

# Police: Consider Safety While House Hunting

**Chapel Hill police officer Chris Blue says students should keep doors locked and valuables hidden.**

**By GEOFF WESSEL**  
Staff Writer

Students rarely cite safety as a primary concern when making housing decisions, but public safety officials say it should be a consideration.

Carrboro police Capt. John Butler said Chapel Hill and Carrboro apartments, like UNC's residence halls, are comparatively safe.

"You have an opportunity to run into crime no matter where you go, but for the most part (students) are pretty safe," he said.

But Butler said students needed to be

aware of some safety concerns.

"We just had a major case, a guy who was doing a lot of break-ins and a couple sexual assaults," Butler said. "Most students become victims when they do things like leave doors unlocked while they go out or are sleeping."

"That's an invitation for bad things to happen."

Chapel Hill police crime prevention officer Chris Blue said the most important points for students to remember are keeping doors locked and valuables out of plain sight.

"Criminals look for easy opportunities," he said. "If you have a door or window standing open, it's worth the risk for

them to look inside and see if there's anything they can grab."

He said parking lots can also be dangerous.

"Apartment complexes are particularly vulnerable to car break-ins, so (students should) park in well-lit areas and not leave valuables in their cars."

UNC senior history major Lorrie Bradley, who lives in University Apartments on Hillsborough Street, said safety had not been a priority for her.

"I would say that was something we considered, but our top priority was the cost and convenience," she said.

But UNC sophomore Ryan Ong,

who now lives in Spencer Residence Hall, said he is considering moving into an apartment next fall and said safety was a priority for him.

"In general, I feel safe (in the dorm)," he said. "Safety would definitely be a concern in finding an apartment."

Katie Norman, a junior journalism and mass communications major, said she feels safe living in the Warehouse Apartments on Rosemary Street.

"I chose it based on location, but my parents thought a lot about safety," she said. "We have a security guard on duty every night and keypad entry, so I feel really safe here. That made my parents

happy."

Warehouse owner Larry Short said he believed students should feel safe at Warehouse Apartments.

"Warehouse Apartments is the safest building off campus in Chapel Hill," he said.

"I think (students) do try (to practice safe behavior)."

Officials said students were comparatively safe for the most part, but should still remember safety concerns when deciding where to live.

"It's not the way people think, unfortunately," Blue said. "There are certainly some, but I think most students are thinking about convenience and price."

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**CAPT. JOHN BUTLER**  
Carrboro Police

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**KATIE NORMAN**  
Warehouse Apartments Resident

# Students Move Off Campus, Meet New Neighbors

**Students who choose to move off campus often find themselves living near families and professionals.**

**By AMANDA WILSON**  
Staff Writer

When students make the decision to move off campus, they might also be choosing to live around people other than college students.

Condos, duplexes, houses and apartments are some of the places students might opt to hang their hats after taking the plunge into residence outside the borders of the UNC campus.

And much of the property students rent is located in mixed-resident housing areas where families, students, the elderly and professionals live in the same community.

Estie Manchik, a UNC senior and duplex tenant on 180 BPW Road, said in her complex, families and students live side by side.

"We have a family living right underneath us, but we've never had complaints," Manchik said. "The people don't really interact that much."

Sometimes students prefer to live in a more age-homogenized setting. Kyle Payne of Smith Level Road Apartments said the tenants there are mostly students.

"I kind of like it all students because we all have the same lifestyle," Payne said.

Although residents of mixed housing are of varying ages, many say this type community, so common in Chapel Hill, is enriched by diversity.

Susannah Parker, of Pittsboro Street, said she lives in a house near a family neighborhood.

"Its pretty much old-school Chapel Hill," she said.

Parker said for the most part, she and her neighbors get along very well but that finding an apartment for next year has been difficult.

"I've been looking for apartments for next year and if (real estate agencies) find out you're an undergrad, they say never mind," Parker said.

Local real estate agent and appraiser John McPhaul said discrimination in real estate is not good business.

"If it weren't for the students, there wouldn't be a real estate market here."

McPhaul, whose properties are only in residential areas, said he likes a mature tenant and often checks with students' last landlords about their competence.

McPhaul said the demand for housing in residential neighborhoods is always high, and student rental has actually benefited houses in the historic district.

"If it hadn't been for student rentals, a lot of them would have been torn down," he said.

McPhaul says regulations and zoning that limit student options are not the solution to community disruptions.

He said regulations are unrealistic, and students should be able to rent whatever they can afford.

"As far as I can tell it's still a market economy," he said. "Agents shouldn't discriminate. In real estate, there's only

one color, and that's green."

McPhaul says efforts to segregate students and families are shortchanging both societies and that growth is inevitable.

With 24,000 students and rising enrollment at UNC, McPhaul said a need for student housing is growing, but many residents are speculative.

"Everyone is afraid that their neighborhood is going to become Northside, but that is a misconception."

Estelle Mabry, a Northside resident, said her main concern is that most college students aren't there as neighbors.

"Being a good neighbor means knowing the garbage and recycling rules," Mabry said. "But they're only here four years. It doesn't matter to them, they'll all be gone."

Mabry said loud music is occasionally a problem, and about once a year students in her neighborhood have parties with more than 80 cars.

"The landlords don't care (as long as) their check is coming in."

Mabry said she proposed a plan to the landlord-tenant group that would inform tenants up front about all their responsibilities regarding things like recycling and garbage pick-up.

"The house behind me once had a trash pile so big that the garbage man wouldn't pick it up," she said. "We eventually had to call the police."

Nathan Singerman, a student resident of 404 Vance Extension, said although it wasn't about garbage disposal, his neighbors last year would frequently call the police.

"It was like people were looking for things to catch you on."

Singerman said if a friend came over for a short while and parked in the alley, his car would be towed.

"We've also got neighbors that are extremely cool."

But all residents really want is for students to respect the sense of community that is so valuable to Chapel Hill, said Mabry.

"If you're going to live in my neighborhood, be a neighbor."



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