

Fire Safety Policy and Procedures – Morningside Campus

Appendix

Fire Safety Procedures and Guidelines

I. Fire Alarm System Inspection and Testing

The New York City Fire Department code requires that in every hotel, lodging house, public or private hospital, department store, public school or University that an interior fire alarm system is provided.

The interior fire system is to be a system approved by the fire commissioner:

- By means of which alarms of fire or other danger may be instantly communicated to every portion of the building.
- The fire alarm apparatus and all other appliances placed or kept within any of such buildings for the purpose of preventing or extinguishing fires and means of escape shall be kept at all times in good working order and proper condition for immediate use.
- Any member of the uniformed force or authorized representative of the fire department may enter any of the said buildings at any time, for the purpose of inspection of the interior fire system or fire protection equipment.

The Fire System group is responsible for the proper operation of all fire systems including testing, inspecting, maintenance and repairs to endeavor to ensure reliability in case of fire or an emergency. The Fire System Group is expected to follow the schedule below.

A. Systems Inspections

1. The following shall be inspected daily:
 - a. When problems exist in a system
 - b. All panels with a "trouble" light or trouble condition
 - c. Magnetic locks and door holders
2. The following shall be inspected weekly:
 - a. Generators
 - b. Gravity and pressure tanks
 - c. Status and condition of all fire alarm panels
 - d. Punch tapes
 - e. Emergency lighting panels
 - f. Campus loop fire alarm monitoring system (keltron units)
3. The following sprinkler /standpipe systems shall be inspected monthly:
 - a. Sprinkler heads and systems
 - b. Sprinkler and standpipe control valves are open and locked in the open position
 - c. Fire check valves
 - d. Campus fire loop system
 - e. Sprinkler and standpipe test valves
 - f. Pre-action systems
 - g. Dry pressure system for air pressure

- h. Piping systems
 - i. Siamese connections
 - j. Fire hoses and nozzles
 - k. Fill pumps
4. The following electrical interior fire alarm systems shall be inspected monthly:
- a. Fire pumps
 - b. Pull stations
 - c. Batteries
 - d. Bulbs
 - e. Electrical wiring and power for damage
 - f. Electromagnetic door locks and holders
 - g. Smoke detectors
 - h. Heat detectors
 - i. Duct smoke detectors
 - j. Protecto Wire heat detection wire
 - k. Keltron units for paper and ribbon
 - l. Automatic transfer switches
 - m. Bells /gongs and horns
 - n. Fan shut down relay
5. The following shall be inspected semi-annually:
- a. Fire extinguisher inspect or replace
 - b. Smoke detector cleaning

B. Testing

- 1. The following shall be tested daily:
 - a. When problems exist in a fire system
- 2. The following shall be tested weekly:
 - a. Fire alarm transmitters
 - b. Test and verify building alarm signals
 - c. Test all central office connections
 - d. Emergency generators
- 3. The following shall be tested monthly:
 - a. Water flow switches
 - b. Sprinkler/standpipe system
 - c. Sprinkler flow and inspector's test valves
 - d. Fire pumps
 - e. Fill pumps
 - f. High/low pressure switches
 - g. Gravity and pressure tanks flow and valves
 - h. OS&Y, and control valve tamper switches
 - i. Siamese connections
 - j. Control panels
 - k. Audible signals
 - l. Strobes
 - m. Pull stations

- n. Electromagnetic door locks
 - o. Automatic elevator recall
 - p. Panels and annunciator lights in alarm condition
 - q. Batteries with an electrical power condition
 - r. Smoke detectors
 - s. Heat detectors and rate of rise detectors
 - t. Duct smoke detectors
 - u. Automatic shut downs fans, electrical and elevators
4. The following shall be tested annually:
 - a. Pressure test sprinkler heads and standpipe and sprinkler lines
 - b. Factory mutual inspections and testing of the fire safety equipment throughout the university campus
 5. Five year fire department test
 - a. Hydraulic pressure of the standpipe and sprinkler systems
 - b. Hydrostatic pressure of the fire extinguishers
 6. Acceptance tests
 - a. New equipment

II. Fire Prevention

Everyone in the University community should be aware of potential fire hazards and make a continuous effort to prevent the occurrence of a fire.

A. General Guidelines

1. Keep doorways, corridors, and stairwells clear and unobstructed at all times.
2. Ensure doors are in good working order and maintained closed.
3. Make sure that all electrical appliances and cords are in good condition and UL (Underwriter Laboratories, an independent testing facility that certifies safety standards) approved.
4. Do not overload electrical outlets.
5. Use fuse-protected multi-outlet power strips and heavy-duty extension cords when power is required and an electrical outlet is not in the immediate area.
6. Turn off all lights and electrical appliances when you leave your room, office, or apartment.
7. Do not smoke in bed.
8. Extinguish all smoking materials properly and thoroughly.
9. Empty wastebaskets regularly, and do not store flammable substances in your room or apartment.
10. Candles are prohibited in University Buildings. The Chaplain's Office may grant permission for use of candles, and the Office of Fire Safety will provide guidelines for specific use. Please refer to the Candle Use Guidelines – Morningside Campus.
11. Open Flame Guidelines for parties and catered events. Please refer to the Solid Alcohol (Sterno) Fuel Use Guidelines – University Policy.
12. Live pitch producing holiday decorations, such as trees, garland or wreaths, are not permitted in the educational buildings or residence halls without exception.
13. Artificial greens must have certificates of flame proofing.

- B. Life Safety Requirements for Auditoriums, Screening Rooms and Theaters
Auditoriums, Screening Rooms and Theaters and places of assembly that hold more than 74 people are required to comply with all aspects of the Public Assembly Law. These requirements are in addition to physical space requirements, and include limitations on seating arrangements, restrictions, in some instances regarding props and sets. Requirements also mandate New York City Fire Department certified Fire Guards during Public Assembly performances.

III. Fire Drills

New York State education law, Fire Department policy and University protocols mandate fire drills in all educational facilities and university residence halls. Drills are conducted unannounced and all building occupants are required to participate.

IV. Fire Incident Protocol

Unless the building is posted for a test or maintenance procedure, State and City Law, as well as University policy mandate total building evacuation.

A. General Procedures

1. If a fire or smoke condition is encountered all building occupants must evacuate the building immediately.
2. Open each door a crack only to determine if smoke or heat is present.
3. Assuming the area is tenable; leave your room, closing the door behind you, taking only your keys and coat.
4. Knock on doors as you proceed to the stairwell, never use the elevator.
5. If not already sounding, activate the manual pull station next to the stairwell door.
6. Continue to exit even if the alarm stops sounding.
7. Once safely away from the fire use a phone to contact Public Safety.
8. Relay any information regarding the fire or condition found, occupants that may still be inside and any other information that may be important to responding emergency personnel.
9. Never return to the building for any reason until authorized. Public Safety personnel are the only people authorized to allow occupants to return to the building after it is deemed safe.
10. If conditions outside your door prohibit you from leaving, seal the cracks around the door if possible.
11. If a campus phone is available dial 99 and report your location and the problems encountered. If no campus phone is available, dial 911 for response to fire or other emergency.
12. If possible open the window from the top and bottom (never break a window).
13. Stay at the window and signal for help.
14. If heat or smoke starts to enter through the window close it to maintain a safe environment.
15. If you must vacate the area stay low, close doors as you leave and, keeping your hand on the wall, proceed to the nearest exit.

- B. Emergency Evacuation Procedures for Persons with Disabilities
1. Do not use the elevator.
 2. Remain in your room.
 3. Dial 99 and give the following information to Public Safety:
 - Your name
 - Your location including floor, room number and location within the room.
 - The nature of your disability (e.g., leg injury, require use of crutches or wheel chair, recovering from surgery, etc.)
 4. Wait for Public Safety or firefighting personnel to respond to your location for assistance.
 5. If smoke is entering your room, seal cracks around the door with a blanket or towel.
 6. When possible, open a window from the top to allow smoke to vent, and from the bottom to draw in fresh air to displace exiting smoke. If smoke enters through the open window, close the window to maintain a tenable atmosphere.
 7. Never break a window.
 8. Hang a towel or bright colored object out of the window to attract attention.
 9. If the room becomes untenable, carefully relocate to another room on the same floor, or evacuate to the stairwell.
 10. In the event of necessity to relocate to a stairwell:
 - Leave wheel chair or walker on the corridor.
 - Move into the stairwell, close the door from the corridor and remain seated as far away from the stairs as possible.
 - Alert exiting residents of your presence and ask them to relay information to Public Safety or Fire Department personnel.
 - If remaining on the fire floor poses an immediate life-threatening situation, instruct Public Safety or other occupants attempting to move you of the best method to bring you down the stairs.

V: Residential Fire Safety Plan:

1. In compliance with RCNY 43-01, *Residential Fire Safety Plans*, all occupants of University Housing have building specific fire safety notices posted in their rooms or apartments, and are issued building specific fire safety plans on an annual basis.

VI: Emergency Evacuation Personnel:

1. In addition to code requirements, Columbia University has implemented an Emergency Evacuation Personnel Program in academic and administrative buildings.
2. The plan emulates the Fire Warden Teams required in Class E hi-rise office buildings, allowing building occupants to voluntarily assist in the timely evacuation of their work area in the event of fire or other emergency.

VII: Hot Work Policy:

1. The Columbia University Hot Work Policy has been designed and implemented to reduce fires, as well as unwarranted alarms during construction activities.

2. A Hot Work Permit is required when work being performed could cause an alarm resulting from:
 - a. Open Flame
 - b. Sparks
 - c. Dust
 - d. Smoke
 - e. Fumes
3. The Hot Work Policy meets or exceeds requirements set forth by the:
 - a. New York City Fire Code
 - b. National Fire Protection Association
 - c. Factory Mutual

VIII: Candle Use Guidelines – Morningside Campus

The use of candles in campus buildings, with exception of the items listed below, is strictly prohibited.

In instances where candles are permitted, the following requirements must be complied with:

Use of Candles for Religious Ceremonies, Within the University Housing Environs:

The use of candles, incense or similar items with open flames is prohibited in residence buildings. However, some exceptions are made for students celebrating religious festivals in which candles play a significant role, for example, the Jewish Festival of Lights.

To obtain permission for candle use for special occasions, students must submit a written statement from their religious or spiritual leader, identifying the religious celebration and the nature of the use of candles. Requests must be submitted at least 72 hours in advance of the requested date to the Office of the Assistant Dean, Residence Life. Approval will be granted for (a) specific date(s) and location only, and copies of the approval will be submitted to Housing and Dining and the Office of Fire and Life Safety within the Department of Public Safety.

The University reserves the right to deny any request for the use of candles or burning of incense. If permitted, candles must be used in compliance with the following fire safety guidelines:

Fire Safety Guidelines for the Use of Candles

- Candles may not be left unattended while burning.
- Candles must be of the low flame variety and must be placed in a properly fitting menorah or in a shallow glass container.
- Candles must be placed on a noncombustible surface.
- Candles must be placed in a shallow dish of water on a hard flat surface if the surface is not noncombustible.
- All readily combustible materials, such as drapes, must be secured away from the open flame.
- Candles shall be doused with water prior to disposal.

- Incense may only be used in conjunction with a burning utensil approved in advance by the University Fire Safety Office.

Use of Candles for Religious Ceremonies, Within Academic and Administrative Buildings:

To obtain permission for candle use for religious ceremonies within academic and administrative buildings, requestors must submit a written statement from their religious or spiritual leader, identifying the religious celebration and the nature of the use of candles. Requests must be submitted at least 72 hours in advance of the requested date to the Office of Fire and Life Safety within the Department of Public Safety.

The University reserves the right to deny any request for the use of candles or burning of incense. If permitted, candles must be used in compliance with the following fire safety guidelines:

Use of Candles in Public Space, Within Academic and Administrative Buildings:

- Candles for decorative lighting purpose are permitted within public space, (i.e. Public Assembly Space, meeting rooms, etc.) only. Candles are not permitted within any private office space, sleeping areas, or other non-public space.
- Where a Public Assembly Permits has been issued, the space must also have a current Open Flame Permit, issued by the New York City Fire Department.
- Only approved outside food vendors shall be allowed to utilize candles for decorative lighting purpose, providing they comply with the Candle Policy of Columbia University. Vendors shall be provided a copy of this policy and upon request shall provide written certification that their employees are properly trained in the lighting and handling of candles or decorative open flame lighting as well as the knowledge of how to operate a fire extinguisher.
- Candles use shall be attended at all times by a member of the catering staff who has been trained in Sterno use and fire safety.
- A 10 pound BC dry chemical extinguisher, or Type K extinguisher, shall be available within ten (10) feet of the serving table or tables.
- Cardboard, paper, or flammable candleholders are prohibited.
- Candleholders must be of a design that holds the candle in a vertical position and prevents tipping, and located so as to avoid ignition of combustible materials.
- When placed on a table less than four (4) feet wide in any direction, candles must be protected by noncombustible globes or shades, with a maximum height of twenty-two inches for tables over four feet wide, and sixteen inches for tables under four wide.
- Kerosene or combustible mixture liquid fuel lamps for decorative lighting purpose are not permitted in University buildings.
- Only regular cloth table covers shall be used. All table decorations must be flame resistant. Combustible material such as plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups and similar products shall be separated by a minimum of three feet from candles.
- In the event of a fire, Columbia University Fire Safety Policy shall be followed. Public Safety shall be immediately notified.

Use of Candles Within the Chapel:

- Candles may not be left unattended while burning.
- Candles for ceremonial lighting purpose are permitted on the Altar, or immediately in front of the Altar.
- A fire extinguisher shall be available within ten (10) feet of the altar.
- Candles are not permitted in the Knave, Post crypt, any carpeted areas, or private offices within the building.
- Candles where permitted, shall be attended at all times by a staff member or their representative.
- Cardboard, paper, or flammable candleholders are prohibited.
- Candleholders must be of a design that holds the candle in a vertical position and prevents tipping, and located so as to avoid ignition of combustible materials.
- When placed on a table less than four (4) feet wide in any direction, candles must be protected by noncombustible globes or shades, with a maximum height of twenty-two inches for tables over four feet wide, and sixteen inches for tables under four wide.
- Kerosene or combustible mixture liquid fuel lamps for decorative lighting purpose are not permitted in University buildings.
- Only regular cloth table covers shall be used. All table decorations must be flame resistant. Combustible material shall be separated by a minimum of three feet from candles.
- In the event of a fire, Columbia University Fire Safety Policy shall be followed. Public Safety shall be immediately notified.
- Only approved outside food vendors shall be allowed to utilize candles for decorative lighting purpose, providing they comply with the Candle Policy of Columbia University. Vendors shall be provided a copy of this policy and upon request shall provide written certification that their employees are properly trained in the lighting and handling of candles or decorative open flame lighting as well as the knowledge of how to operate a fire extinguisher.

IX: Solid Alcohol (Sterno) Fuel Use Guidelines – University Policy

Solid alcohol (Sterno) heating of food is permitted, when the following requirements are complied with:

- Sterno use is permitted in public space, (i.e. Public Assembly Space, meeting rooms, etc.) only, it is not permitted in private office space, sleeping areas, or other non-public space. Where a Public Assembly Permits has been issued, the space must also have a current Open Flame Permit, issued by the New York City Fire Department.
- Only approved outside food vendors shall be allowed to utilize Sterno heating devices, providing they comply with the Solid Alcohol (Sterno Fuel Use Guidelines) of Columbia University. Vendors shall be provided a copy of this policy and upon request shall provide written certification that their employees are properly trained in the lighting and handling of Sterno as well as the knowledge of how to operate a fire extinguisher.

- Sterno fuel use shall be attended at all times by a member of the catering staff who has been trained in Sterno use and fire safety.
- A 10 pound BC dry chemical extinguisher, or Type K extinguisher, shall be available within ten (10) feet of the serving table or tables.
- Use of secondary containers for Sterno, i.e. fuel holders with cover, is mandatory. Proper tools must be available for the smothering of the flame if needed, i.e. snuffer paddle.
- All chafing racks and beverage urns using Sterno shall be placed on non-combustible mats, ceramic or metal trays extending at least eight inches beyond the Sterno container in each direction, to prevent accidental contact with any combustible materials.
- Sterno shall be placed under food or beverage tray before lighting. Sterno shall only be lit by means of a butane lighter or long handled match. Chafing racks or beverage urns shall not be moved while Sterno are lit.
- Only regular cloth table covers shall be used. All table decorations must be flame resistant. Combustible material such as plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups and similar products shall be separated by a minimum of three feet from Sterno.
- Sterno must be immediately extinguished when the food tray is empty or no longer used. When the event is over, all Sterno must be extinguished immediately, capped and removed from facility by catering personnel.
- The Fire Safety staff of the appropriate facility shall be notified of all Sterno usage within their respective buildings.
- In the event of a fire, Columbia University Fire Safety Policy shall be followed. Public Safety shall be immediately notified.

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