

## Damage Billing

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### What is Damage Billing?

There are two types of damage billing: Individual Damage Billing and Community Damage Billing.

- **Individual Damage Billing:** Individual damage billing refers to damages to an individual residence hall room whereby the resident(s) of a room is responsible for the costs associated with any repair or replacement within his/her room.
- **Community Damage Billing:** The philosophy behind community damage billing is that all residents in University housing are part of a larger community on campus. Therefore, residents are not only responsible for their personal accommodations, but also the community areas they share with fellow residents. One unfortunate aspect of this responsibility is that damages that may occur in common areas. It is our hope that students will create a sense of ownership and pride in their community. As a result, residents will work to prevent damage and address incidents as they occur. Instead of requiring a damage deposit from each resident, we choose to bill the students for individual incidents. Depending on the building and the physical configuration, as well as the nature of the incident, our staff will determine whether the incident should be shared by all members of the building or by members of a particular floor, wing, or section.
- Damage billing is used to address all vandalism in public areas. These areas include lobbies, hallways, social and student lounges, recreation rooms, bathrooms, kitchens, and elevators. When public areas are vandalized or University property is damaged, a group of students, a floor, or a building where students live in close proximity to the damage will be assessed fees for the damages if no one resident or group of residents accepts responsibility. Each time an incident occurs, a Community Assistant, Residence Education and Services or University Facilities staff member will document it.

### Examples of Damage Billing incidents:

- Any damage that goes beyond the normal, expected, wear and tear of items.
- Excessive cleaning
- Bodily fluids (blood, urine, mucous, feces, and vomit) in the halls, bathrooms, or other common areas
- Broken exit signs
- Broken windows or glass
- Broken lounge furniture
- Damage to carpet and upholstery
- Food or trash left in sinks or water fountains

- Trash or trash bags not properly disposed (i.e. pizza boxes or room trash found in the halls, stairwell, or bathroom/lounge trash can)
- Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors that are missing or have been tampered with (greater sanctions will be given to persons found responsible)
- Removal of any University furniture from its designated location
- Holes in walls
- Sprinkler head discharges due to causes other than fire
- Graffiti

### **Estimated Facilities Repair Costs**

The determination of who will be charged for facilities repairs is directly related to the area where the damage occurs. For example, if the damage occurs in a particular hallway or bathroom - the students of that floor will likely be billed. If the damage happens in an entry lounge, common stairwell, or elevator, the charge will likely be assigned to all residents in the building.

The amount of the charge may vary in cost depending on the incident and the severity and costs of repairs. Please view the *Estimated Facilities Cost List* for a list of estimated costs.

### **Appeal Process**

**Community Damage Billing:** Prior to posting community damage charges to your student account; you have an opportunity to assist us in identifying those responsible for vandalism. Notification will be posted in your Residence hall reporting the damage and associated billing charges. You have until a predetermined date to either accept responsibility for all or part of the damage, or provide information leading to the adjudication of the person(s) responsible for the damage. If no community member steps forward, the charges will be distributed among all members of the community. This may occur immediately, at the end of the semester or even at the end of the academic year, pending the amount of unidentified damages within your area. Please contact your Community Director or Community Assistant if you have any pertinent information.

**Individual Damage Billing:** To appeal an individually billed damage charge, you must submit a written appeal to:

Theresa Giardino  
 Montclair State University  
 Bohn Hall, Room 444  
 Montclair, NJ 07043

During the semester in progress, the individual damage billing appeals process for that semester is ongoing. For charges assessed after the close of a semester, there is an appeal submission deadline that will be emailed to your MSU account along with your Damage Billing Invoice. All appeals will be accepted for the prior semester until the posted deadline.