



**Smoke-Free  
New England**

# **Smoke-Free Campus Housing Will Reduce Fire Risk and Save Lives**

## **Tobacco use in student housing poses a fire risk**

- **On October 13, 1996, a fire in the James House Dorm at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst resulted from the careless use of smoking materials. Approximately 50 students had to be relocated.**
- **Around 6 a.m. on May 12, 1996, a fire broke out at University of North Carolina Chapel Hill's Phi Gamma Delta fraternity house after a nightlong graduation party attended by 250 to 300 students and their parents. The fire killed five people and injured three. Investigators attributed the fire, which started in the basement, to the improper use or disposal of smoking materials, which most likely ignited combustible materials.<sup>1</sup>**
- **On March 9, 1996, a student suffered second- and third-degree burns to his hands, face, head, and torso when he fell asleep on a couch while smoking. The ensuing fire was confined to his room in the Forest Hall Dorm at Bentley College in Waltham, Massachusetts.**

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<sup>1</sup>Fires caused by smoking materials kill more people than fires ignited by any other cause. Eleven percent of the 154 fraternity and sorority fires that occurred between 1993 and 1997 were a result of improper use of smoking materials.

- **At Dean College in Franklin, Massachusetts – Wednesday, October 25, 1995, at approximately 2:00 a.m. – a fire occurred in an occupied college dormitory. The building was successfully evacuated without loss of life or injury. The building, however, was a total loss. Two residents occupied the room in which the fire originated. Prior to the fire, the residents had been using candles and incense, which was against college policy. In addition, there had been a party in the room earlier in the evening, during which several people were smoking, according to investigators.**
- **A student playing with a lighter ignited a fire in his mattress at the University of Maine on November 12, 1994. One student was injured.**
- **On October 21, 1994, five students were killed at Bloomsburg University in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, when a sofa caught fire in the Beta Sigma Delta House. The students had removed the batteries from the house's smoke alarms, a common practice during smoky parties.**