



OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE SERVICES  
UVM.EDU/POLICIES

## POLICY

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**Title:** Fire Safety

### Policy Statement

All employees, students, and visitors are required to evacuate a building when the fire alarm sounds. No person may tamper with fire protection devices, create fire hazards within or near buildings, or cause impediments to emergency egress from buildings.

### Reason for the Policy

To promote workplace and student safety, comply with fire codes and protect University assets.

### Applicability of the Policy

This policy applies to all University of Vermont faculty, staff, and students, to all guests and visitors, and to all other persons present on University owned or leased property.

### Definitions

- None

### Procedures

All University and affiliated employees should be familiar with the indication of a fire alarm in their buildings (i.e., sound, flashing lights, tactile indicators). The safety of those living, working, and learning on campus must begin with a conscientious awareness of and adherence to emergency fire drills, emergency procedures, and proper usage of fire detection and alarm devices in each building. Fire protection devices must never be removed, covered, obstructed, or otherwise tampered with, nor may batteries be removed. Protection of life, property and personal possessions is dependent on the responsible actions of all persons.

Fire hazards include improperly used heating, cooking and electrical appliances, improperly stored flammable liquids, excessive accumulations of combustible waste, and open flames. The use of candles is prohibited in University buildings including, but not limited to, residence halls. Prohibition of certain other items including, but not limited to, hoverboards, e-scooters, and e-bikes in University of Vermont residence halls is covered by the Housing and Meal Plan Terms and Conditions. Approval for participation in processes involving open flames or generating sparks or heat is regulated by the Hot Work Permit Program administered by the Physical Plant Department.

Rooms and doorways must remain free of obstruction and debris; all items to be discarded should be disposed of properly and not stored in hallways. Bicycles must not be parked in areas in buildings, such as stairwells, doorways, or hallways, where they may impede egress. All such items can hinder a safe evacuation should a fire or other emergency occur.

Exterior fire escapes are designed for egress only and must remain free of obstruction. For this reason, exterior fire escapes shall not be used for building entry, recreation, photography, academic demonstrations, or other non-emergency related functions. The University Fire Marshal may grant exceptions to this in writing for official University functions.

Fire doors prevent the spread of fire and smoke. Fire doors at stairwells and in corridors must be kept closed at all times unless held open by an approved fire alarm system magnetic door holder device (or equivalent approved door hold-open device). This device will release automatically when a fire alarm sounds. Therefore, fire doors must never be blocked open or otherwise tampered with. Supervisors should make sure that all employees become familiar with exits nearest their work area and the location of fire alarm pull station devices.

If individuals are present in or on a University owned or leased property, and those individuals have disabilities that may hinder their perception of an emergency situation or may hinder their rapid departure from a building, they should inform those in charge (i.e., supervisors, professors, resident advisors, program facilitators) and others as needed (i.e., co-workers, peers, program participants) so that necessary evacuation procedures can be devised. Individuals are not required to disclose personal or protected information; however, they should notify those in charge that they need assistance in the event of an emergency and provide details on the type of assistance needed.

Those in charge are encouraged to consult with the University Fire Marshal in the Department of Environmental Health and Safety for assistance in planning for safe evacuation or relocation in those circumstances. Those in charge must inform others (employees, students, participants) of any special procedures in place in the event of fire or any other emergency and should not disclose any personal or protected information about those requiring special procedures.

## Contacts

| Questions concerning the daily operational interpretation of this policy should be directed to the following (in accordance with the policy elaboration and procedures): |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Title(s)/Department(s):  | Contact Information:              |
| University Fire Marshal, Department of Environmental Health and Safety   | 284 East Avenue<br>(802) 656-3242 |

## Forms/Flowcharts/Diagrams

- None

## Related Documents/Policies

- [Housing and Meal Plan Contract Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Hot Work Permit Program](#)

## Regulatory References/Citations

- [NFPA 51b: Standard for Fire Prevention During Welding, Cutting and Other Hot Work](#)

## Training/Education

Training/education related to this policy is as follows:

|                            |  |                      |   |
|----------------------------|--|----------------------|---|
| <b>Training Topic:</b>     | Hot Work   |                      |   |
| <b>Training Audience:</b>  | All employees involved in hot work including Supervisors, Permit Authorizing Individuals, Hot Work operators and Fire Watch personnel. | <b>Delivered By:</b> | Environmental Health & Safety                   |
| <b>Method of Delivery:</b> | In-Person  | <b>Frequency:</b>    | Within 30 days of hire and annually thereafter. |

|                            |   |                      |   |
|----------------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| <b>Training Topic:</b>     | Portable Fire Extinguishers   |                      |   |
| <b>Training Audience:</b>  | All employees where the employer has provided portable fire extinguishers in the workplace. | <b>Delivered By:</b> | Environmental Health & Safety                   |
| <b>Method of Delivery:</b> | In-Person   | <b>Frequency:</b>    | Within 30 days of hire and annually thereafter. |

|                            |  |                      |   |
|----------------------------|--|----------------------|---|
| <b>Training Topic:</b>     | Fire Safety Training   |                      |   |
| <b>Training Audience:</b>  | All employees where the employer has provided portable fire extinguishers in the workplace | <b>Delivered By:</b> | Environmental Health & Safety   |
| <b>Method of Delivery:</b> | On-Line:<br><a href="http://riskmgmt.w3.uvm.edu/courses/">riskmgmt.w3.uvm.edu/courses/</a> | <b>Frequency:</b>    | Pre-requisite for anyone required to complete Portable Fire Extinguishers Training. |

## About this Policy

|                              |   |                            |                |
|------------------------------|---|----------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Responsible Official:</b> | Chief Safety and Compliance Officer   | <b>Approval Authority:</b> | President      |
| <b>Policy Number:</b>        | V. 3.9.3  | <b>Effective Date:</b>     | April 24, 2019 |
| <b>Revision History:</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• V. 4.1.18.1 effective November 9, 2006</li><li>• V. 4.1.18.1/V. 5.11.2 effective March 22, 2012</li><li>• V. 5.11.3/V. 3.9.3 effective April 24, 2019. Responsible official officially changed from the Vice President for University Relations and Administration to the Vice President for Operations and Public Safety (VPOPS) on October 1, 2019. Title of VPOPS changed to Chief Safety and Compliance Officer in July 2022. Minor revisions approved February 27, 2023.</li></ul> |                            |                |

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