

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY



Fire Alarm Response

Category: Operations

Responsible Department: Facility Operations

Responsible Officer: VP for Facility Operations

Effective Date: 1/20/2016

Policy Summary

This policy details required responses to fire alarms in University buildings and includes universal emergency instructions.

Scope

This policy affects the following groups of the University:

- Entire University Community

This policy affects all members of the University Community.

Policy

All fire alarm protected University-owned buildings have basic response/evacuation guidelines. All members of the University community should maintain an awareness of how to respond to fire alarms that are sounded within the University buildings.

Lincoln Park and Loop Campus:

All fire alarms require mandatory evacuation via stairwells. Elevators should never be used in a fire alarm. Use interior stairwells if safe to do so (no smoke or fire) and exterior fire escapes as a last resort.

When alarms sound, all requiring assistance should proceed to a safe area away from the danger, see below evacuation options. Emergency personnel/first responders upon arrival will begin a search of all floors. If an individual finds themselves in a serious situation, they should immediately call 9-1-1 then DePaul Public Safety, and report their location.

In the event of an emergency building or campus evacuation, City of Chicago emergency personnel are the only personnel formally trained and authorized to provide physical evacuation assistance. In the event danger is imminent and there is no time to wait for City of Chicago personnel, the

University suggests the following evacuation options for students, faculty, and staff with special needs:

- ***"Buddy System" Evacuation Option*** - Inform a student, staff and/or faculty acquaintance (a "Buddy") of the need for special assistance in the event of a fire alarm. When the fire alarm sounds, the "Buddy" should make sure of the individual's location, then go outside and inform emergency personnel of a person in a specific location who needs assistance in leaving the building. Emergency personnel will then enter the building and evacuate that person.
- ***Horizontal Evacuation Option*** - Move a safe distance away from the area of imminent danger to another wing of the building or opposite end of the corridor.
- ***Vertical (Stairway) Evacuation Option*** - Those who are able to evacuate with or without minor assistance may evacuate via stairways.
- ***Stay in Place Evacuation Option*** - Unless danger is imminent, remain in a room with an exterior window, closing the door if possible. If possible, dial 9-1-1. The individual should be prepared to tell the 9-1-1 operator his or her name, location and the nature of the emergency.

Most buildings on campus are equipped with fire alarm horns/strobes that sound an alarm and flash strobe lights. However, persons with hearing and/or vision impairments may not immediately notice or hear emergency alarms and may need to be alerted of emergency situations. Some persons may need to be alerted to the situation by gestures or by turning the light switch off and on. Emergency instructions can be given by verbalizing, mouthing or by a short, explicit written note. University faculty and staff are encouraged to offer such assistance, as appropriate.

The Fire Department shall be the only authority to signal the "all clear" to re-enter the building.

Residence Halls

Upon hearing a building alarm, students must leave the residence halls immediately. Exits are clearly marked in each housing facility. Students should leave using the most direct and safe route. Evacuation procedures are posted near the entrances of University buildings and affixed to the back door of each residence hall or apartment unit.

Non-University Buildings

Fire prevention policies and procedures for rental properties are determined and distributed by the management companies for each building.

Procedures

Universal Emergency Instructions for All Building Occupants/Users at All Campuses:

1. Familiarize yourself with the location of emergency equipment (i.e. fire extinguishers & hoses) on your floor. This equipment can be used for such minor emergencies as trashcan fires, etc. After a minor fire has been extinguished, notify Public Safety or Facility Operations so that they can ensure that the problem has been dealt with fully and properly.
2. Familiarize yourself with the locations of all stairwells and fire escapes on your floor.
3. During an evacuation remain calm but evacuate immediately and in accordance with your building plan. Refrain from using phones while evacuating to allow for a quick and safe evacuation.
4. WALK to the nearest stairwell to exit the floor. Elevators are automatically called to the first floor to avoid entrapment in the cars when an alarm sounds. If there is smoke or flame in the stairwell, go to the alternate interior stairwell. Use the exterior fire escape (in buildings where fire escapes exist) as a last resort.
5. Remove high heels. They can be caught in stair treads or fire escape openings.
6. Remember that false alarms are serious pranks that have the potential for creating panic situations, as well as being the cause of unintentional injury. Anyone apprehended in the act of triggering a false alarm or reported to have been the cause of a false alarm shall be turned in to the proper authorities for disciplinary action and/or prosecution.

Divisional Collaborations

Public Safety

Contact Information

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Appendices

DePaul University Emergency Operations Plan - 11/19/2015

History/Revisions

Origination Date: 05/20/2002

Last Amended Date: 01/20/2016

Next Review Date: N/A