



## ***Stay Or Go?***

### **Deciding whether it is best to leave the building, or stay...when there's a fire**

Getting out of a burning building is what people's instincts tell them they should do. But it's not always the best course of action. Many times, in a multi-unit building, it's better to stay where you are than risk running into smoke or fire as you leave. If you decide you are going to leave, the decision must be made quickly. The longer you wait, the better the chance the fire or smoke will have spread to stairways and corridors, blocking escape routes. If the fire is in your unit, you and anyone else inside will have to get out. Close all doors behind you and pull the fire alarm as you head for the closest stairway. **DO NOT USE THE ELEVATOR!**



### **If you hear the alarm and decide to go**

- Check your apartment door. If it is hot, or if smoke is coming in around the edges, do not open the door. If there is no heat or smoke, open the door a crack and look to see if the corridor is clear. If it is, take your keys, lock your door and go to the nearest stairway.
- Open the door to the stairway carefully. If there's smoke present, don't enter. Close the door and try another stairway. If they are all blocked, return to your unit and protect yourself from smoke.
- If you are descending (never try to go to the roof...smoke will rise to the top of a stairway) and encounter smoke, leave the stairway as quickly as you can. Remember to stay as low as you can. The air is cleaner closer to the floor.



### **If you remain in your apartment**

- Keep smoke from entering your unit. Duct tape is very good for this purpose. Seal the cracks around the door. Wet towels will also work. You can seal ducts or vents the same way.
- Call the fire department and tell them what unit you are in. If possible, move to the balcony. If you don't have a balcony, move to the room with the least amount of smoke in it.
- Open a window to provide you with fresh air. Hang a sheet or blanket from the window to show rescuers where you are