

University of Alaska Anchorage	Section EHS/RMS
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES MANUAL</b>	Part Procedure
<b>Policies and Procedures</b>	Statement 8
Title <i>FIRE and EVACUATION SAFETY</i>	Effective Date 12/05/05

*Code Compliance* All university facilities must be operated and maintained in compliance with municipal or state fire codes and other accepted safety standards.

*Safe Practices* A number of precautionary measures and practices can be taken to help prevent fires or help employees survive a fire. It is the responsibility of all department heads to ensure that their employees are familiar with these fire safety precautions and practices as well as other emergency plan requirements for their particular operations and areas.

- Flammables*
1. Keep your work area clean and organized. Good housekeeping is the first rule of fire prevention. Discarded materials should be picked up and placed in proper containers. **Storage of any items in fire-rated exit corridors is prohibited.**
  2. Keep flammable liquids to a minimum and stored in closed, approved containers and metal cabinets. Such containers shall be labeled with the word "FLAMMABLE" in large letters and contain the required [NFPA 704M hazard identifications](#). The NFPA 704M can be located along with definitions in [EHS/RMS Hazard Label Appendix 1](#). Know the maximum safe or allowable quantities and keep inventories well below these quantities.
  3. Don't use or permit flammable liquids, gases, or dust near open flames, sparks, incandescent surfaces, or other sources of ignition.
  4. Store fuels outside and preferably below ground. Any below ground storage must be planned and engineered by Facilities, Planning Services to conform to Department of Environmental Conservation, Environmental Protection Agency, and Fire Marshall regulations.
  5. Store paints thinners and small amounts of other necessary flammable liquids in an approved cabinet and containers to control their reaction in a potential fire ([also see EHS/RMS Procedure 2, Hazardous Material Management](#)). These areas should be labeled "No Smoking".

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6. Store paper and waste paper at least six to eight feet away from operating machinery.

*Electrical*

1. Protect all electrical circuits by the correct capacity fuse or circuit breaker. Circuit protection devices that switch off shall not be put into service until the cause of the overload is located and corrected.
2. Use only coffee pots, hot plates or other electrical items that have the UL (Underwriters Laboratories) label. Don't use immersion-type heating devices. Electrical desktop coffee cup heater plates (coasters) should also be UL listed and have automatic shutoffs and heat limiters.
3. Avoid electrical overloading with octopus plugs (more than one plug per electrical outlet). Do not plug high amperage items into electrical outlets without first checking with Facilities Maintenance Services.
4. Use outlet strips equipped with circuit breakers or fuses for permanent extensions to appliances or equipment. Outlet strips should not be augmented with additional extension cords. Regular extension cords are permitted only for temporary operations provided the cord is equipped with a three-prong connector and the electrical load is not beyond the amperage capacity of the cord. Avoid placing cords where moving objects may cause damage to the cord or where they are covered by chair mats. Do not run extension cords through door ways. When working in wet areas, use extension cords equipped with ground fault interruption (GFI).
5. Report overheated or buzzing fluorescent light units to maintenance personnel immediately. These are characterized by pungent, burning odor melted tar on light lenses, and annoying buzzing sounds from the fixture.
6. Report failure of any electrical office outlets to maintenance and follow up with your department head if corrective action is not taken.

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*Extinguishers*

1. Know the location of fire extinguishers and how to use them. Don't obstruct them. Report improperly mounted or unserviceable extinguishers to maintenance personnel.
2. Know what types of fire extinguishers can be used on electrical or flammable liquid fires. Read the labels on the extinguishers and plan ahead for proper action.
3. Never fight a fire that is spreading beyond the immediate area where it started, is already a large fire, or could block your escape route.

*General  
Precautions*

1. Know the location of the fire alarm in your area.
2. Report every accidental fire to the University Police Department.
3. **Don't block open or obstruct fire doors.**
4. **Don't block the spray pattern of sprinklers, don't hang objects from sprinkler head, and don't paint the sprinkler heads.**  
Materials stored in sprinklered areas may not be stacked higher than 18" from the horizontal plane of the sprinkler heads.
5. Become familiar with all evacuation exits in your area (at least two) and practice using them. Building floor plans are available at <http://fpgis.uaa.alaska.edu/CampusBuildings.htm> .
6. Don't smoke or use open flames in UAA buildings.
7. Don't exceed the posted occupancy level for a room or area under your direct control. Maximum occupancy levels are sometimes posted above each classroom, lab or auditorium door or are available by contacting Environmental Health and Safety.

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*Fire  
Extinguisher  
Procedures*

Fire extinguishers are devices having a limited supply of fire extinguishing chemicals that are intended for use on the first stage of fires. Even the larger wheeled units that are intended for larger fires are limited in their capacity to extinguish fires. It is obvious, therefore, that the prompt discovery of the fire and having employees well trained in the use of this equipment are essential to effective action. One of the best uses of fire extinguishers is to aid in building evacuation by suppressing fire along an escape route.

To be most effective, place extinguishers close to the location where they are most likely to be used. The user of the extinguisher should not have to walk more than 75 feet to reach portable fire extinguisher.

Portable extinguishers are classified according to the type of fire for which they are suitable. Ideally, they should be selected and placed with these capabilities in mind. The basic types of fires are Class A, B, C, and D as defined in the following:

- Class A: Ordinary combustible materials, such as wood, cloth, paper, rubber, and many plastics.
- Class B: Flammable liquids such as gasoline, oil, grease, tar, oil based paint, and flammable gas.
- Class C: Energized electrical wiring, fuse boxes, circuit breakers, machinery, and appliances. (For de-energized equipment, Class A or B extinguishers may be used.)
- Class D: Combustible metals, such as magnesium, titanium, zirconium, sodium, and potassium.

For complete guidance on portable fire extinguishers, consult National Fire Protection Association Publication, NFPA-10, "Standard For Portable Fire Extinguishers."

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Departments that have program specific extinguishers are responsible for ensuring they are properly charged and serviced. Maintenance personnel will arrange for regular inspections of other extinguishers.

*Fire or Other  
Emergency  
Procedures*

The following alarm and fire suppression action should be taken immediately upon detection of a fire or a substantial quantity of smoke or any other situation that compromises the continued safe occupancy of a building. There will be at least one emergency evacuation drill per year in UAA facilities. Advanced notice of the drill will be provided.

1. **Call the fire department immediately (9-911).** Don't hesitate. Employees do not need to obtain approval to summon the fire department. Also notify the University Police Department 786-1120 if on the Anchorage campus.
2. Activate the building fire alarm before undertaking any fire fighting activities. Make sure that all employees know the locations of the nearest alarm pull stations. **Note: In many cases the building fire alarms do not summon the fire department automatically. They may only alert the occupants.** On alarm, all employees must begin evacuation of the building. Failure to evacuate not only jeopardizes complacent individuals' lives, but could endanger the lives of emergency responders. Failure to evacuate on alarm is also a criminal offense.
3. Use fire extinguishers to aid in building evacuation. **The safety of building occupants is the first consideration during a fire.**
4. Do not become preoccupied with fighting the fire until it is established that: 1) the fire department has been notified, 2) the fire department has the exact information regarding the location and nature of the fire, and 3) no employees are endangered by the fire situation.

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5. Designate an individual to meet the fire department outside the building. This individual should have knowledge of the size and location of the fire and the location of any persons trapped inside.
6. Do not shut off or disable an automatic sprinkler system. It is absolutely vital to the control of a fire that the sprinkler system be allowed to function until there is no question that the fire has been extinguished. Only an officer of the responding fire department has the authority to shut off the sprinkler.
8. Elevators are not considered a safe means of emergency exit from a fire. Elevator service is automatically shut off until a complete evaluation has been made and the building has been determined to be safe by emergency responders. Elevator shafts are similar to chimneys in that they provide a perfect draft area for fires and smoke.
9. If time and the situation permits, a supervisor or designated person in the area should walk quickly through the work area and make sure that everyone is complying with the evacuation. If someone refuses to evacuate, do not waste time trying to convince them to leave. Instead, notify the emergency responders and the appropriate supervisor after evacuating of the building.
10. If time and the situation permits, make sure that all hazardous operations are shut down. If this cannot be done safely, notify the emergency responders about the situation.
11. During a fire or explosion, flying glass and other debris can cause serious injuries. Therefore, designate safe areas or other safe buildings to evacuate to and do not permit employees or others to stand within fifty feet of the evacuated building.
12. Whenever possible, perform a head count and do your best to account for everyone in your area. If you believe that individuals have remained in the building, notify the emergency responders about their

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last known location and any other details that might assist the responders with evacuating them.

*Individuals with Special Evacuation Needs* Each supervisor should be aware of any employees within their areas of control who require special assistance during emergency evacuations. Individuals that cannot use stairs are to report to the nearest fire rated (enclosed) stair well landing and remain within that stairwell or safe refuge with the landing door closed until an emergency responder with proper equipment and training can assist with evacuation. Supervisors should compose and practice an evacuation and safe refuge plan for employees needing assistance which includes immediate notification to emergency responders of the location of stranded individuals. A buddy system is recommended for this procedure. Individuals with special evacuation need who are working off-hours should notify the University Police Department of their presence. For the locations of safe refuge areas within buildings, contact EHS/RMS at 786-1351, [ayssg@uaa.alaska.edu](mailto:ayssg@uaa.alaska.edu) or go to <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/dss/information/emergency.cfm> .

Instructors who have students with special evacuation needs should discuss those needs with the individuals and formulate plans similar to those suggested in this procedure. Again ... “buddy systems” using volunteer classmates are the preferred method to assist individuals to refuge areas as the “buddies” will more than likely be using the same evacuation route through the safe refuge area. Additional advice for students is available from Disability Support Services at 786-4530 or at their web site <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/dss/>.

During real evacuations and practice drills, individuals who can not use the stairs due to mobility related disabilities or temporary injuries need to remain in safe refuge areas until professional assistance arrives or the all clear is announced. Novices or good Samaritans are not permitted to lift, carry, or otherwise transport individuals down the stairs as there is a high potential for physical injury to both the good Samaritan and the individual being assisted if evacuation is not performed correctly.

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Individuals who need assistance evacuating due to low vision or blindness should have a buddy who can guide them down the stairs. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing should be assisted with visual cues or notes as needed.

*Emergency Signs* An abbreviated emergency procedure poster is available in [EHS Appendix 24](#) as a PDF or MS Excel file. The Excel version can be modified to meet the specific needs of individual departments and campuses.

*Evacuation Maps* To develop evacuation maps for specific areas and buildings, go to <http://fpgis.uaa.alaska.edu/CampusBuildings.htm> and locate the desired building map. Then print the map and, using red marker, outline the evacuation routes (at least two) for the area of concern.