



OFF-CAMPUS

By Tim Knisely

July 2018

Tragedy in Texas:



As we close out the month of July, we are still learning details about the fatal fire at the **Iconic Village Apartments** in San Marcos, TX. At least five were killed, six injured and 200 people displaced in this fast moving early morning blaze. As the investigation continues, there is little detail being released about a potential cause or where the fire started. Of the five that have died, three were either current or recent students at Texas State University. In the weeks to come we will learn about each of these victims. Hear stories from their families and friends. Now, all of their hopes and dreams cut short due to this tragic fire.



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This fire occurred as millions of students and parents prepare to head off to their first year – or maybe their final year of college. Housing staff, administrators and off-campus property managers need to be prepared to answer questions about actions you have taken to present a similar tragedy in your communities.

- Know about the fire safety features of your buildings.
- Use these fire safety features in your marketing plans.
- Have details about the most recent fire inspection of your properties.

All colleges that offer housing must have a fire safety report in accordance with the Clery Act and the Higher Education Opportunity Act. Staff should know what is contained in this report and be prepared to answer any questions about details contained within.

Parents, it is never too late to ask questions about the fire safety of your son or daughter's apartment. Put the property manager on the spot – ask questions about smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, fire extinguishers, sprinklers, fire doors, fire escapes, emergency plans, more recent inspection and the history of fires in the property. If the property manager cannot answer these questions – keep moving up the corporate ladder until you get the answers you



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need. If that does not work, contact the local fire official or municipal office to find out who is in charge.

However, do not just rely on the property manager to give you the answers you need. Know about the safety features that should be present. Be informed.

For more information, please utilize the Resource Library on the [CCFS website](#) and follow the CCFS social media pages to receive updates about this incident as it becomes available.

Tim Knisely

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.

Tim has been active with The Center for Campus Fire Safety since its inception and served as treasurer from 2007 to 2010.

He is a frequent presenter at Campus Fire Forum, an instructor for the Fire-Wise Campus program and served as project manager for Campus Fire Data.



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