ST. CLOUD, Minn., July — St. Cloud area residents are being encouraged to provide more rental rooms for students this fall to ease St. Cloud State College's housing crisis.

Despite the scheduled opening of a second 400-bed high-rise residence hall in September, the college has more than 700 students on waiting lists for on-campus housing.

"Most of the students who can't get into residence halls would live in the community if they could find a place," said Dr. Dale Patton, dean of students. "The need is particularly acute for women students who must stay near the campus because they don't have cars." Some 2,800 students rented rooms and apartments in the St. Cloud area last fall.

To increase the on-campus housing capacity to 2,402, the college will convert two-student rooms into three-student rooms in two residence halls -- North Shoemaker and Lawrence. Rates will be reduced $10 per quarter for students affected.

On-campus enrollment is expected to reach 7,000 this fall, compared with 6,297 last year. Although fall quarter applications will be accepted through Aug. 15, prospective students are being warned that housing is scarce and that most classes already are filled.

Construction is scheduled to begin on a 200-bed residence hall later this summer.

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