



city of  
**greenville**

# News Release

## **GCFD FOCUSES RISK REDUCTION EFFORTS ON MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS**

**(Greenville SC)** Multi-family dwellings pose a large life-safety risk due to the number of occupants living under one roof, and fires in multi-family dwellings can have catastrophic results. With several apartment fires causing extensive structural and property damage and displacing residents and families in recent months, the Greenville City Fire Department (GCFD) is stressing the importance of its community risk reduction program to the managers of multi-family developments in the city.

While GCFD is involved in inspecting and permitting new multi-family developments, once they are occupied, the responsibility for keeping residents safe falls on the management company. As a result, GCFD developed a Multi-family Fire Compliance Program in 2014 to create a system for inspecting existing apartment buildings for draft stopping - a material installed to restrict the movement of air through concealed spaces, thereby starving a fire of oxygen before it can cause severe damage to the building. In 2015, GCFD expanded the program to require management to perform self-inspections and test their property's fire alarms and fire hydrants annually, and to ensure that all units have working smoke alarms.

According to Will Broschious, GCFD's community risk reduction coordinator, the sheer number of new multi-family developments that have been built in the city over the past few years has prompted GCFD to increase its outreach efforts to this rapidly growing segment of the city's population. "In addition to our ongoing neighborhood smoke alarm initiative, we are also working to spread the 'Fire is Everyone's Fight' message to all of the apartment and condo buildings in the city, which presents some unique challenges," said Broschious. "So far, most of our attention has been focused on ensuring that property managers are keeping their fire protection systems in good working order; however, the next step is to launch a fire safety education and awareness campaign - hopefully this fall - for the residents who live in the city's multi-family developments."

"Fire is Everyone's Fight" is a national effort led by the U.S. Fire Administration to lower the number of home fires and home fire injuries in America. GCFD is actively promoting that effort by sharing life saving information and equipment, and by working to change the way city residents think about fire and fire prevention.

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