

What's Goin' On

Around Town

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTERS

Winter 2014

Volume 11 - Quarter 4



BENSALEM

TOWNSHIP

MAYOR & TOWNSHIP COUNCIL



Joseph DiGirolamo
Mayor



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Council President



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Council Vice President



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Secretary



Ed Kisselback
Member



Bryan Allen
Member

As we anticipate the holidays and a new year just weeks away, Council and I would like to wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season. This year comes to a close with many positive accomplishments for Bensalem Township. Our 2015 Budget will reflect NO REAL ESTATE TAX INCREASE.

Keeping taxes steady and still providing the municipal services that residents expect and deserve is ever challenging in the existing economic climate. I have advised over the past several years cut backs were necessary in order to continue our day-to-day operations and my Administrative Team met this challenge and actually exceeded the goals set. The \$100 Homeowners Assistance Grant (HAG) was processed for most homeowners in October. While the HAG amount has decreased from its original amount of \$300, it's just one of the casualties of "cutting back" and not increasing real estate taxes. There is not one other municipality in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that provides a monetary benefit to its residents other than Bensalem (in towns and cities that have licensed casinos/racetracks).

October was a great month for Bensalem. Money Magazine named Bensalem Township as "1 of 50 Best Places to Live in the Country". This is something we should all take pride in. You might ask, what determined this ranking? There were many items taken into consideration for the rating formula. We have a strong economic base of businesses, transportation excellence, public safety procedures and initiatives and several others. The TD Bank Amphitheater carried us into the top 50, putting us in the above average ranking in the arts and culture category. This past year was a banner year for the amphitheater, with one of the best seasons in its 15 year history.

Are we perfect? No. Is there always room for improvement? You bet. Money Magazine named the City of McKinney, Texas, as the number one place to live in the country. We were curious as to what constituted their ranking and what improvements are they striving for? McKinney, Texas is a community of 148,000 people in 62 square miles, just about tripling our population and size. The information provided states "While many factors combine to make McKinney a truly special place in America, it is the people of McKinney who bring these vibrant qualities to life. That community spirit is embodied in a friendly, safe, and inviting city that holds strong ties to its roots and history while enjoying rapid economic development and continually adding new amenities that compliment and expand their unique quality of life" (Money Magazine Excerpt)

You can't help but compare the statistics. We sound very similar in amenities and services, although McKinney Texas is much younger than Bensalem Township as they were established in 1848 and Bensalem in 1692, mere babes.

Just like McKinney, Texas, Bensalem Township has a strategic vision to continue to improve our infrastructure, the health, safety and welfare of residents, strong economic development, recreational opportunities and streamlined business environment. With the continued hard work of our Council members and my Administrative Team, the Township is operating with a clear understanding of our communities values and identity as now "1 of 50 Best Places To Live in America".

Happy Holidays,

Mayor's Signature





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Thursday If your trash is collected on Tuesday/Friday

Saturday If you live in the neighborhoods of Linconia Park, Nottingham & Stanwood Garden

BENSALEM POLICE K-9 UNIT AWARDED TOP HONORS

The Bensalem Police K-9 Unit recently competed in the Harrisburg Regional Police Dog 1 competition held over the weekend of September 6th and 7th. The K-9 unit had a stellar performance and did a great job of representing the Bensalem Police Department. In this competition the K-9 teams are judged on how they perform in job related tasks.



Corporal Michael Schum and K9 Argo came in 1st place overall with a score of 686 out of 700 points. Additionally, Corporal Schum and Argo received awards for 1st place in obedience, 1st place in scent work, 1st place in agility (tied), and 2nd place in criminal apprehension. Officer Matthew Tobie and K-9 Ozzy came in 2nd place overall with a score of 684 out of 700. Officer Tobie and K-9 Ozzy also were awarded 2nd place in obedience, 2nd place in scent work, first place in criminal apprehension, and 1st place in agility (tied). Officer Brian Cowden was also awarded the decoy award for taking the bites from both competing dogs.

These results reflect the hard work, commitment, and dedication of all the members of the Bensalem Police K-9 Unit. Other members of the K-9 Unit that did not compete in this event are Sergeant David Richardson, Sergeant James McGinty, and Detective Christine Kelliher.



BENSALEM TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT PROMOTIONS

On Friday, October 3, 2014, the Bensalem Township Police Department promoted three of its member to new ranks. All three officers were sworn in by Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo and presented their new badges by Director Fred Harran and Deputy Director Pat Ponticelli.



William McVey was promoted to the rank of lieutenant. Lieutenant McVey is now the department's operations commander and also handles media relations. Prior to this promotion, McVey had been a detective sergeant, patrol sergeant, K-9 handler, and field training officer. McVey was hired in 1998.

James McGinty was promoted to the rank of sergeant. Sergeant McGinty is now assigned as one of the department's patrol sergeants and will also oversee the department's K-9 unit. Sergeant McGinty will also remain active in the K-9 field with his new partner, ACE. Prior to this promotion, McGinty had been a patrol corporal, K-9 handler, and field training officer. McGinty was hired in 2004.

Michael Schum was promoted to the rank of corporal. Corporal Schum is now assigned as one of the department's patrol corporals and he will also assist with the management of the department's K-9 unit. Corporal Schum will continue to work his new assignment with his K-9 partner, ARGO. Prior to this promotion, Schum had been a K-9 handler and field training officer. Schum was hired in 2006.

Mayor DiGirolamo, Director Harran, and Deputy Director Ponticelli are proud to announce these promotions and welcome these police leaders into their new roles within the department.



BENSALEM TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT TIP LINE:

Do you have a tip for the Bensalem Township Police Department? Do you wish to remain anonymous?

If so, please use our anonymous tip line at 215-633-3660. Calling this number will allow you to report possible drug related crimes and other criminal acts directly to the police. Violations may include the growing, manufacturing, distributing, possessing, or trafficking of controlled substances. The department also encourages you to report any suspected criminal acts, information on wanted suspects, and any other information that you feel the police should have.

This line is checked daily, but if you have a true emergency or need an officer right away, please call 911.

Judy Loftus

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POLICE DEPARTMENT HAS ACHIEVED ACCREDITED STATUS BY THE PENNSYLVANIA LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION COMMISSION

We had reported in a previous Around the Town that the Bensalem Township Police Department was in the process of attaining accredited status through the Commonwealth. The Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission (PLEAC) is designed and developed by professional law enforcement executives within the Commonwealth to provide a reasonable and cost effective plan for the professionalization of Pennsylvania law enforcement agencies. On October 28th and 29th the Department was assessed by a PLEAC Assessor Team on the 132 law enforcement standards included in the Program. The assessment consisted of a review of files for each individual standard, ensuring Department policies and procedures, along with corresponding documentation, complied with criteria specified in the standards.

It is with great pleasure to announce the Department was awarded PLEAC accreditation status on November 12th!

Accreditation is a progressive way of helping departments evaluate and improve their overall performance. The basis of this approach lies in the dissemination of standards containing a clear statement of professional objectives. Some of the benefits a department obtains through Accreditation include:

1. The establishment of a credible framework for evaluating department practices and procedures
2. Reducing department risk and exposure to lawsuits

3. Decreasing some liability insurance expenditures
4. Improving law enforcement – community relations
5. Increasing employee input, interaction and confidence in the department
6. Identifying and highlighting the capabilities and competence of the department
7. Furnishing a solid foundation for the agency to build upon for further progress
8. Developing improved methods for providing services to the community

Congratulations to Public Safety Director, Fred Harran and the rest of the department, as well as Mayor DiGirolamo and Bensalem Township Council for their support on gaining this prestigious status.



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UNITY WEEK 2015

B Bensalem Township
School District



Building A Better Bensalem Together (B3T) is in the midst of planning Unity Week 2015. Unity Week will be held January 19-23, 2015. This will be the 10th year Unity Week has been celebrated in Bensalem Township.

Unity Week began in collaboration with MLK Day of Service. In 1994, Congress designated the Martin Luther King Jr. Federal Holiday as a national day of service and charged the Corporation for National and Community Service with leading this effort. Taking place each year on the third Monday in January, the MLK Day of Service is the only federal holiday observed as a national day of service - a "day on, not a day off." The MLK Day of Service is a part of United We Serve, the President's national call to service initiative. It calls for Americans from all walks of life to work together to provide solutions to our most pressing national problems. The MLK Day of Service empowers individuals, strengthens communities, bridges barriers, creates solutions to social problems, and moves us closer to Dr. King's vision of a "Beloved Community."

In 2015 to expand the concept of a "day on not a day off" Building A Better Bensalem Together and Bensalem School District are partnering together. They will be hosting a "Toiletry Drive" throughout December and the beginning of January. The items being collected are shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, deodorant, lotion etc. There will be donation boxes at all school buildings and other convenient locations in the community.

On January 19th students from Bensalem School District and members of B3T will work together to coordinate the toiletry care packages. Those packages will be distributed to the under served families in our community.

For more information on Unity Week or to find out donation drop off locations you can visit the B3T website www.bensalemb3t.com or the Bensalem School District website www.bensalemsd.org.



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2015 WINTER/SPRING PARKS & RECREATION PROGRAMS

Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo, Council and the Bensalem Township Parks and Recreation Department invite you to browse through our Winter Activities program flyer. Let us help you keep the children busy with one of our drawing classes or perhaps our long standing field hockey program. When reviewing the activities bulletin be sure to take note of the early registration dates for our returning by popular demand Extended Day summer program as well as our Play area programs. We look forward to your joining us. Should you have questions or concerns or require a registration form contact the office at 215-633-3616.

Young Rembrandts

EARLY ELEMENTARY Drawing

Ages 4-6 (5 week program)

SESSION 1: January 24 thru
February 21

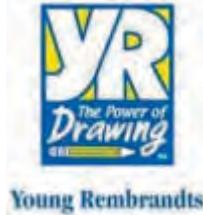
SESSION 2: February 28 thru
March 28

Location: Bensalem Community Park

Cost: \$65.00

Time: 9:00 am - 9:45 pm

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: Young Rembrandts



Young Rembrandts

DRAWING

Ages 7-14 (5 week program)

SESSION 1: January 24 thru February 21

SESSION 2: February 28 thru March 28

Location: Bensalem Community Park

Cost: \$65.00

Time: 10:00 am - 11:00 am

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: Young Rembrandts

Young Rembrandts

CARTOONING

Ages 8-14 (5 week program)

SESSION 1: January 24 thru February 21

SESSION 2: February 28 thru March 28

Location: Bensalem Community Park

Cost: \$65.00

Time: 11:15 am - 12:15 pm

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: Young Rembrandts

Bensalem Township Spring Field Hockey: Program runs April through early June. All practices and games are held at Bensalem Community Park. Fee: \$80 for all new girls that need equipment. \$60 for those not needing equipment. (Equipment includes official field hockey stick, ball, mouth guard and shin guards). Registration for this program is due by February 6.

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO:
Bensalem Township



LETTER FROM SANTA

OPEN TO ALL BENSALEM CHILDREN

Write a letter to "Santa Claus, North Pole"
C/O Bensalem Parks and Recreation
Department, 2400 Byberry Road,
Bensalem PA 19020 or drop off to Santa's
mailbox outside of the Parks and
Recreation Office. Be sure to include your
name, address, age and phone number. All
letters to Santa must be received by
December 12th so Santa can get back to
you before his big trip around the world.



Back by popular demand Summer Recreation Play Area and EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS

Take advantage of the convenient payment plans for our summer recreation play area programs by registering early. Registrations will begin February 2nd for all those who wish to be ahead of the game. Remember waiting until the last minute to register may cause your child to miss out on a summer full of fun activities. Call for registration form.

Interested in registering for the Extended Day program? If so call 215-633-3616 leave your name, address, telephone number and a special application will be sent to you. This is a limited enrollment program so register early to reserve your spot and take advantage of the payment plan.

For additional information call 215-633-3724 or 215-633-3614



Kids Music Round

www.kidsmusicround.com In this class, infants, toddlers 2, 3 and 4 years of age along with their parent or care givers join together as a musical community. Activities include playing rhythm instruments, having fun with rhymes, and singing and dancing to music of different meters and tonalities. If you have, any questions email musicwithsandy@aol.com



We Serve

The Bensalem Lions Club has wrapped up their Flea Market Season. It was a successful season with the exception of a few rainy Saturdays.

The Lions of Bensalem are excited to be planning the upcoming Annual Food Basket donation drive that benefits those in need in Bensalem. Food donations are being collected at our local schools, the Township Building (2400 Byberry Road), Bensalem Community Park (4301 Richlieu Road), if needed we could pick donations up. Donations are always welcomed.

The Bensalem Lions Club is always looking for new members to join the cause. If you are interested in learning more about the club or would like to attend one of the monthly dinner meetings please call 215 633 3655 ext. 3000.

Kiwanis Club of Bensalem

Fly Old Glory



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We will install a Flag & Holder at your Home or Business before:

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4th of July
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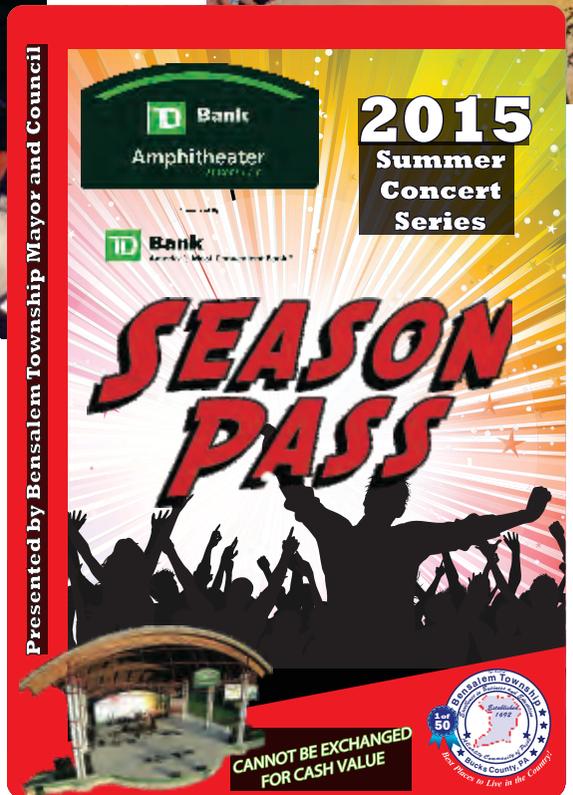
Planning is underway for another great summer of concerts at the beautiful Bensalem Township TD Bank Amphitheater. Just a little peek into 2015? We have booked "The McCartney Years" performing the best of McCartney & Wings, Hollywood Nights, featuring the sounds of Bob Seger. Many other pleasing acts are on the horizon for your entertainment pleasure.

Slight Increase for Concert Admission Beginning 2015 Season

The TD Bank Amphitheater is able to bring our audience the summer concert season with the support of corporate sponsors and admission sales. Good talent is expensive, Great talent is exponentially expensive! In order to continue to provide quality entertainment a slight increase in admission was necessary. This is the first increase in 5 years. The following is the fee schedule:

Adults \$6.00 • Seniors (age 65) \$3.00
Children 12 & under remain free

We always promote our TD Bank Season Pass, which provides you the best bargain as well as ease of entrance to our Central Park without stopping to pay admission at the ticket booths. The price of the Season Pass will remain the same at \$35.00 for the entire season. Season Pass sales begin Monday, December 8th in the Community Affairs Office located in the Municipal Building at 2400 Byberry Road. This is the perfect holiday gift for the dedicated TD Bank Amphitheater fan!



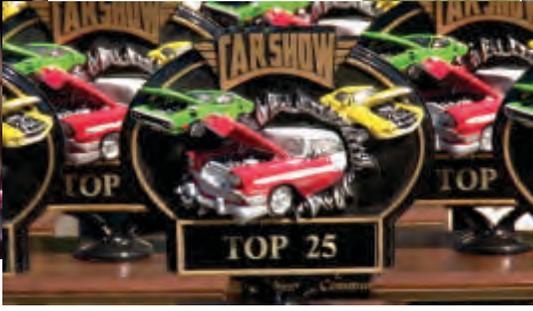
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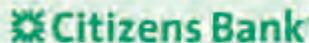
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Best Places to Live 2014

BEST PLACES TO LIVE

46. Bensalem, Pa.

Sept. 19, 2014

Think Bucks County, Pa., is just a rural escape for East Coast city-dwellers? The township of Bensalem, located on the southeastern tip of Bucks County, has access to stunning state parks, sure, but also has plenty of urban attractions, from gambling and horse-racing at the Parx Casino and Racetrack to shooting on the ranges of the Philadelphia Gun Club and attending concerts at the TD Bank Amphitheater.

Bensalem is also known for its strong Jewish community; the Jewish Outreach Center includes a Hebrew school, a shul, and a Torah study center. The local job market benefits from the presence of Fortune 1000 company Charming Shoppes as well as Ibanez Guitars and Tama Drums, but many Bensalem residents also work (and eat the legendary cheese steak) in downtown Philadelphia, just under a half hour away.

<http://time.com/money/3312358/bensalem-pa-best-places-to-live/>

POPULATION: 60,512

CENSUS REGION: Northeast

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME: \$77,730

MEDIAN HOME PRICE: \$205,000

AVERAGE PROPERTY TAXES: \$4,192

PROJECTED JOB GROWTH: 2.1%





MAXIMUM BUILDING COVERAGE CALCULATION SHEET

All permit applications for building additions, sheds, pools or other accessory structures must be accompanied by a plot plan indicating all structures and impervious surfaces that exist on the property including the proposed new addition. Impervious surfaces do not permit penetration of water and includes patios, walkways, driveways, etc.

In order to accurately calculate the impervious coverage for your particular project you need to know the Zoning Classification for the property. There are varying percentages used depending on the district. The calculation shown below is only an example depicting the process used for determining impervious coverage.

To determine allowable additional building coverage for you property complete the following where applicable.

- A. Square footage of house, including additions. _____
- B. Square footage of carport/garage. _____
- C. Square footage of pool. _____
- D. Square footage of shed or detached garage. _____
- E. Square footage of deck or covered porch. _____
- F. Square footage of proposed addition. _____
- G. Total Square Footage Of Building (A+B+C+D+E+F) _____
- H. Square footage of driveway. _____
- I. Square footage of sidewalk (including around pools) _____
- J. Square footage of patio. _____
- K. Total Sq Footage Of Impervious Coverage (G+H+I+J - C) _____

EXAMPLE CALCULATION:

To compute the maximum square footage of building coverage allowed on a lot, multiply 0.35 X the total square footage of the lot. (example: A lot measuring 7200 SQ. FT. would have a maximum allowable building coverage of 2,520 SQ. FT.)

To compute the maximum square footage of impervious surface allowed on a lot, multiply 0.40 X the total square footage of the lot. (example: A lot measuring 7200 SQ. FT. would have a maximum allowable impervious surface of 2880 SQ. FT.)

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| Lous Baked Ham | 2 lbs. Macaroni Salad |
| American & Swiss Cheese | Fresh Baked Rolls & Rye Bread |
| Hard Salami | 1 lb. Olives 1 lb. Pickles |

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The Buffalo Wing Thing

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10-12 people - **\$29.99**
12-24 people - **\$39.99**

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Seasonal fresh fruit or vegetables attractively sliced and served chilled. Homemade dips are also included.

10-12 people - **\$34.99**
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THE SNACKER

A Great Treat or Party Starter

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MINI HOAGIE TRAY

American, Italian, Ham & Cheese and Turkey Hoagies, sliced down to snack-size bites. Attractively decorated with fresh seasonal fruit. (Includes condiments - mayonnaise, oil & vinegar and sweet or hot peppers)

10-15 people - **\$39.99**

MINI SANDWICH TRAY

Finger Sandwiches of Our Own Roasted Turkey Breast, Baked Ham, Tender & Juicy Roast Beef, American & Swiss Cheeses, Bakery-fresh miniature rolls. Attractively decorated with fresh seasonal fruit. (Includes mayonnaise & mustard)

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A Wonderful Party Pleaser

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THE HOME-STYLE PLATTER

Our Most Popular Tray

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Any Array of Italian Meats & Cheeses

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- Our Own Oven Roasted Turkey Breast & Gravy Meatballs & Sauce
- Our Own Oven Roasted Pork & Gravy
- Maglio Italian Sausage with Peppers & Onions
- Wyszynski Polish Kielbasa & Sauerkraut
- Chicken Fingers with Dipping Sauce
- Homemade Stuffed Shells
- Homemade Baked Ziti With or Without Sausage
- Barbecued Roast Pork or Beef
- Chicken Parmigiana
- Chicken Caesar Salad
- Baked Macaroni & Cheese
- Strips of London Broil With Saut ed Onions & Peppers

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Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

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Never use gas grills or charcoal barbeques indoors; not only is it a fire hazard but charcoal and propane emit a variety of toxic fumes including carbon monoxide. Keep your grills outside at all times. Never use generators in homes, garages, crawl spaces, or other enclosed or partially enclosed areas, even with ventilation. Always use generators outdoors, away from windows and vents.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that is undetectable to the human senses and is deadly. It is known as the silent killer. The best way to alert your family is to install carbon monoxide detectors. Smoke alarms are not the same thing. Test them and change the batteries yearly. We recommend battery-operated ones since many carbon monoxide deaths occur during power outages when people are most likely to attempt to keep homes warm with alternate heat sources.

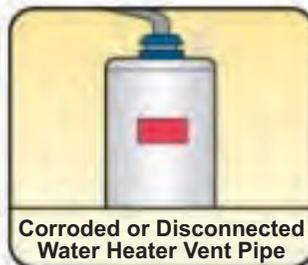
Carbon Monoxide Poisoning: Know the Common Sources



Car Left Running in Attached Garage



Portable Generators



Corroded or Disconnected Water Heater Vent Pipe



Portable Kerosene or Gas Heaters



Cracked or Loose Furnace Exchanger



Improperly Installed Kitchen Range or Vent



Operating a Grill Indoors or in a Garage



Gas or Wood-Burning Fireplace

Renters Insurance

Most individuals are unaware that the landlord's fire insurance policy may not cover any personal possessions or temporary relocations costs, regardless of where the fire starts. A fire may not start in your apartment unit, but it may completely destroy everything you own. In addition, to fire damage, your home may be uninhabitable due to smoke and water damage, which might leave you scrambling to find a new place to live. We recommend you consider rental insurance to help cover your losses.

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