



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSCEP OP: 75.16, **TTUHSC El Paso Fire and Life Safety Policy**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) Operating Policy and Procedure (HSCEP OP) is to define and outline fire and life safety program requirements to assure the safety of building occupants and protect TTUHSC El Paso facilities and property.

1. Definitions
2. TTUHSC El Paso Fire and Life Safety Authority Having Jurisdiction
3. Fire Prevention
4. Fire alarm response at TTUHSC El Paso facilities
5. Monitoring and reporting requirements for fire events
6. Fire and Life Safety Training
7. Fire Drill requirements for employees and students
8. Required fire alarm system maintenance

REVIEW: This HSCEP OP will be reviewed by June 15 of each even numbered year (ENY) by the HSCEP Fire Marshal, HSCEP Senior Director of Safety Services- Physical Plant, Texas Tech Police Department, and the Managing Director of Physical Plant and Support Services, with recommendations for revision submitted to the Chief Financial Officer by July 30.

POLICY/ PROCEDURE:

1. **Definitions:**

- a. **Authority Having Jurisdiction:** The organization, office, or individual responsible for approving equipment, materials, an installation, or a procedure relating to fire or life safety.
- b. **Employee Training:** Basic employee training on proper response to fire alarms, fire drills and fire extinguisher usage at TTUHSC El Paso facilities.
- c. **Fire Alarm Monitoring:** Constant attention to the status of TTUHSC El Paso fire alarm systems, and code acceptable emergency response utilizing either employee based or contracted services.
- d. **Fire Alarm Response:** The proper and required response to fire alarm system activation is the prompt and orderly evacuation of all occupants from the areas of the building that are in alarm.
- e. **Fire Drill Response:** Evacuation of faculty staff and students from the building during a planned drill without interrupting direct patient care, elevator travel or critical need laboratory work.
- f. **Non-Ambulatory Building Occupants:** Building occupants who, due to the nature of their injury or illness, are incapable of taking action for self-preservation under emergency conditions without the assistance of others.
- g. **Required Maintenance:** Code required maintenance and inspection for essential systems and components necessary for occupant and facility protection from fire and similar emergencies.

2. **TTUHSC El Paso Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ):**

The TTUHSC El Paso Fire Marshal reports to the Senior Director of Safety Services and is the official contact and authority having jurisdiction for TTUHSC El Paso regarding fire and life safety issues. In addition, they serve as the designated representative of the State Fire Marshal's Office.

The TTUHSC El Paso Fire Marshal is responsible for the application, interpretation and enforcement of codes adopted by the TTU System Board of Regents. Communication regarding fire and life safety issues within any construction project will be conducted through the project management team, which will include the AHJ, as appropriate. Fire and life safety related inspections or code enforcement will be conducted by the TTUHSC El Paso Fire Marshal. The Fire Marshal shall collaborate with each department to achieve safe conditions. Appropriate persons in the institutional chain of command will be included in this communication as needed.

3. **Fire Prevention**

a. Fire prevention begins with identifying fire hazards. All faculty, staff, students, volunteers, and visitors have a personal obligation to be aware of fire hazards and to reduce or eliminate the risk of fire on our campus.

b. **Identification of Common Fire Hazards**

| | |
|---|---|
| Scrap, Waste Materials, Dust, and Trash | Accumulation of these items increases the risk of fire. Under the right conditions, the buildup of dust from wood, plastic, or certain metal operations can lead to fire or explosion. |
| Improper Use, Storage, Dispensing or Disposal of Flammable Materials | Flammable materials are a primary fuel source for fire and explosions. Proper handling of these materials is critical to reducing the fire risk. |
| Use of Extension Cords and Multiple Plug Adapters | Extension cords and multiple plug adapters may <u>ONLY</u> be used for temporary operations. Overloaded circuits, damaged wiring, and defective switches can all lead to electrical fires. The Fire Code prohibits “daisy chaining” power strips together. |
| Hot Work Hazards | Any operation involving heated materials or open flames presents a fire hazard. Hot Work procedures have been developed as part of the fire prevention program. <u>ALL</u> Hot Work must comply with the TTUHSC El Paso Hot Work Procedure outlined in Attachment E of this document. |
| Inadequate Machine and Equipment Maintenance | Electrical problems and equipment defects can lead to a fire. Routine inspection and maintenance of all machines and equipment can reduce the risk of fire. |
| Smoking | Smoking is prohibited in facilities owned or leased by the university. Discarding smoking materials carelessly in waste containers or into landscaping can easily start a fire. |
| Electric Space Heaters | All electric space heater models must be approved by TTUHSC El Paso Fire Marshal prior to use. |
| Aerosol Spray Cans | Read all labels prior to use. Aerosol spray cans should never be exposed to heat or flames. |
| Non-Compliant Renovation or Maintenance | Renovation or maintenance projects that do not meet the requirements of the state of Texas and/or applicable building and fire codes can result in improper egress, improper construction methods or materials, and electrical hazards. |

c. **Basic Fire Prevention Strategies**

| | |
|--|--|
| Accumulation of Combustible Materials | The accumulation of combustible materials is prohibited (e.g. cardboard boxes, magazines/journals, paper products). Combustible materials must never be stored near any heating appliance or other potential ignition source. A good rule of thumb is 18 inches clearance minimum. |
|--|--|

| | |
|--|--|
| Storage | Stored materials must be at least 18 inches below sprinkler heads. |
| Decorations | Decorations, signs and other items may not be hung on or near sprinkler heads. |
| Obstructing Portable Fire Extinguishers | Do not obstruct access to portable fire extinguishers. |
| Spills on Floor | Correct any condition causing leaks or drips of flammable or combustible liquids. Clean up all spills immediately. |
| Fire Exit Stairway | Stairways shall be kept clear at all times. Nothing shall be set, stored, or placed in any stairway. |
| Hoarding | Maintain premises free of unneeded or unnecessary materials. Hoarding increases the risk of fire. |
| Clear Passage | Keep passageways free of obstacles, including furniture and equipment. |
| Fire-rated Doors | Fire-rated doors are generally found at any opening to a corridor, stairwell, storage room, mechanical and/or electrical equipment room. Blocking doors with wedges or other items allows smoke to spread rapidly through a building, possibly preventing occupants from quickly evacuating during a fire emergency. |
| Renovation Projects | All materials used in renovation or building projects must meet the state of Texas requirements as well as fire code requirements for fire-resistance. All work must be performed in accordance with building code requirements. |
| Fire-stopping | All penetrations of floors, ceilings, and/or walls are avenues for smoke and heat travel. These penetrations must be properly fire-stopped where required. This includes the replacing of ceiling tile when disturbed for any reason. |
| Wiring, Switches, and Plugs | Inspect all wiring, switches, and plugs. Report any damage found to Facilities Operation & Maintenance to have a qualified electrician make any needed repairs. |
| Electrical Outlets | All electric outlets, junction boxes, and electrical panels are required to have proper cover plates at all times. If a cover plate is missing, contact Facilities Operation & Maintenance to have the hazard addressed. |
| Junction Boxes and Electrical Panels | Junction boxes and the breakers/disconnects in electrical circuit panels are required to be labeled advising what it controls for emergency response and maintenance personnel. |
| Wet Electrical Cords | Do not use electrical cords or equipment that is damp or wet unless they are approved for such use. Do not connect or disconnect electrical equipment when your hands are wet. |
| Overloaded Motors or | Do not overload motors or circuits. Overloaded motors and circuits can easily be a source of ignition. |
| Lighting Fixtures | Report any problems with lighting fixtures to Facilities Operation & Maintenance immediately. |
| Extension Cords | The improper use of extension cords is strictly prohibited. Do not use extension cords in place of permanent wiring. |
| Multiple Plug Electrical Adapters | The improper use of multiple plug electrical adapters is strictly prohibited. Remove multiple plug electrical adapters and install permanent electrical wall outlets. |

d. **Fire Prevention and Suppression Procedures for Hot Work Operations**

If not properly controlled, Hot Work Operations present serious fire hazards that can lead to significant property damage, injury and/or loss of life. To ensure safe Hot Work activities the following procedures are set forth in **Attachment E** of the operating policy. These procedures apply to all work performed on TTUHSC El Paso property.

4. **Fire Alarm Response Requirements:**

- a. Personnel at TTUHSC El Paso Physical Plant & Support Services shall respond to all fire alarms. TTUHSC El Paso employees in positions of authority or control such as instructors, doctors, directors, and supervisors are obligated to take the lead by evacuating with subordinates. Departments should establish procedures to notify and assist employees with impairments. Employees are responsible for directing the evacuation of patients and visitors in their charge during emergencies. Persons evacuating the building during fire alarms should not re-enter the building unless directed by police or fire officials.
- b. Clinics and departments that may have non-ambulatory patients, visitors, volunteers, or staff should be familiar with evacuation routes that are adequate for relocation of non-ambulatory occupants from their area(s). Generally, non-ambulatory building occupants should move horizontally away from the fire, exit the building, or move to an area of refuge. Facility constraints and operations are important factors that must be considered when determining non-ambulatory evacuation routes. Contact the TTUHSC El Paso Fire Marshal if assistance is needed in determining appropriate routes of evacuation.

5. **Alarm System Monitoring & Fire Reporting Requirements:**

Monitoring and proper emergency response are basic code required actions for the safety of building occupants and for property protection. Monitoring duty also includes the code required action of promptly notifying Fire Departments and other listed emergency response personnel. Facilities Maintenance and Operations, along with Texas Tech Police Department Dispatch, assure the constant 24/7 monitoring of the fire alarm and fire suppression monitoring systems. All fire events must be reported to TTUHSC El Paso Risk Management, which will notify the insurance carrier, and the TTUHSC El Paso Fire Marshal. (Also see **Attachment A**)

6. **Fire and Life Safety Training:**

All new employees shall receive training in emergency fire response procedures during New Employees Safety Orientation Program (NESOP). Unit Safety Officers must conduct training for members of their department regarding emergency fire response using **Attachment B** at least once each year and/or by having employees complete emergency fire response training online. If no Unit Safety Officers are appointed, the Safety Department is responsible for this employee training and documentation. **Attachment D** – Fire Extinguisher Operation and Types of Fire should be distributed annually.

7. **Fire Drill Response Requirements:**

Faculty, staff and students are required to respond to fire drills. Exceptions regarding drill response are set forth in **Attachment C** to this policy. Fire drills are conducted annually by the TTUHSC El Paso Fire Marshal. **Patients and visitors are not required to participate in fire drills.**

8. **Fire Equipment Maintenance Requirements**

All facility fire alarm detection, notification and suppression equipment must be maintained in accordance with applicable NFPA Standards. TTUHSC El Paso fire alarm systems must meet NFPA Standard 72. Fire pumps and automatic fire sprinkler systems must meet NFPA 25. Fire

extinguishers must meet NFPA 10 requirements. Facilities Operations and Maintenance will normally coordinate inspections or maintenance on these systems.

- Attachments:** A – [Fire Reporting](#)
B – [Fire Response Procedures](#)
C – [Fire Drills](#)
D – [Fire Extinguishers and Types of Fire](#)
E – [Hot Work Policy](#)
F – [Outage Request Form](#)

Fire Event Reporting

