



## ***NY Fire Consultants, Inc. Fire Safety Message***

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November 2006

### **Plane Crashes into Building - Two Die in Plane**



### **Building Withstands Plane Crash - Fire Contained to Apartments**

Which headline is correct? Both are, but the top one is the only one you will see printed. The part of the story that isn't written about is the fact that the building withstood the force of the plane crash and that the fire did not extend beyond the impacted apartments. The residential apartment building at 524 East 72<sup>nd</sup> Street, where the plane struck, is a fireproof building.

What does a "fireproof building" mean? A "fireproof" or "non-combustible" building is a building whose structural components (the supporting elements of the building, such as steel or reinforced concrete beams and floors) are constructed of materials that do not burn or are resistant to fire and therefore will not contribute to the spread of the fire. In such buildings, fires are more likely to be contained in the apartment or space in which they start and less likely to spread inside the building walls to other apartments and floors.

**THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE BUILDING IS IMMUNE TO FIRE.**

While the structural components of the building may not catch fire, all of the contents of the building (including furniture, carpeting, wood floors, decorations and personal belongings) may catch on fire and generate flame, heat and large amounts of smoke, which can travel throughout the building, especially if apartment or stairwell doors are left open.



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As you can see in the picture to the above, the contents of the apartment were total consumed. The building did not burn or add to the combustible fire load.



The "combustible" or "non-fireproof" building to the left has structural components (such as wood) that will burn if exposed to fire and can contribute to the spread of the fire. In such buildings, the fire can spread inside the building walls to other apartments and floors, in addition to the flame, heat and smoke that can be generated by the burning of the contents of the building.

At the East 72<sup>nd</sup> Street crash and fire, the plane penetrated apartments on the upper floors of this high-rise building. When the plane blasted through the windows, the apartment went up in flames. The occupant of the apartment ran out of the apartment and down the stairs. She did exactly what her building's Fire Safety Plan said to do.

### Evacuation Instructions If the Fire Is In Your Apartment (All Types of Building Construction)

1. Close the door to the room where the fire is, and leave the apartment.
2. Make sure EVERYONE leaves the apartment with you.
3. Take your keys.
4. Close, but do not lock, the apartment door.
5. Alert people on your floor by knocking on their doors on your way to the exit.
6. Use the nearest stairwell to exit the building.
7. DO NOT USE THE ELEVATOR.
8. Call 911 once you reach a safe location. Do not assume the fire has been reported unless firefighters are on the scene.
9. Meet the members of your household at a predetermined location outside the building. Notify responding firefighters if anyone is unaccounted for.

Note that if the fire is in your apartment you should leave whether the building is fireproof or non-fireproof.

Let's examine what some occupants several floors above the fire did. To quote one of the occupants, "The whole building shook. Then we ran for the elevator."



Another occupant said, "As I was coming down the stairs I thought that the whole building might come down."

We all know that we should not use the elevator during a fire, but some people will make the wrong decisions in a state of panic. Remember this was a fireproof building and the fire was not in the apartment of these occupants.

The following is from the building's Fire Safety Plan:

Evacuation Instructions If the Fire Is Not In Your Apartment

**"Non-Combustible" or "Fireproof" Buildings:**

1. Stay inside your apartment and listen for instructions from firefighters unless conditions become dangerous.
2. If you must exit your apartment, first feel the apartment door and doorknob for heat. If they are not hot, open the door slightly and check the hallway for smoke, heat or fire.
3. If you can safely exit your apartment, follow the instructions above for a fire in your apartment.
4. If you cannot safely exit your apartment or building, call 911 and tell them your address, floor, apartment number and the number of people in your apartment.
5. Seal the doors to your apartment with wet towels or sheets, and seal air ducts or other openings where smoke may enter.
6. Open windows a few inches at top and bottom unless flames and smoke are coming from below. Do not break any windows.
7. If conditions in the apartment appear life-threatening, open a window and wave a towel or sheet to attract the attention of firefighters.
8. If smoke conditions worsen before help arrives, get down on the floor and take short breaths through your nose. If possible, retreat to a balcony or terrace away from the source of the smoke, heat or fire.

In a fire emergency, the decision to leave or to stay in your apartment will be yours to make. If you must take immediate action, use your judgment as to the safest course of action.

As shown in these pictures, the fire did not extend beyond the original apartments. If you decided to leave, the exit stairs could have been full of smoke and heat. You may not have been able to get back to the safety of your apartment.



On December 23, 1998 a fire that started in the Manhattan apartment where the actor Macaulay Culkin's family lived, a building worker was found dead in a stairwell on the 29<sup>th</sup> floor of the 51-story building. The fire started in a 19<sup>th</sup> floor apartment. The fire was contained to the fire apartment and the woman died 10 floors above the fire.

### **Past crashes into buildings:**

July 28, 1945: A B-25 bomber crashed into the 79th floor of the Empire State Building. Fourteen people died, including 11 in the building.

May 16, 1977: A helicopter struck the Pan Am Building killing five people and injuring two others. Those killed include a pedestrian on the corner of Madison Avenue and 43rd Street.

Sept. 11, 2001: Terrorists hijacked and flew a pair of commercial jets into the north and south towers of the World Trade Center killing more than 2,700 people.

### **Emergency Action Plan deadlines:**

**August 31<sup>st</sup> for office buildings over 40 stories**

**October 31<sup>st</sup> for office buildings over 25 stories**

**Next deadline December 31<sup>st</sup> for all other office buildings**

What is an EAP? An Emergency Action Plan outlines the procedures for a buildings response to a non-fire-related emergency involving an explosion, biological, chemical, radiological, nuclear or hazardous materials incident, natural disasters such as a hurricane or earthquake, or other emergency conditions that occur inside or in close proximity to their buildings.

### **NY Fire Consultants Services:**

#### Fire and Life Safety Consulting

Fire and Life Safety Inspections  
Fire Safety Plans for Residential Buildings (LL 10 of 1999)  
Fire Safety & Evacuation Plans  
Commercial (Class E) Buildings

#### Emergency Action Plans

#### Emergency Procedures Manuals

#### Fire & Evacuation Preparedness Training

#### Interior Fire Alarms Consultants

#### Violations Correction & Removal

Environmental Control Board  
Fire & Building Department  
Housing Preservation & Development



# Personal Life Safety Guide Book

## Fireproof Residential Apartment Buildings

The Personal Life Safety Guide Book offers a quick reference for fire and life safety emergencies. A must for residential building staff.

Bomb Threat  
Carbon Monoxide  
Chemical Spills  
Extreme Heat  
Fire  
First Aid  
Gas Leaks  
Heart Attack

Person Trapped in Elevator  
Poisoning  
Power Outage  
Robbery or Mugging  
Shelter in Place  
Suspected Terrorist  
Suspicious Packages  
Threatening Behavior



Write emergency telephone numbers on the back. The Personal Life Safety Guide Book comes with in travel pouch that fits in your shirt pocket.

- Overall size 3.5 " x 5.5"
- Coated card stock
- Put emergency telephone numbers on back
- Comes with vinyl pouch

Prices:		
<u>1-24</u>	<u>25-49</u>	<u>50 +</u>
\$9.95	\$8.95	\$7.25



### Basic Emergency Information at Your Finger Tips

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