

University spends millions on fire safety, no sprinklers in Castle building

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Although the Schwartz Hall building in the Castle Residence Quad does not have fire sprinklers, the university has taken on extra efforts to install sprinklers in many buildings during the past 10 years, according to Waltham Fire Department Chief Richard Cardillo.

Public Safety's annual report last week incorrectly listed the number of sprinklers on campus, stating that buildings in the Charles River Residence Quad also do not have sprinklers. In fact, full sprinklers were installed during the summer as part of renovations to Charles River, after the report was completed, Ed Callahan, Director of Public Safety said.

Callahan said that the report was likely finished in July, before the renovations to Charles River were completed.

"Existing buildings come under the code with which they were built," Cardillo said, explaining that all buildings still require fire alarms and smoke detection.

Cardillo explained that because of the work Peter French, former executive vice president and chief operating officer, and Mark Collins, senior vice president of administration have supported during the past 10 years, many older buildings now have fire sprinklers.

"The university made a great effort to sprinkle a lot of buildings," Callahan said.

"The University absolutely considers fire safety a priority," Collins wrote in an e-mail to The Hoot. "Evidence of that can be seen in the fact that in the last seven or eight years, Brandeis has spent millions of dollars on fire alarm and sprinkler systems in our residence halls."

Sprinklers are not required inside Schwartz Hall because the building was built in 1928, when no code existed, Cardillo said.

Cardillo acknowledged that "funding is becoming a problem" in equipping university buildings with sprinklers, but explained that the laws require places to install fire sprinklers for all square footage in buildings, even unoccupied spaces and not just "life safety systems" for the rooms where people reside.

Installing a sprinkler system as part of a "retrofit" would cost \$1.1 million instead of installing sprinklers as part of a larger renovation, according to Collins. As part of the renovations to Charles Rivers' four buildings, sprinklers cost 800,000 for the 351 beds. The Castle has 121 beds.

Applying the laws to the university, Cardillo said, means that a thorough renovation of the Castle would need to be completed in order to install the sprinklers according to code.

Scott Phillips '13 said that "it would be a little more reassuring" if there were sprinklers for all of the Castle.

"Sprinklers will be installed in the Castle when the building is renovated. It is clearly an old facility, and designing and installing a sprinkler system is a very complex project," Collins wrote in an e-mail to The Hoot.

In 2004, the university installed a "state of the art fire alarm system," Collins wrote.

Explaining that many students are not concerned, Andrea Ortega '13 said, "I think it's because we're college students and we're stuck in that stigma that nothing bad would ever happen to us here."