

# THE OC LINK

OFF-CAMPUS LIVING NEWS FOR FANSHAWE COLLEGE STUDENTS  
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2019

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## Fire Safety Tips

By Marysa

While living off-campus, it's important to learn about and actively practice fire safety. Whether you're cooking in the kitchen or burning candles in your bedroom, we advise you to be aware of the fire hazards in your home. Check that each room in your rental has at least two fire exits (i.e. window and door) and that your smoke detectors are properly installed and distributed throughout your unit. We encourage students to learn the location of the fire extinguishers in their homes and to be prepared in the event of a fire. Most of the time fires can be snuffed out by cutting off the oxygen supply like putting a pot lid on a grease fire. However, we encourage you to practice diligence in preventing fires by keeping flammable objects or materials away from stoves or open flames, as well as regularly monitoring heated appliances.

## Roommate Issues

By Mackenna

Shared living spaces are a new experience for students, and most would agree that even the best of friends can face disagreements and challenges while living together. Fanshawe's Housing Mediation Service can help to eliminate and resolve these conflicts.

While on your roommate search, we suggest taking a closer look at whom you select as your roommate(s). You can utilize our Roommate Agreement found on our website:

<https://www.fanshawec.ca/roommate-agreement>.

This document will help you determine if your potential future roommate and you share similar lifestyle preferences or not.

Another aspect to consider are the benefits and differences of separate and joint leases. It's

important to understand what each type of lease means for you legally and how that could affect potential disagreements.

For current off-campus students facing roommate concerns, it is never too late to sit down and discuss an updated Roommate Agreement. Additionally, we offer Mediation Services in our Off-Campus Housing Office, found on our website: <https://www.fanshawec.ca/housing/mediation>.

Living with others is a learning experience all in its own, and sometimes you have to pick your battles. Fanshawe Housing Mediation Services are here to help you through your conflicts. After all, college is too short to be worried about your roommates.

## **Winter Has Come: Heating Bylaws!**

By Avanti

With the cold, snowy weather fast approaching, it is important to understand your rights as a tenant regarding heating. The heating bylaw is a requirement that property owners must follow, and ensures that rental units are meeting a certain standard of warmth.

The London heat bylaw states that from September 15 to June 15:

- Between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. your unit should be at a minimum of 20°C
- Between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. your unit should be at a minimum of 18°C

If you feel that the heating requirement is not being met, make sure to bring some proof to your landlord. Use a thermometer to check what the temperature is at different times of day and take pictures of it. If the temperature is lower than what the bylaw requires, the landlord must fix this. However, if the minimum temperature is being met and you are still cold, you will need to find another way to stay warm!

## **Home Safety**

By Marysa

It's exciting to think about heading home for the holidays at the end of the semester, but when doing so, be sure to properly equip your home for your time away. Sounds simple, but with heads full of exams and assignments, we often forget to lock our doors and windows. Be sure to practice this on a regular basis to ensure the safety of you, your housemates and your belongings. Close your blinds or drapes before leaving for a significant period of time and avoid leaving spare keys to your rental in obvious hiding places (for example, under a doormat or a planter at the front door).

When leaving, unplug appliances to reduce wasting energy and secure your valuables in a safe location (i.e. not near any windows). Doing these simple tasks can help ensure that your rental will be safe and ready for you to come back in the new year.

## **Housing Horror Story**

By Alyssa

This month's horror story involves a student who rented a house based only on pictures he saw online. After he signed the lease and went to see the house in person, he quickly realized that the house looked much different than it did online. The house looked much newer in the pictures and the mould he found when viewing the rental in person was never mentioned by the landlord!

Pro Tip: Don't let this be you! Always be sure to thoroughly inspect the property in person before signing the lease or paying a deposit. You can also ask questions to previous tenants to find out what your potential landlord is like. We recommend using the Renting in London document (<https://www.fanshawec.ca/renting>) when looking for a new rental to minimize the problems that could occur in the future! This will give you a better sense of what to look for when renting.

## **Fanshawe College Housing Mediation Service-Counselling and Accessibility Services**

Tuesdays from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Office: Room F2010

Phone: 519-452-4282

Email: [housing.mediation@fanshawec.ca](mailto:housing.mediation@fanshawec.ca)

Website: [www.fanshawec.ca/housing](http://www.fanshawec.ca/housing)

OR

Monday to Friday: 519-661-3787