



Resident assistants learn how to operate a fire extinguisher as part of the ninth annual RA Safety Night on campus.

RA Safety Night

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Fire safety training provided for Residence Life staff

University of Delaware resident assistants (RAs) and professional housing staff learned fire safety procedures firsthand at the ninth annual RA Safety Night, held Aug. 23, at Harrington Beach.

During the event, four rotating fire and campus safety training modules were presented to 188 RAs and 25 professional Residence Life housing staff, thanks to the efforts of UD Environmental Health and Safety, Police and Residence Life and Housing. Also participating were the Aetna Fire Department, city and state fire marshals and the Delaware State Fire School.

The training was designed to prepare RAs so they will be ready to react in the event an incident occurs within their residence halls.

Hands-on fire extinguisher training was provided, emphasizing the PASS (Pull pin, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep) method to operate the extinguisher. Participants learned about the limitations of fire extinguishers and the need to report all fires by contacting UD Police at 911.

To provide a true simulation of a smoke-filled residence hall corridor, the third floor of Lane Hall was filled with theatrical smoke, and participants practiced evacuation by crawling, staying low so they would have cleaner breathing air and enhanced visibility.

Room 209 in Lane Hall was staged with various prohibited items. RAs in teams of three were given 30 seconds to survey the room and identify as many items as they could on inspection clipboards.

Stovetop fires were extinguished by putting a lid on a burning pot while wearing firefighter turnout clothing, helmet and gloves. Participants were reminded of the dangers of unattended cooking and of having combustibles around cooking areas.

In addition, UD Community Police officers provided safety and security guidelines and displayed various illegal substance items.

“All in all it was one of the best Safety Training Nights ever,” said Kevin McSweeney, UD fire marshal. “The experience the RAs received will hopefully lead to a fire-incident-free academic year in the residence halls.”