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Starting this year, some residence halls have been furnished with private bathrooms, such as this bathroom on the second floor of Douglas Hall. Each bathroom has a shower, toilet, sink and can be locked. (Erin Matheny/The Daily Eastern News)

Summer renovations may change vote

By: Brittni Garcia/ Campus Editor

Posted: 8/27/08

Douglas Hall was rated the worst bathroom on campus in the 2006 Resident Satisfaction Survey.

The hall might change that rating this year.

"The really big project we did this summer was Douglas Hall," said Mark Hudson, director of housing and dining services.

On May 6, construction began on renovations to the hall that include new bathrooms.

More than 3 million dollars was spent on the renovations that include new carpet, stackable furniture, a new fire alarm system in every room and an electrical power upgrade.

Hudson said the most significant part of the summer project is the bathroom renovations.

Michael Baird, junior political science major and Douglas Hall resident, said he enjoys the new renovations.

"I love the bathrooms," Baird said. "They are extremely private."

Up to three dorm rooms were gutted to expand the bathroom setting on each floor.

The area consists of seven private bathrooms in one common space. Each private bathroom has a toilet, sink and shower.

Baird said he is comfortable in his new living area and, with the new bathrooms, he said he feels more comfortable having his own personal bathroom.

The area has one bathroom that is available for the opposite sex.

"We're very proud of this," Hudson said. "We did this in less than three months."

During the renovations, a new fire alarm system was also installed in each room.

The system is different than any other alarm system on campus.

It allows the director of the building to speak in the speaker, giving specific instructions when there is a situation.

The National Weather Service is also connected to all alarms. If the National Weather Service triggers a warning, the new system's alarms will automatically warn the residents.

Not only were new alarms put in each room, a recycling system has been piloted in Douglas.

Hudson said each floor has a recycling room, allowing residents to recycle more often.

Baird said the new recycling system is useful because now he recycles more than before.

"I am surprised how much I can recycle with such little effort," Baird said.

Others said they just cannot change their recycling habits.

Mike Navarez, junior elementary education major, hides his recycling can behind his garbage can.

Navarez said he never recycled before and does not plan to start.

"We are piloting to see if this increases recycling," Hudson said of the program.

More work for Douglas is still on schedule. Central stairs, floor work and new doors will be worked on in the next few months.

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