

STUDENT HOUSING RENTAL PROPERTY CLAIMS

A Guide to Prevention and Mitigation for Landlords

Student housing is an essential cornerstone of student life for any college or university. And while this market is noted for its dependable cash flows, renting to students comes with unique risks. There are many things you can do to mitigate or prevent common claims from occurring at your student housing rental property.

01

Tenant-Caused Fire Accidents. Unattended cooking. Careless disposal of cigarettes. Unattended candles. Overloaded extension cords. These common fire-triggering events could be mitigated by addressing them in the lease.

TIP Install affordable stovetop fire mitigation devices, enforce a no smoking policy, educate tenants on candle usage, and make sure there are plenty of electrical outlets throughout the property to minimize the need for extension cords.

02

Freeze-Related Water Claims. Frozen water pipe damage is very common for student housing landlords as your property is often unattended during the holiday season. A burst pipe can cause thousands of dollars of damage, especially with no one at home to notice it.

TIP A cold building is the single greatest risk factor for frozen pipes. Keep the heat at 50 degrees or higher, add insulation to crawl spaces and attics, let a faucet continuously drip, and make sure all windows and doors are tightly closed.

03

Snow and Ice Slips and Trips. Snow accumulation on sidewalks, driveways, and parking lots can create hazards. Should someone slip and fall on untreated walkways you are responsible for, it could cost you thousands of dollars.

TIP Create an Ice and Snow Removal Log to keep track of your properties this winter and stick with it.

04

Pothole, Parking Lot, or Sidewalk Trips and Falls. Uneven pavement, potholes, and large cracks can lead to trips and falls on the property. Owners have a duty to take reasonable steps to protect people from known hazards.

TIP Repair uneven surfaces, potholes, and large cracks as soon as possible. Mark all speed bumps or tire stops, provide proper outdoor lighting, and ensure good handrails are available leading up steps.

05



Vandalism. This is the intentional damage to your property without your consent, including smashing mailboxes, breaking windows, tampering with electricity or plumbing, or spray-painting graffiti.

TIP

Prevent vandalism by having bright security lights outside the property, planting bushes and shrubs close to the property to make it harder for vandals to approach, and installing security cameras.

06



Severe Weather. Heavy storms can bring trees and branches down, hail can cause damage to windows and roofs, and hurricanes and tornadoes can completely wipe out buildings.

TIP

As soon as a storm is announced, secure outside fixtures or bring them indoors, clear gutters and storm drains, and consider having a generator to prevent the property from a complete blackout.

07



Sewer Backups. A sewer backup can cause thousands of dollars in damage to everything from floors, walls, furniture, electrical units, and much more. They are most often caused by the age of the system, tree routes, and sanitary main blockages.

TIP

Educate tenants on properly disposing of grease and paper products to avoid clogging. You can also cut tree roots on your property and replace your line with new plastic pipes.

Steadfast Commitment to the Student Housing Market

In the wake of an accident, an insurance policy should provide a source of solace. Without a carrier that's deeply invested in the student housing space, property owners experiencing a loss may find just the opposite. Avoiding gaps in coverage takes singular focus.

Millers Mutual zeros in on multifamily housing. Our deep understanding of the exposures endemic to the niche means thorough coverage for property owners--and reassurance amid the anxiety of emergencies. Learn more about our student housing coverage today.

About Millers Mutual Insurance

Millers Mutual, based in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, is the niche property & casualty insurer that brings stability to multifamily housing. As a carrier that's dedicated to understanding the intricacies of the niche, we believe our singular focus on multifamily housing results in the kind of comprehensive, stable coverage our agents--and their multifamily clients--deserve. We currently serve commercial policyholders in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, Ohio, Virginia, and Washington, D.C., through a network of independent agents.