

# Number of Lincoln, UNL fires burns low

By Ad Hudler  
Daily Nebraskan Staff Reporter

Fire prevention programs have helped reduce the number of fires this year in Lincoln and at UNL, local fire officials say.

Douglas Peterson of the University Police Department said UNL police officers have reported only three fires this semester.

Corp. Bill Manning, UNL police department fire specialist, said the number of fires at UNL has decreased in the past four or five years.

Manning attributes the decrease to a fire awareness program sponsored by UNL's Office of Housing. Posters and pamphlets in residence halls teach students "learn not to burn" ideas.

Major losses from fire in the city of Lincoln also have decreased, according to a news release from Mayor Roland Luedtke's office. Fire loss for Lincoln during the first seven months of 1984 was set at \$429,314, about half of last year's total.

"I think these statistics provide evidence that the city's various fire prevention programs are having a positive effect," Luedtke said.

Mike Durst, a Lincoln fire inspector, said the city's Volunteer Fire Prevention Program, sponsored by the Bureau of Fire Prev-

ention, is one city program that has helped decrease fires here.

"We'd like to think this contributed to the reduction of fires during this seven-month period," Durst said.

The program, now in its first year, is manned by 100 volunteers who distribute fire safety information and inspect residents' homes for fire hazards.

Peterson said that at UNL, most residence hall fires occur in trash chutes. Fires in residence hall rooms, although rare, usually are caused by overloaded circuits — too many appliances plugged into

an outlet.

Durst said electric blankets also can cause fires. Students' electric blankets, can "short out," thus becoming fire hazards.

Fires in off-campus housing usually are the result of large parties, Durst said. Cigarettes from parties end up in trash barrels or trapped in upholstery. These could start fires later, after the party ends and the host or hostess falls asleep, sedated from alcohol.

But statistics indicate that college students don't start most of Lincoln fires. About 90 percent of Lincoln fires occur in single-family homes, Durst said. Most of these fires are caused by "careless smoking" or kitchen mishaps, he said.

To avoid fires, the Bureau of Fire Prevention provides these safety tips:

- Keep the area near stoves free from rubbish and other flammable materials.
- Empty the contents of ashtrays into a toilet, garbage disposal or a covered metal trash can.
- Make sure no more than one appliance or fixture is connected to an extension cord.
- Install good smoke detectors and test them regularly.
- Check all windows and doors. Be sure they can be opened easily from the inside.

## Leaves of absence focus of seminar

A seminar focusing on the benefits and details of working out faculty leaves of absence will be today from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. in the Nebraska Union and Tuesday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Nebraska East Union.

A panel of faculty members who have been on leaves of absence will discuss the procedures for going on leave and the opportunities for professional growth while on leave. There also will be small group discussions.

Call 472-3079 for more information.

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