

The Renter's Insurance Advantage

It is easy to understand the necessity for insurance in this country—whether for car, home, or health—but for some reason, less than half of the country's renters protect their homes with renter's insurance. Although renter's insurance is usually not required to move into an apartment home, it is just as necessary to have as your car insurance. Not only will renter's insurance protect your personal items, it will also give you help with temporary housing, liability protection for people on your property, or lawyer's fees if you are sued by someone you unintentionally injure.

Renters face the same risks as homeowners in cases of disasters striking their dwelling. Additionally, rented properties are 79% more likely to be burglarized than owned properties (U.S. Department of Justice). While renter's insurance is considerably less expensive than homeowner's insurance, only 43% of those who live in a rented home have a renter's insurance policy, compared to 96% of people who own their homes having a homeowner's insurance policy.

Perhaps the reason for this low percentage of renter's obtaining insurance is the common misconception that renters are covered under their landlord's insurance policy. This is simply not true. Most landlords' insurance policies only cover the outside of the building and its infrastructure. Their policy does not cover your belongings, so don't expect the landlord to owe you payment should anything happen.

While all policies vary slightly, your policy typically covers damages caused by the following:

- Fire or lightning
- Windstorm or hail
- Explosion
- Riot or civil commotion
- Damage caused by aircraft
- Damage caused by vehicles
- Smoke
- Vandalism or malicious mischief
- Theft
- Falling objects
- Weight of ice, snow or sleet

- Water-related damage from home utilities
- Electrical surge damage

Floods and earthquakes typically require extra coverage which you can buy as a separate policy or rider.

Your coverage will include liability protection, which covers damages as a result of unintentional bodily injury or property damage to another person.

Thus, you will be covered if, for example, someone trips on a skateboard in your yard and breaks a wrist, or if you accidentally break a window. This liability coverage usually includes medical expenses for non-residents and residents.

Renter's insurance also extends beyond on-premise theft and hazards. If your suitcase is stolen while you're on vacation, you'll likely be covered. The same is true with property stolen from your car. You may even receive compensation for legal defense costs in the case of a lawsuit.

Although the financial impact of liability is something most people don't like to think about, residents in Illinois are responsible for property damage and injuries they cause in and around their apartments. This includes sinks and tubs that overflow, kitchen fires, accidents caused by candles and cigarettes, and bodily injuries resulting from negligence. Residents that cause damage and are not covered for liability exposure could lose their apartment and be liable for thousands of dollars in damage.

In addition to liability coverage, renter's insurance offers contents insurance for the items you own. While it may not seem like you have all that much, the cost of your possessions—from your electronics to your furniture to your clothing—can



Protect your new home, and everything in it.

be more than you can afford to replace in the event of an accident. If you have renters insurance, you don't have to worry. You'll be insured for the replacement of cost of your contents, up to the policy limits.

One final benefit to having a renter's insurance policy is that if your apartment becomes unlivable due to a fire, burst pipes, or other reason that is covered by your policy, the insurance will typically cover any additional living expenses, such as hotel stays or rent at a similarly priced apartment while your home is being repaired or rebuilt.

Renter's insurance is an affordable way to protect your home against life's uncertainties. Call your insurance provider for a quote or contact the Westmore Leasing Office today to learn more about the benefits of renter's insurance.