

Renter's Insurance: Minimal Cost, Significant Savings

Renter's insurance is so cheap that it is hard to imagine why only 43% of the renters in this country carry a renter's insurance policy. It may be that many renters believe the common myth that they are covered under their landlord's policy, but the truth is that residents are financially responsible for damages to their personal property and damages and injuries they cause to the building or other residents.

Just like any other insurance policy, your renter's insurance premium depends on a number of factors, including where you live,



It's not going to cost as much as you think.

your deductible, your insurance company, and whether or not you need additional coverage. Still, the average cost of renter's insurance is \$120 to \$180 per year (or \$10 to \$20 per month). This typically gets you about \$30,000 to \$35,000 worth of coverage for your personal possessions and somewhere between \$100,000 and \$300,000 in of liability protection.

Compare that with the amount of money you will pay to replace damaged possessions or cover someone's medical expenses should an accident occur in your unit. A new computer alone would cost thousands of dollars. Here are three questions you should ask yourself when considering whether or not to get a renter's insurance policy:

- How much are my belongings worth?
- Could I afford to buy it all back again if it were destroyed in a fire or stolen?
- What would I do if a liability lawsuit was filed against me?

If you are like most renters, the answers to these questions are good indicators that you need renter's insurance.

Most policies typically cover your belongings from theft and damage and destruction from fire, lightning, smoke, windstorm, hail, and vandalism while living in a rented complex. Additionally, guests are covered if they sustain an injury in your home or if their property is damaged on your premises. If damage is caused to your property by another resident who does not have renter's insurance, you will still be protected under your policy.

Additionally, renter's insurance covers the cost of temporary living expenses if your apartment

is deemed uninhabitable, and some policies cover stolen items, such as laptops, even if you are not on the property when the item is stolen. If your suitcase is stolen while you're on vacation, or property is stolen from your car, you'll be covered. Or, if someone slips and injures themselves because of your neglect, whether on-site or off, you will likely be protected and may even receive compensation for your legal costs.

If \$10 per month still seems like more than you can handle, there are ways to keep your premium low. One way is to increase your deductible, or the amount you pay before the coverage kicks in. Other available discounts will depend on your insurance company, so be sure to ask about these discounts. There are often discounts to policyholders who have "protective devices" such as smoke and fire detectors, and discounts for seniors and military. Other companies may offer a discount if you get a combined auto/renter's policy.

Whatever the case, it is more likely that you can afford renter's insurance over damages to your property, your landlord's property, or your neighbors' property. Call your insurance provider or the Westmore Leasing Office today to get more information about the benefits of renter's insurance.