

HASCO TIMES

Fire Safety Issue 2024

In This Issue:

- How to use a Fire Extinguisher
- Pet Safety
- Landlord/Tenant Fire Safety – From the WA State Patrol
- Apartment Fire Safety
- Protecting Your Children From Lead
- Treating Burns
- Resident Advisory Board Meeting
- Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMRs) Update and FAQs
- Holiday Closures



HOW TO USE A FIRE EXTINGUISHER

P A S S



Pull the pin
in the handle



Aim the nozzle
at the base
of the fire



Squeeze the
lever slowly



Sweep from
side to side

The acronym P-A-S-S helps you remember how to use most fire extinguishers. However, you should familiarize yourself with the fire extinguishers in your homes, businesses, and other places you frequent and the instructions for use listed on the extinguisher itself.

Prevent Your Pets from Starting Fires



The American Kennel Club and ADT Security Services have joined forces to provide the following tips:

- **Extinguish Open Flames** - Pets are generally curious and will investigate cooking appliances, candles, or even a fire in your fireplace. Ensure your pet is not left unattended around an open flame and make sure to thoroughly extinguish any open flame before leaving your home.
- **Remove Stove Knobs** - Be sure to remove stove knobs or protect them with covers before leaving the house - a stove or cook top is the number one piece of equipment involved in your pet starting a fire.
- **Invest in Flameless Candles** - These candles contain a light bulb rather than an open flame and take the danger out of your pet knocking over a candle. Cats are notorious for starting fires when their tails turn over lit candles.
- **Secure Young Pets** - Keep them confined away from potential fire-starting hazards when you are away from home such as in crates or behind baby gates in secure areas.

Help Firefighters Help Your Pets

- Keep pets near entrances when away from home. Keep collars on pets and leashes at the ready in case firefighters need to rescue your pet. When leaving pets home alone, keep them in areas or rooms near entrances where firefighters can easily find them.
- Affix a pet alert window cling and write down the number of pets inside your house. This critical information saves rescuers time when locating your pets. Make sure to keep the number of pets listed on them updated.

Landlord & Tenant Fire Safety: FROM THE WA STATE PATROL



In 2023, the Washington State Patrol offered some information on Landlord and Renter responsibilities for fire safety. Their tips for fire safety are below.

According to a Washington housing data report, there are over 3 million housing units in the state of Washington. Of those, more than 1 million are rentals. Renters make up 36% of the housing market in our state. In 2022, Washington State reported over 8,000 fire incidents in residential properties. As a landlord or a renter, it is important to be familiar with the requirements of RCW 43.44.110, which speaks to smoke detection devices in dwelling units.

The SFMO [State Fire Marshal's Office] urges landlords and renters to be familiar with fire alarm requirements:

- Rental units must have working smoke alarms.
- Checking with local fire or building departments for information about state laws and local ordinances on smoke alarm installation and maintenance.
- Landlords must ensure smoke alarms are installed in the rental unit prior to the tenant occupying the space.
- Renters must maintaining the smoke alarms in operable condition, following the smoke alarm manufacture's specifications.
- Ensuring smoke alarms are installed in every bedroom, outside of each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home or unit. This includes any basements.
- Testing smoke alarms at least once a month.
- Replacing smoke alarms when they are 10 years old from manufacturing date.
- Making sure rental agreements include the maintenance of smoke alarms

Apartment Fire Safety



The Seattle Fire Department wrote the following advice for Apartment fire Safety.

Whether you live in a high-rise condominium or a 2-story apartment building, there are steps you can take to remain safe from a fire:

- If you hear the building fire alarm, take it seriously. Every second delayed wastes valuable time needed to escape. For this reason, developing and practicing a home escape plan with all occupants is so important.
- If a fire starts in your building, you must know how to get out quickly. Don't wait to find out the severity of the situation. Your home escape plan should include two ways to exit out of your apartment and a designated outside meeting place away from the building.
- Remember to not use the elevator during a fire emergency.
- If you are unable to use the stairs, stay in your apartment and call 9-1-1. Tell the dispatcher where you are and ask for help.
- If the fire is in your unit, quickly go to the stairwell, pull the fire alarm, and wait on the stair landing for help.

Treating Burns

The U.S. Fire Administration says that to treat burns you should:

- Treat a burn right away by putting it in cool water for 3 to 5 minutes.
- Cover with a clean, dry cloth.
- Do not apply creams, ointments, sprays or other home remedies.
- Get medical help right away by calling 911 or the fire department.

First aid for burns: what to do

If available, use a gel-based burn dressing and skip straight to step 5. If not, start from step 1.

1  Cool with cold, running water for 20 minutes.	2  Remove jewellery that may constrict the area as it swells.	3  Once cool, lay kitchen film lengthways over burn - not around the limb, in case of swelling. Alternatively, place a clean plastic bag over a foot or hand.	Do not:  Use ice  Burst blisters  Apply dressings that may stick  Remove clothing stuck to the skin  Apply any lotions or creams
4  If you do not have these, use a sterile or clean non-fluffy dressing.	5  Reassure the casualty and seek medical advice if appropriate.	6  In a severe burn call the emergency medical services as soon as possible.	

Protect Your Children from Lead

Did you know that lead can harm a child's growth, behavior, and ability to learn? Despite knowing for more than a century that lead is a neurotoxin that can cause irreversible harm, lead continues to be a threat to child development and physical health, even at low levels of exposure. Potential sources of lead include older paint, soil, and more.

Young children, below the age of 6 years old, are the most susceptible to the harmful effects of lead. Their growing bodies absorb more lead than adults. Because their brains and nervous systems are developing at a rapid pace, they are more sensitive to the damaging effects of lead. They are also susceptible because they are closer to the floor and surfaces that may have lead-contaminated dust and have more hand-to-mouth behavior.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Was your home built before 1978? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does anyone in your house work in a lead-related field such as painting, manufacturing, construction, mining, or firearms? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Have you done or do you plan to do home renovations? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you use traditional or homeopathic medicines such as greta, azarcon, bhasma or others? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your child eligible for Medicaid, Head Start, or WIC? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does anyone in your home have a lead-related hobby such as fishing, making jewelry or stained glass, or refinishing furniture? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your child have a sibling that has tested positive for lead? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you use imported makeup such as kohl, surma, or others? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you live near a factory that uses lead, like paint or manufacturing? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your child a refugee or adoptee from a foreign country? | | |

There are no obvious symptoms of lead exposure. Those exposed to and affected by lead may not act or look sick. A blood test is the only way to identify if a child has an elevated blood lead level. Often, blood lead levels peak around 24 months of age, and it is not until a child reaches school-age that learning and behavior issues become apparent.

All children should be screened for their risk of lead exposure at 12 and 24 months of age and any time that lead exposure or risk is suspected. Any children with learning or behavior challenges should be screened and tested. These tests are covered by Medicaid and most private health insurance plans. Federal law mandates that all children enrolled in Medicaid are required to get blood lead tests at ages 12 and 24 months or before age 6, if not previously tested. Show this article to your child's healthcare provider and ask for more information on blood lead testing.

For more information on sources of lead and on how to prevent exposure to lead, visit: [Lead Information for Families | Snohomish County Health Department, WA \(snohd.org\)](#).

Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMRs) Update and FAQs

On **January 1, 2025** the Housing Authority of Snohomish County will begin using Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMRs) to set the payment standards in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. This handout answers some basic questions about SAFMRs and opportunities under this approach.

Please visit our website at [HASCO.org](https://hasco.org) or contact us at housing@hasco.org or call 425-290-8499 and press option 3 for additional information.

What are SAFMRs?

SAFMR stands for "Small Area Fair Market Rent." SAFMRs are typical rent levels (including the cost of utilities, except telephone) within a ZIP code, for rental units with different numbers of bedrooms. SAFMRs are established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) each year.

What are payment standards?

Payment standards are used to calculate the maximum subsidy that the PHA will pay for your rental unit. Under the HCV program, you are generally required to pay 30 percent of your adjusted income for rent and utilities. The PHA then pays the difference between your required contribution and either (a) the payment standard or (b) the gross rent (contract rent plus utility allowance) of the unit - whichever is lower. For more information about this calculation, contact us at housing@hasco.org.

What's new about this approach?

Until now, the payment standards were based on rental rates across the entire metropolitan area. The new approach uses the fair market rent in each ZIP code (the SAFMR) to determine payment standards. Using this new approach is a new HUD requirement for PHAs in Snohomish County.

How will I be affected?

You will still be able to choose a unit that meets your needs (subject to PHA requirements). With SAFMR payment standards, you will be able to use your voucher in more places than would have been possible before - including neighborhoods with higher rents that may have high-performing schools, low levels of poverty, and access to grocery stores, parks, and other amenities. If you choose to rent in a high-cost neighborhood, you will likely receive more assistance toward rent and utilities than you would have under the old approach. If you choose to rent in a neighborhood where rents are low, you may receive less assistance toward rent and utilities under the new approach. HASCO hopes that you will make the most of this new approach to choose housing in an area that offers the most benefits for you and your family.

NOTE: HASCO is adopting a policy to hold existing renters harmless if the payment standard is reduced in their zip code. This means that if you are currently leased in a unit with a voucher, HASCO will continue paying the higher payment standard until you have a change in family composition that changes the value of your voucher (someone moves into or out of the household). When you move units or someone moves into or out of your household, the new payment standards apply.

How can the PHA help me access high-cost neighborhoods?

HASCO is available to help you find housing that meets your family's needs and fits within your budget. They can provide you with details about neighborhoods that you may be unfamiliar with.

Resident Advisory Board for 2024

In November, HASCO's TBA department will be hosting two events. Annually, HASCO gathers with participants and staff to discuss our progress on goals made for our Housing Choice Voucher and Project Based Voucher programs. This year, with participant help, HASCO has create a set of new goals to follow for the next five years. Please join us to discuss HASCO's progress in 2024 along with our plans for the future.

To RSVP or inquire for more information, please contact Tenant Based Assistance Administrative Specialist, Sara O'Neill at sconeill@hasco.org or 425-474-7021

In-person

Wednesday, November 13th
at 12:30pm
12711 4th Ave W
Everett, WA 98204

Virtual

Thursday, November 14th
at 5:00pm
Microsoft Teams
(Link will be provided upon
registration)

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY
12711 4TH AVENUE W.
EVERETT, WA 98204

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT NO. 963

HASCO's Business Hours:

Staff are available by phone at (425) 290-8499

Monday - Thursday: 8AM—4:30PM

Friday: 8AM—12PM

Our office is open for appointments and walk-ins:

Tuesday – Thursday, 10:00am – 3:00pm.

HASCO will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

- November 11, Veterans' Day
- November 23 & 24, Thanksgiving
- December 25, Christmas

For information about our programs, resources, and a version of this newsletter in Spanish check out our website at www.hasco.org.

Para obtener información sobre nuestros programas, recursos y una versión de este boletín en español, visite nuestro sitio web en www.hasco.org.

