

## UNIT FIRE SAFETY PLAN

Version	Date	Comments
1	December, 2009	Initial <i>Unit Fire Safety Plan</i>
2	March, 2012	Routine review
3	February, 2015	Routine review
4	June, 2017	Routine review
5	July, 2019	Routine review
6	August, 2022	Routine review

### A. INTRODUCTION

This Plan provides information to prepare university departments, employees, and students to respond to fires that may occur in campus buildings and work areas.

### B. SCOPE

Deaths and damages caused by fires can be mitigated if proper preparation and response procedures are taken by individuals during a fire. This Plan provides information to help individuals plan, prepare, and respond to a fire. This Plan should be used in conjunction with the *Emergency Evacuation Guide*. It is the responsibility of supervisors and faculty to ensure that employees and students are familiar with evacuation signals, evacuation routes, exterior designated assembly areas, and other procedures related to fire safety and evacuation.

### C. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

In order to plan and prepare for possible fire emergencies on campus, the following planning and preparation measures should be done by students, faculty, and staff:

- **Participate in fire drills:** Whenever a fire alarm is activated, it is mandatory that all persons evacuate the building. Practicing evacuation procedures during drills and alarms is the best way to prepare for a real fire emergency.
- **Identify primary and alternate exits from the building:** Exit route signs are posted in conspicuous locations throughout university buildings that identify primary and alternate exit routes. All individuals should familiarize themselves with exit routes for the building(s) they occupy. Reference the *Emergency Evacuation Guide* for additional information.
- **Learn to use a fire extinguisher:** The Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHS) offers periodic training in the use of portable fire extinguishers. George Mason University faculty, staff, and students are not *required* to attempt to extinguish a fire, only to warn others and evacuate the building. For more

information on fire extinguisher training, training dates, and how to register for training, please contact EHS at [safety@gmu.edu](mailto:safety@gmu.edu) or (703) 993-8448.

## **D. EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

Immediately reporting a fire, suspected fire, or fire alarm is the most important action necessary to mitigate fire damage, prevent injury or death, warn others, and avoid property damage. If you discover or become aware of a fire in your building or work area:

1. Activate the building fire alarm using a manual pull station located near an exit door.
2. Call 911 and be prepared to give the exact location of the fire, including campus, building address, building name, and cause of the fire if cause is known. The building address and campus name are located on emergency exit route signs.
3. If you are confident you can control the fire with a portable fire extinguisher and have been properly trained in the use of portable fire extinguishers, attempt to extinguish the fire if it is safe to do so.
4. Never allow a fire to come between you and an exit. Assist individuals with disabilities and those who appear to need direction.
5. Evacuate the building as quickly as possible, using the primary or alternate exit routes. Exit route signs are posted in conspicuous locations throughout university buildings. Alternate exit routes have been identified in case the primary evacuation route is obstructed by a hazard, is occupied by emergency response personnel, or cannot otherwise be used.
6. Proceed to the designated assembly area and verbally warn others to evacuate the building as you exit the building. Designated assembly areas should be identified in the *Emergency Evacuation Guide*. They are also identified on evacuation signs.
7. If you are unable to exit the building due to fire, mobility challenge, or other hazard, notify a person that is exiting the building or call 911 from any phone, shout for assistance, dropping an object to the ground from an exterior window, or hang a highly visible object from a window to get the attention of first responders.
8. Do not re-enter the building until informed it is safe to do so by University Police or the fire department.

Keep in mind these tips as you follow the steps listed above:

- Feel door handles with the back of your hand before opening a door(s).
- If the door handle is hot, don't open it. Go to a phone or window and call for help.
- If the handle is not hot, open it cautiously.
- Check for smoke, heat or fire before going out.
- If smoke is present, stay as low as possible and crawl to an exit door. Keep one shoulder against the wall as you exit the building to avoid becoming lost.
- Do not use elevators.
- Knock on closed doors as you leave and yell "FIRE!" on your way out.

- Make note of the location of anyone who may have been unable or refused to evacuate.

Additional information regarding emergency evacuation for fire or other emergencies is available in the *Emergency Evacuation Guide*. This *Unit Fire Safety Plan* must be used in conjunction with the *Emergency Evacuation Guide*.

## E. FIRE DRILLS

Emergency evacuation and fire drills are required for most university buildings, depending upon occupancy and use, and must be conducted in accordance with the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code. All emergency evacuation drills are scheduled and conducted by EHS. The frequency and required participation of fire drills is as follows:

Group or Occupancy	Frequency	Examples
Assembly Buildings Group A	Quarterly	EagleBank Arena, Center for the Arts, Johnson Center
Educational / Business Group B	Annually	Innovation Hall, Research Hall, Thompson Hall
Adult and Child Care Group E	Monthly	Child Development Center
Residence Halls Group R-2	Four Annually	Northern Neck, Commonwealth Hall, Wilson Hall

## F. FIRE SAFETY PLAN

Per the requirements of the Virginia State Wide Fire Prevention Code and U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 29, part 1910.39, George Mason University maintains a *Fire Safety Plan*. The *Fire Safety Plan* outlines the university's fire prevention, protection, and safety programs. A copy of George Mason University's *Fire Safety Plan* is available on the Fire Safety Program page of the EHS web site ([ehs.gmu.edu](https://ehs.gmu.edu)).

## G. UNIT FIRE SAFETY PLAN

In addition to a university-wide *Fire Safety Plan*, individual units must complete a *Unit Fire Safety Plan* that identifies specific fire hazards and fire safety procedures unique to their building or work area, see Appendix A. Plans must be made available upon request to EHS, building occupants, the Fire Marshal, and state officials. Please contact EHS if you have questions about the *Unit Fire Safety Plan* or need assistance to complete the plan.

## H. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For additional information on emergency evacuation procedures and drills, please refer to the *Emergency Evacuation Guide* and the university wide *Fire Safety Plan* located on the EHS website ([ehs.gmu.edu](https://ehs.gmu.edu)). For more information on fire safety at home, work, and school please visit the following links.

- National Fire Protection Association - <http://www.nfpa.org/>
- FireSafety.Gov - <http://www.firesafety.gov>
- U.S. Fire Administration - <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/index.shtm>