

July 19, 2010

TO: **ALL HALL DIRECTORS**
Residence Life

FROM: Jeffrey Rook, EHS Officer
Harold Burke-Sivers, Director Public Safety

RE: **Fall Holiday Decorations and Haunted Houses**

In order to ensure compliance with fire department requirements and to ensure a safe environment on our campus, we would like to remind you of the following requirements:

Combustible Materials: including paper, foam, plastic, cotton, cloth, vegetation, moss, straw, hay, vines, split bamboo, leaves and similar materials:

- 1) Combustible materials in residence hall rooms shall not exceed more than 50% of the wall surface.
- 2) Combustible materials in hallways shall not exceed more than 10% of the wall surface.
- 3) No combustibles shall be placed on doors, doorways or stairwells.
- 4) Combustible materials for holiday displays such as hay bales, corn stalks, or similar decorative combustible materials are not allowed in University facilities unless rendered flame resistant by treating with a fire retardant.

Exit Path Obstructions: Displays and decorations, of any type, shall not be placed where they can obstruct any exit paths or obstruct the exit path in any exit corridor.

Haunted Houses and Move-in Weekend Decorations: If a residence hall is considering a haunted house, a plan for the haunted house must be submitted to Public Safety for review and approval. Move-In Weekend decorating does not require a plan or inspection by the Fire Marshal, however should abide by the same rules listed below for setup. The plan should include:

- (1) A detailed floor plan to scaled showing direction of travel and exits, maximum occupancy within the haunted house, its location on the facility, a list of materials to be used, lighting and electrical connections, emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers and flashlights, and a supervision plan. The plan should be submitted to Public Safety no later than **11 days prior to the event** to allow enough time for review and approval.
- (2) All decorations used in a haunted house that are considered combustible must be rendered flame resistant by treating with a fire retardant. "Flame resistant" means that the material treated with fire retardant will not burn when a heat source (e.g. a match or lighter) is applied to it.
- (3) A walkway must be maintained throughout the haunted house with a minimum of 4 ft. wide and 6'8" ft. high.
- (4) There must be a fire extinguisher present at each exit. The extinguishers cannot be covered by decorations. The maximum travel distance to any extinguisher can not exceed 50 feet. Staff members shall be instructed in proper use of extinguishers.

- (5) If the area is setup using a maze concept, there may be no dead-end corridors. The maze must have obvious exits out of the maze for approximately every 50 feet of linear travel.
- (6) Exits shall be a minimum of 3 ft wide and 6'8" high. They shall have lighted exit signs placed above them. Centered above each marked "EXIT", there must be an electrically powered, battery back-up exit sign with two emergency lights, or a heavy paper/cardboard exit sign with 12" red fluorescent letters on a white background. Permanent exit lighting in the building will suffice as long as it is not obstructed. There must be one exit for every fifty (50 ft.) linear feet of travel. Emergency exit signs must be illuminated at all times and cannot be covered by decorations.
- (7) Flammables are not allowed at any time by anyone inside the building. Smoking is prohibited at all times in accordance with the UP Smoking Policy. There shall be no open-flame devices or temporary heaters used in the building and/or structure, unless prior approval is obtained from the Fire Marshal. The use of untreated fire-retardant material is prohibited.
- (8) Occupancy during the event at any time shall be limited to a specific number, as determined by the Fire Marshal's Office. A group shall consist of no more than 20 persons as determined by the Fire Marshal. Each group of children 12 and under must be accompanied or supervised by a staff person who is 18 years of age or older. Staff person must have in their possession, an operable flashlight, and shall be completely familiar with the facility. The staff person shall be thoroughly instructed on an approved evacuation plan for the facility, and be able to assist the public in the event of the emergency.
- (9) The Portland Fire Marshals Office must be contacted for any event that involves bringing the public into residence halls. The areas will require an inspection of the area that will be used, visited by the public. A permit may be required for conducting a haunted house. Please contact Public Safety at 503.943.7161 for further direction. The fire marshal may be contacted at 503.823.3955 for further information on permit and inspection requirements.

Christmas Decorations: If a residence hall is considering decorations for the Christmas holiday they are allowed to use Christmas lights "twinkly lights" no more than a 30-day period and must be removed by the end of the Winter break. No more than 3 strands of seasonal Christmas lighting may be combined in a string for any indoor decoration.

Christmas trees are allowed from the beginning of December to the start of Christmas break when they must be removed from the residence halls. All displays of wreaths or other holiday decorations must be flame retardant.

Please contact me at Public Safety at x7161 or rook@up.edu if you have any questions.

cc: Mike Walsh, Director, Residence Life
Fr. John Donato, Associate Vice President for Student Life
John Goldrick, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Life
Denis Ransmeier, Vice President for Financial Affairs