



OFF-CAMPUS

By Tim Knisely

July 2017

Prep Time:

It's August! Before we know it the summer will be over and it is time to welcome our part-time residents back for the Fall semester. From May until now we have had to turn-over, renovate, build or spruce up properties. It's the same process, year after year. For the off-campus communities many of the transitions will be seamless. Let's hope the parents and students have done their research on the property that they signed a lease for 10-months ago. But, for those that didn't it may be a nightmare.

Through the year I talk with many parents that have had good and bad experiences with their landlords or management companies. Some of the bad experiences aren't that bad and have easy fixes. Others are a life lesson that we hope is never repeated. As government officials we can't give our true opinion of some landlords, although we are typically able to tout those that do things right. Those that go above and beyond. When a parent asks what I know about a landlord or asked to opine, I suggest that they 'Google' the name of the owner or company. And, I always

caution them that it is the internet - it might not all be true. If you see trends in the comments that are posted each year, or if the person is actually 'Trending' on Twitter, you may want to reconsider.

Unfortunately, if you are asking me these questions now, it's too late. We've covered this before in several topics - parents need to be involved in the housing selection process. The process starts in October, soon after the beginning of the Fall semester. Especially if you want the prime properties. Or, the best options to match the number or roommates in your



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child's group of friends.

And, expect the unexpected. If you have group of four, five or six you will find housing to suit if you start early enough.

However, it is guaranteed that one or more of this group will have a better offer later. And, they want out. Then, it's time to start over or find a replacement, and quick.

Don't forget to use the resources on [The Center's webpage](#), including the [Library section](#). And, here is a link to a previous article '[Move-in Guide for Off-Campus Housing](#).'

Good luck to everyone, no matter what your role is. If you have problems or questions you can't figure out, give us a call. Or, send the request to the [Off-Campus Fire & Life Safety Alliance](#).

Tim

Tim Knisely is on the Board of Directors for The Center and the Senior Fire Inspector for the Centre Region Code Administration in State College, PA.

In this position he manages the Existing Structures Division that administers the fire and property maintenance code in all existing commercial and residential rental properties, and coordinates the life safety education for the community including off-campus and Greek housing.

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Published by The Center for Campus Fire Safety.

www.campusfiresafety.org
978.961.0410 | [email](#)