



FDNY mandates “Close the Door” signs that will save lives – Compliance deadline is April 30th - by Evan Lipstein

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Fire commissioner Daniel Nigro is urging all New Yorkers to close the door when escaping a fire; following two serious fires in Brooklyn and Manhattan in the past two weeks that have injured 27 people.

“If you are escaping a fire in your home or apartment, I strongly urge all New Yorkers to ‘Close the door’ to reduce the spread of fire,” said commissioner Nigro. “Leaving a door open allows the fire to grow rapidly, spread throughout the building, and puts the lives of building occupants and responding firefighters in grave danger.”

Without warning, fire sent smoke and flames through 515 East 72nd St., a 41-story apartment building, leaving 22 people injured, including a child, according to the FDNY.

The fire started in a 24th floor kitchen where its two occupants were found passed out from smoke inhalation with the door open. Fire officials said the blaze was exacerbated after the door to the apartment where the flames originated was left open.

The occupant left the door to the fire apartment open, which caused the fire to come out into the hallway, down the hallway and send smoke throughout the upper floors.

On January 13th, FDNY was called to 2402 Benson Ave. in Brooklyn for report of a fire on the first floor of a four-story apartment building. The door from the fire apartment to the public hallway was left open allowing the fire to spread beyond the apartment. Occupants on multiple floors self-evacuated to fire escapes due to smoke conditions throughout the building. There were five injuries at this fire: One critical injury, one serious injury, and three non-life threatening injuries in the building,” FDNY deputy assistant chief Joseph Ferrante said.

Close the Door signs

The FDNY will also require apartment buildings to post a sign indicating that those escaping a fire should close all doors behind them. The mandated sign must read:

“In a Fire, Close All Doors Behind You! Keep Fire and Smoke Out of Building Hallways and Stairs. Keep Apartment and Stairwell Doors Closed at All Other Times. Protect Your Neighbors and Your Home!”

The mandated rule posting is on the public hallway side of stairwell doors. The purpose of the “Close the Door” sign is to provide a clear, visible reminder to building residents of the importance of closing each door as one exits one’s apartment and building during a fire. Closing these doors serves to contain the fire and smoke within the apartment, assist in firefighting operations and prevent smoke from entering the stairwells through which building residents may need to evacuate.

This new law applies to all residential apartment buildings and occupancies classified in occupancy group R-2 except any building or occupancy that is occupied as a homeless shelter and that has a fire alarm system with voice communication capability, school dormitories, college and university dormitories, and student apartments.

There is also a rule to make sure your property is following rules related to fire and emergency preparedness notices. The purpose of the fire and emergency preparedness notice serves to inform building residents and building staff about evacuation procedures and to provide other guidance in the event of a fire or non-fire emergency in the building or occupancy. These notices must be printed and mounted in the following locations: On the inside of every dwelling unit door of each dwelling unit in the building and in a conspicuous location near any common mailbox area customarily used by building occupants, or if there is no common mailbox area, in a conspicuous location in or near the elevators or main stairwell. Each fire and emergency preparedness notice shall be securely affixed, no lower than four feet from the floor, nor higher than five and a half feet from the floor.

Hyline Safety Company offers the assorted signs and consulting services needed to comply with these new local law requirements. Please reach out if you need our assistance.

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