - Unless flames or smoke are coming from below, open your windows a few inches at the top or bottom. Don't break windows; they may need to be closed later.
  - Call the fire Department with your apartment number and description of the conditions in your apartment. Firefighters will be directed to your location.
- C. **If the fire IS IN your apartment, regardless of construction type:**
- Get everyone out. Stay low as you go.
  - Use your safest and most accessible exit.
  - CLOSE ALL DOORS as you leave.
  - If using an interior stairway, alert people on your floor by knocking on their doors on your way out.
  - DO NOT USE THE ELEVATOR