

# Revised Fire Safety Policy Issued 10/12/06

This information will supplement the 2006-2007 Catawba College Student Handbook and serve as a replacement for the fire safety policy printed in the handbook distributed earlier this year.

## Fire Safety

### Fire Fighting Equipment/Systems

Fire Alarm systems, fire extinguishers, and other fire fighting equipment are placed in each building for the protection of occupants. Such systems and devices are required by applicable law and must be in operating condition at all times.

The unlawful use, tampering, destruction or theft of fire alarm and fire fighting equipment is a serious offense. The College will charge violators with a policy violation and take disciplinary action that may include suspension or expulsion from the College. Any person(s) who intentionally compromises these systems in any way, will be held accountable, sanctioned and/or arrested and fined. Fire equipment includes, but is not limited to, room and hallway smoke detectors, exit signs, fire alarms, breaker panels, fire extinguishers, etc.

### North Carolina Statute

Tampering with fire equipment, or giving a false alarm is a serious offense and may result in suspension from the College. North Carolina General Statute 14-286 reads as follows: *Giving false fire alarms; molesting fire-alarm, fire-detection or fire-extinguishing system. It shall be unlawful for any person or persons to wantonly and willfully give or cause to be given, or to advise, counsel, or aid and abet anyone in giving, a false alarm or fire, or to break the glass key protector, or to pull the slide, arm, or lever of any pull station or signal box of any fire-alarm system, except in case of fire, or willfully misuse or damage a portable fire extinguisher, or in any way to willfully interfere with, damage, deface, molest, or injure and part or portion of any fire-alarm, fire-detection, smoke-detection or fire-extinguishing system. Any person violating any of the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00), imprisonment for not more than six months, or both.*

### Fire Alarms

Each residence hall is equipped with a fire alarm system that is monitored by the Catawba College Public Safety and the Salisbury Fire Department (SFD.) The SFD responds to each alarm on campus. The fire alarm system is maintained to monitor all areas of the residence hall including rooms.

Because it's impossible to immediately determine the difference between an actual emergency and a false alarm, students are required to evacuate the building for every alarm and assemble in the designated area outside of the building. Each semester the college will stage fire drills to test the response and evacuation time of students and to ensure all fire alarm equipment is operational. Any student found not evacuating the building immediately will be fined \$50 and is subject to additional disciplinary action.

The Student Conduct Administrator will use the resources and information provided by the Residence Life Staff, Public Safety Officers, other College officials and local fire and law enforcement officers to determine the circumstances involved in the activation of an alarm. The activation of a fire alarm will be investigated and subject to immediate conduct proceedings. The Student Conduct Administrator will make a determination of an (intentional) or (unintentional) fire alarm and proceed accordingly within the guidelines of the student conduct process. An unintentional fire alarm is defined as an event where the student could not have reasonably anticipated that the action or behavior would activate a fire alarm during normal daily activities within a college environment. Intentional fire alarm activation is defined as an event where the action, behavior or result of the behavior exceeds the expected, normal, daily activities within a college environment. The determination of unintentional and intentional fire alarms will be made in the context of a residential college environment that must consider the safety of all members of the community.

The following categories provide a few examples of what may constitute a fire alarm. The list is not exhaustive and the Student Conduct Administrator will evaluate student behavior on a case by case basis to make a determination of the appropriate category.

**Unintentional Alarm:** Overcooking food in a microwave, excessive steam from a shower, accumulation of dust on a fire alarm head, etc.

**Intentional Alarm:** Any form or source of an open flame, tampering with fire equipment, discharge of a fire extinguisher, pulling an alarm, arson, etc.

**Emergency Activation Alarm:** The use of fire safety equipment in response to an emergency situation.

### Open Flames

Students are strictly prohibited from using any object with the capacity to create an open flame in the residence halls. This includes items intended to use a flame for normal operation (lighters, candles, incense, oil burners, etc.) and also improvised devices that can be modified to create a flame (aerosol spray, combustible items, etc.).

### **Candles and Incense**

In conjunction with the open flames fire safety policy, all candles, incense, oil burners, etc., are strictly prohibited in the residence halls. ALL candles are prohibited even if the candle's wick has been cut off, it is still in its original wrapper, or intended for decorative purposes only. First violations of this policy will result in fine of \$50.00 and immediate confiscation of banned items. Repeat offenses will be subject to additional disciplinary action.

### **Fireworks**

The College strictly forbids the use or possession of fireworks, firecrackers, or any other type of explosive. Anyone discovered using these will be fined \$50 for the first violation, along with immediate confiscation of banned items. Repeat offenses will be subject to additional disciplinary action.

### **Decorations**

The College strictly prohibits LIVE Christmas trees. Also, holiday and decorative lighting is prohibited as decoration in the room as this does not comply with fire safety regulations. First violation will result in a fine of \$50 per violation and immediate confiscation of banned items. Repeat offenses will be subject to additional disciplinary action.

### **Appliances and Cooking**

The College has approved only a limited number of appliances that may be used in the residence halls. The following appliances are strictly prohibited: Open coil burners (hot plates), griddles or grills, regular toasters, electric hamburger or hotdog cookers (including George Foreman grills), indoor/outdoor grills or hibachis, and any high heat appliance capable of heating cooking oil to the boiling point. First violation of this policy will result in a fine of \$50 per violation and immediate confiscation of banned items. Repeat offenses will be subject to additional disciplinary action.

### **Electrical Equipment**

In the event that students need additional electrical outlets or plugs, surge protectors with an automatic circuit breaker are an accepted electrical device for use. All other plug extenders or multipliers are prohibited. Extension cords may not contain multiple plug ends, be connected to other extension cords, or create a walking hazard. First violation will result in a fine of \$25 per violation and immediate confiscation of banned items. Repeat offenses will be subject to additional disciplinary action.

## **Fire Safety Terms**

**Fire equipment:** includes, but is not limited to, room and hallway smoke detectors, exit signs, fire alarms, breaker panels, fire extinguishers, etc.

**Fire Alarm:** any action that causes the alarm system to be activated.

**Flame:** Any form or source of a flame.

**Confiscation:** The College will immediately remove all sources of hazardous materials or other items determined to be in violation of the fire safety policy. These items will not be returned to students.

**Unintentional Fire Alarm:** is defined as an event where the student could not have reasonably anticipated that the action or behavior would activate a fire alarm during normal daily activities within a college environment.

**Intentional Fire Alarm:** is defined as an event where the action, behavior or result of the behavior exceeds the expected, normal, daily activities within a college environment.

**Emergency Activation Fire Alarm:** The use of fire safety equipment in response to an emergency situation.