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It said that without a strong foundation, whatever you build may crumble and fall. This is a rule of thumb that could be applied to all aspects of one's life. Building codes specifically, assist those in this area of work with protecting the public, and instilling trust in those who provide us with spaces to occupy as we move along day to day, in and out of buildings and structures. Though we leave and enter spaces daily, any work besides visible construction rarely crosses the mind of an individual. It is the job of the regulators to ensure that all peoples safety is the priority, even before the building goes up.

At the age of 5, my great grandmother and I sat in her bedroom. After a bit of nagging, she finally decided to let me play outside. Moments after we stepped onto the front porch, the entire upstairs floor of her apartment became engulfed in flames due to wiring embedded it the walls of the public housing. While a buildings construction could take months, or even years to be completed, this only took a matter of seconds to happen. Since I was only a child, the idea of building codes to ensure public safety didn't come to mind. Now that I am older, the severity of someone's ability to abide by, and stick to these codes is extremely important. Being a student at James Madison University, we occupy massive buildings every day to attend class, and other campus events. No matter if its sitting at a desk in the back of a classroom, or sitting in the highest seat of Bridgeforth Stadium, we must employ trust in an individual to make sure we are safe in every structure this campus entails. Many of these structures are built to accommodate large scale audiences, but even the smaller one's matter. Dorm rooms must be structured to accommodate two individuals and both of their belongings. Moving in freshman year, you will quickly become familiar with the "fire spray". Any items being hung on the walls of the room had to be coated with this liquid in case of any fire. While we had to coat any fixtures going onto the walls with this liquid, we also could not have any paper items on the walls either. During my dorm shopping, I acquired these multicolor room lights which happen to be made from paper. Of

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course, I was upset, and didn't see the severity of having to remove them, but as I gave it thought, I see how they could enhance a safety issue if one arose.

While many things can seem unimportant when they are not in our direct line of work, this is something that plays a key role in our lives every day. It is not only important for those who initiate the rules to follow them, or for those who construct things to align with the rules to follow them, it is important for us as individuals to keep in mind that we play a key role as well. This topic should evoke a feeling on responsibility within communities. We are responsible for the endurance of our properties just as much as any builder or contractor. As we trust them to provide durable spaces, they trust us to cherish them, and abide by rules set in place. This system follows the ladder, with every step being accounted for. These spaces cannot be deemed safe without the proper contributions of everyone who uses them.

Within our communities we must work together to create safe environments. Creating codes, abiding by them, and cherishing our spaces are only a few of the steps one will take to do so. Even though things like building codes are not a prioritized thought, it is things of that nature that allow us to have a life. From this we have workspaces, homes, educational environments and more. It is within these spaces where we pave ways to our futures. We pave these ways without having to think about buildings coming down on top of us. It is because of the precautions being taken that we can live our lives. Yes, communities consist of individuals, but of individuals who make way for one another. Thanks to those who create building codes, we are promised strong foundations, for sturdy futures.

Word Count: 722