



Fall 2008

Recent Fire Tragedies



May 21, 2008 - A Tompkins Cortland Community College student was killed in an off-campus fire near Ithaca, N.Y.

This was the 18th student-related fire death for the 2007-08 academic year.

April 12, 2007 - A Bradley University student was killed in an off-campus house fire. The building did not have automatic sprinklers.

May 13, 2006 - A Cornell University student's life was claimed by an off-campus fire that started in a plastic container used for discarding smoking material.

April 20, 2005 - At the University of Maryland, a fire started on the porch of an off-campus house where six students lived. The fire spread inside the house. Four students escaped, one was critically injured and the other died. The fire was determined to be an arson fire.

Communication During a Crisis

How will you or your parents know what is going on at MVNU during a crisis?

- Voicemail
- Text messages (if you opt in)
- E-mail
- Residence directors and advisors
- www.mvnu.edu
- WNZR 90.9 FM
- Chapel announcements
- Security PA system

Take It Seriously

October is Fire Prevention Month. Whether you live on campus or off, you need to know how to prevent fire and what to do in case of fire. Plus, winter is just around the corner. Check out these snow and ice driving tips. [Tell us](#) what you'd like to see in future issues.

On- and Off-Campus Fire Safety

In an effort to reduce the number of on- and off-campus fires, the American Society of Safety Engineers is providing this information to help create awareness. For more information or tips, go to www.asse.org/newsroom.

Residence Hall Fire Safety Tips

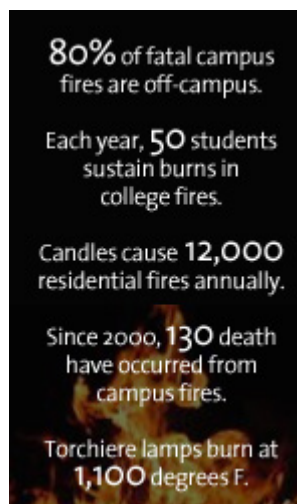
- Keep microwaves, hot plates, and other cooking appliances out of unapproved areas.
- Know where the exits are located.
- Do not ignore alarms or drills.
- Do not put aluminum foil in the microwave.

Off-Campus Housing

- Extinguish candles and incense when leaving the room.
- Keep combustible materials such as clothes, curtains, books, etc. at least three feet away from heaters.
- Check smoke alarms regularly.
- Change smoke alarm batteries quarterly.
- Develop and practice a fire escape plan with your roommates.
- Set up a post-fire meeting place for you and your roommates.

Common Causes of On- and Off-Campus Fires

- Cooking is the main cause of fire injuries. Smoking materials, candles and arson are other causes.
- Improper use of 911 notification systems delays emergency response.
- Vandalized and improperly maintained smoke alarms inhibit early detection of fires.
- Evacuation efforts are often hindered when fire



- Bullhorns and volunteers
- School closings: ext. 1600

For parents:

- We will attempt to make calls to each parent
- Text message (if you opt in)
- www.mvnu.edu or mvnucrisis.wordpress.com
- School closings: ext. 1600
- Emergency hotline (activated in crisis only): ext. 5000

If you see members of the media across campus, direct them to crisis communication headquarters at FEBC 133 (round room). They will hear from local authorities and campus officials, as well as have access to telephones, e-mail, and computers.

- alarms are ignored, a common occurrence.
- Student apathy is prevalent. Many are unaware that fire is a risk or threat.

Fire Safety Statistics

- In more than 50% of adult fire fatalities, victims were under the influence of alcohol at the time of the fire.
- Smoke inhalation accounts for the majority of deaths in home fires.

Sources: *National Fire Protection Association*, www.nfpa.org; *National Fire Incident Reporting System*, www.nfirs.fema.gov; *U.S. Fire Administration*, www.usfa.dhs.gov; *National Safety Council*, www.nsc.org; and *Campus Firewatch*, www.campus-firewatch.com.

Winter Driving Tips

The following are list of some safety items to consider carrying in your car or having in your room **before** being faced with an emergency.

Driving in Snow and Ice

The best advice for driving in bad winter weather is not to drive at all, if you can avoid it.



Don't go out until the snow plows and sanding trucks have had a chance to do their work, and allow yourself extra time to reach your destination.

If you must drive in snowy conditions, make sure your car is prepared, and that you know how to handle road conditions.

It's helpful to practice winter driving techniques in a snowy, open parking lot, so you're familiar with how your car handles. Consult your owner's manual for tips specific to your vehicle.

Driving safely on icy roads

- Decrease your speed and leave yourself plenty of room to stop. You should allow at least three times more space than usual between you and the car in front of you.
- Brake gently to avoid skidding. If your wheels start to lock up, ease off the brake.
- Turn on your lights to increase your visibility to other motorists.
- Keep your lights and windshield clean.
- Use low gears to keep traction, especially on hills.
- Don't use cruise control or overdrive on icy roads.
- Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roads, which will freeze first. Even at temperatures above freezing, if the conditions are wet, you might encounter ice in shady areas or on exposed roadways like bridges.
- Don't pass snow plows and sanding trucks. The drivers have limited visibility, and you're likely to find the road in front of them worse than the road behind.
- Don't assume your vehicle can handle all

conditions. Even four-wheel and front-wheel drive vehicles can encounter trouble on winter roads.

If your rear wheels skid...

- Take your foot off the accelerator.
- Steer in the direction you want the front wheels to go. If your rear wheels are sliding left, steer left. If they're sliding right, steer right.
- If your rear wheels start sliding the other way as you recover, ease the steering wheel toward that side. You might have to steer left and right a few times to get your vehicle completely under control.
- If you have standard brakes, pump them gently.
- If you have anti-lock brakes (ABS), do not pump the brakes. Apply steady pressure to the brakes. You will feel the brakes pulse — this is normal.

If your front wheels skid...

- Take your foot off the gas and shift to neutral, but don't try to steer immediately.
- As the wheels skid sideways, they will slow the vehicle and traction will return. As it does, steer in the direction you want to go. Then put the transmission in "drive" or release the clutch, and accelerate gently.

If you get stuck...

- Do not spin your wheels. This will only dig you in deeper.
- Turn your wheels from side to side a few times to push snow out of the way.
- Use a light touch on the gas, to ease your car out.
- Use a shovel to clear snow away from the wheels and the underside of the car.
- Pour sand, kitty litter, gravel or salt in the path of the wheels, to help get traction.
- Try rocking the vehicle. (Check your owner's manual first — it can damage the transmission on some vehicles.) Shift from forward to reverse, and back again. Each time you're in gear, give a light touch on the gas until the vehicle gets going.
- [MORE TIPS](#)



Sources: National Safety Council, New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, Washington State Government Information & Services.

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