

## **Southeastern Oklahoma State University**

Subject: **Fire Safety Plan**

Date issued: Updated/February 2007

Authority: a. Occupational Safety and Health Administration ([OSHA](#)), 29 CFR 1910.38.

b. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA 101) Life Safety Code Chapter 4.

c. Emergency Preparedness and Crisis Management Plan

d. International Fire Code Chapter 4

### **General Policy**

- a. Fire safety standards promulgated by OSHA are contained in 29 CFR 1910.38, Fire Prevention, and in Subpart L, 29 CFR 1910.155-165, Fire Detection, Alarms and Suppression. The standards mandate that Southeastern Oklahoma State University develop and implement a fire safety plan that includes:
  1. determining the response level to incipient stage fires;
  2. developing a plan based on selected response level; and,
  3. maintaining fire detection, alarm, and suppression systems.
- b. This policy applies to University employees in all departments
- c. University employees are required to read and understand the contents of the University Fire Safety Plan and to take appropriate action in the event of a fire emergency in any university facility.

### **Definitions**

- a. **University employee.** Any faculty, staff, or student employee who receives compensation from the University for his/her employment and who is covered under Oklahoma Bureau of Worker's Compensation.
- b. **Incipient stage fire.** A fire in the initial or beginning stage that can be controlled by using a portable fire extinguisher and that does not require using protective equipment.
- c. **Area of rescue assistance.** Designated areas of protection on floors of a building above ground level where individuals who physically cannot use the stairways for evacuation are to wait for rescue assistance ... refer to section **Emergency Action Plan: Employee Responsibilities g-4**, most of the hallways, in the buildings made of concrete blocks are two (2) hour fire partition. If a building is fully sprinkled any point in the building is an area of refuge.
- d. **Designated personnel.** University employees who have received annual training on the proper use of portable fire extinguishers.

### **Response Level**

- a. OSHA provides three options for the response level to incipient stage fires.
  1. *Option A.* Requires all employees to evacuate the workplace when a fire alarm sounds.
  2. *Option B.* Provides portable fire extinguishers and designates certain employees to use them to fight incipient stage fires.

3. *Option C*. Provides portable fire extinguishers and permits all employees to fight incipient stage fires.
4. The University has elected to exercise OSHA Option B whereby university personnel (on a voluntary basis) are designated to fight incipient stage fires. "Designated personnel" are employees of the Departments of Police and Safety, Transportation, Physical Plant, academic/research laboratory supervisors ; Residence Life and University employees in selected specialty work areas (CERT trained personnel).
5. By electing to exercise OSHA Option B, the university has provided a copy of the University Fire Safety Plan to each employee and has instructed all employees not designated that they must take no action to fight an incipient stage fire and must evacuate a building immediately when a fire alarm sounds.

### **Emergency Action Plan**

- a. All University employees must be notified of the elements of the Emergency Action Plan contained in the University Fire Safety Plan. All University employees are required to fulfill those elements.
- b. All employees are expected to read and understand the information presented in the Emergency Action Plan, particularly their responsibilities regarding identifying building exits and knowing when to activate a fire alarm and what action to take following activation of an alarm, i.e., identifying to the responding emergency response personnel the location of the alarm station activated and the location of the fire/smoke.
- c. All employees are required to notify the Campus Police Department 745-2727 of any class cancellation or of a Special event.

### **Emergency Action Plan: Employee Responsibilities**

- a. **Fighting incipient stage fires in university buildings.** If a University employee is not a designated employee who has received the required training in using portable fire extinguishers, he/she is responsible for activating the nearest fire alarm and immediately exiting the building in the event of a suspected or observed fire. ***Under no circumstances should the employee attempt to extinguish the fire.***
- b. **Emergency procedures and escape route assignment.** University employees are responsible for determining the location of the closest exit from the work area that leads to the outside of the building. This is the primary emergency exit. University employees also are responsible for determining the location of a secondary exit from the work area, in the event that the primary exit is not accessible. All outer doors will be marked as an *EXIT*. Evacuation route plans are posted. Alternated routes should be planned for encase primary route is blocked.
- c. **Procedures to be followed by employees who remain in a building to conduct critical plant operations.** Employees who are required and permitted by the responding fire department to remain in a building to conduct critical plant operations should perform their duties only if they are not in the smoke/fire area. ***Employees should never risk injury when performing work related duties.***
- d. **Procedures to account for all employees after an emergency evacuation have been completed.** Supervisors or employees in lead positions are required to develop a procedure to account, to the maximum degree possible, for all employees, students, and visitors after an emergency evacuation has been completed. The procedure should designate an area outside the building to which employees, students, and visitors should report during an emergency evacuation.

- e. **Rescue and medical duties.** Rescue and medical treatment for injured employees will be provided by the responding fire department and ambulance services. On the SOSU Campus, Southeastern Oklahoma State University police officers will assist responding fire department personnel.
- f. **Preferred means for reporting fires.** The preferred means for reporting a fire is by using the fire alarm system in a building. As quickly as possible after activating a fire alarm pull station are located approximately 5 feet from the entrance to each exit, employees are responsible for meeting responding police officers and/or fire department personnel and identifying the location of the alarm activated and the location of smoke and/or fire.
- g. **Safe and orderly evacuation of building occupants.** The following procedures represent acceptable guidelines for ensuring the safe and orderly evacuation of building occupants. Fire evacuation route plans are posted in all building and in dorm rooms.
1. Building occupants are **not** to use elevators.
  2. Building occupants are to use the primary emergency exit whenever accessible. When the primary emergency exit is not accessible, building occupants are to use the secondary emergency exit. Occupants evacuating the building should go immediately to the designated meeting point away from the building. Supervisors or employees in lead positions should account, to the maximum degree possible, for employees, students, and visitors.
  3. Building occupants are to assist individuals with disabilities (non-wheelchair) in exiting the building.
  4. Building occupants who use wheelchairs and are on floors above ground level are to go to the closest enclosed stairwell. A faculty or staff member shall remain with building occupants who use wheelchairs until a rescue is completed or the emergency is terminated. Faculty or staff shall assign three (3) individuals to assist in the evacuation of wheelchair persons. One in front and one on each side, obtaining information from the wheelchair person, as to the best way to assist him/her, is important.
  5. ***No individuals, regardless of physical limitations, are to stay in tunnels connected to the building in which the fire alarm has been activated.***
  6. The responding fire department personnel or police officers are to be informed as soon as possible of the number and location of building occupants who use wheelchairs. Refer to Emergency Evacuation list.
  7. Building occupants are **not** to reenter affected building(s) until permitted to do so by local fire department personnel or by the responding law enforcement officers. Doors should be locked to keep personnel/students from reentering the building or faculty should be located at each door to stop individuals from entering buildings.

### **Emergency Action Plan: Building Fire Alarm System**

- a. All University owned facilities of general occupancy are equipped with fire alarm systems. Personnel in the Communications Center are responsible for notifying the Durant Fire Department, which has jurisdiction for the SOSU Campus.
  - b. Using a building fire alarm system normally is restricted to situations where smoke and/or fire has been observed. In situations where an odor (i.e., chemical, electrical, natural gas, etc.) is detected, employees are to observe the following procedures.
- a.) Employees on the SOSU Campus are to notify the Campus Police at 745-2727. Campus police will notify Director of Residence Life 745-2948 or the Residence Hall Director or assistant on duty.

b.) Responding personnel will determine the necessary response and the immediate disposition of building occupants. Should evacuation be necessary, instructions will be given and supplemented by verbal directions from on-the-scene emergency response personnel.

c.) When fire and/or smoke are not evident, the emergency response personnel (University Police and Safety, and Physical Plant) will activate the fire alarm system when they determine that a fire is imminent and immediate evacuation is required and when they determine that the alarm can be activated without danger of causing an explosion. The Durant Fire Department will be notified.

***The decision to activate a building fire alarm system when there is a detected odor but no visual sighting of fire and/or smoke will be made only at the discretion of emergency personnel.***

d.) During normal work hours (8:00 am until 5:00 pm), University employees will notify the building manager, Police and Safety, and/or maintenance personnel of a detected odor (i.e., chemical, electrical, natural gas, etc.). The building manager, Police and Safety, and/or maintenance personnel are responsible for conducting a search of the building and for making the determination whether or not to notify the designated fire department and to activate the fire alarm system. ***If any questions arise as to the seriousness of the situation, the building manager, Police and/or Safety officer, and/or maintenance personnel are not to hesitate in ordering an immediate evacuation of the building. If there should be any concerns about an explosive mixture from chemical or natural gas concentrations in the air, the fire alarm is not to be activated.***

e.) Outside normal work hours, employees are responsible for notifying the SOSU Campus police and immediately evacuating the building.

1. Upon hearing a building fire alarm, **all occupants must evacuate the building immediately.** Faculty members and instructors are required to cease instruction and assist students in exiting the building. The **only exception** for remaining in the building applies to "designated personnel" who are required to operate or shut down critical systems. Should smoke and/or fire be in the area of a critical system, "designated personnel" also shall immediately evacuate the building and report to their respective supervisors.

- a. The individual(s) activating the fire alarm is responsible, after evacuating the building, for meeting responding fire department personnel and/or police officers and identifying the location of the smoke and/or fire.
- b. University personnel are to notify the maintenance department or the Police and Safety office of any known areas within a building where the fire alarm appears not to be working or cannot be heard over ambient noise. Any system that is not operating properly is to be repaired immediately.
- c. National and local fire codes require that all manually operated pull stations be unobstructed, conspicuous, and readily accessible.
- d. It is the responsibility of a Police and Safety personnel to ensure that the fire alarm and public address systems are operational at all times. Any questions regarding maintenance or testing of those systems can be directed to the University Department of Police and Safety.

### **Training**

The information contained meets the International Fire Code, Life Safety Code and OSHA requirements for training all employees not designated to remain in a building and fight incipient stage fires. The Department of Police and Safety will be the lead department in identifying designated personnel and in completing initial and refresher training in using portable fire extinguishers.