Emergency Response and Evacuation

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER AT HOUSTON

The UTHealth Emergency Management Plan is a multi-hazard plan that addresses the mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery either directly or through reference to other specific plans or appendices such as the Business Continuity Plan, IT Disaster Recovery Plan, Employee Assistance Program Plan, Harris County Psychiatric Center emergency plan, The University of Texas Physicians emergency plan, departmental plans or other emergency related plans.

The scope of the emergency management plan is to define emergency situations, to categorize levels of emergencies and to provide procedures to prevent, prepare, respond and mitigate emergency situations in a safe, orderly and efficient manner.

Mitigation

UTHealth is committed to programs that mitigate or prevent emergency situations. Facilities, Planning and Engineering (FPE) and Auxiliary Enterprises (AE) are engaged in proactive maintenance of building systems and infrastructure. Information Technology has procedures in place for maintaining the institution’s network infrastructure and critical data. Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) conducts routine surveillance, fire system testing, routine drills and safety training to individuals on campus.

Preparedness

This emergency management plan is a multi-hazard plan that is available to all UTHealth personnel through the UTHealth website, and hard copies are provided to all Executive Team members and the Emergency Control Team. Each department is required to develop specific plans that address their unique needs and potential situations. UTHealth conducts drills at least annually that exercise this plan that assist employees and students in understanding how to respond to emergencies. The drills may include fire evacuation drills, hurricane and flooding drills, and bomb threats, for example. The drills may be announced or unannounced to the institutional community. Records of emergency drills are maintained by Environmental Health and Safety.

Response

Response actions for the highest ranking items on the UTHealth’s potential emergency situations risk assessment matrix are included within the plan. Information included assists employees, students and visitors in responding to emergency situations and evacuating to a safe location when necessary.

Recovery
UTHealth has established business continuity plans (BCP) for each of the eleven key units/services that provide the necessary infrastructure for the institution to continue to have critical processes function in the event of an emergency or return to operation as soon as possible. BCPs have also been developed for each of the six schools. The institution also has pre-established contracts with local vendors that provide hazard response and mitigation services, a mutual-aid agreement exists with the other University of Texas System institutions for assistance, and insurance coverage where available and financially feasible.

Because each emergency situation is different, the UT Employee Assistance Program (EAP) will customize its responses so that they may address the specific needs for each situation. Additional information on UT EAP’s internal plan of operations to provide support in the aftermath of an emergency event can be obtained from the UT EAP at 713-500-3327.

**Incident Command Responsibility**

A single event or any combination of events can trigger possible emergency level escalation. Severity level escalation decisions are made by the UTHealth Executive Team. The Executive Team consists of the following members:

- UTHealth President
- Senior Executive Vice President, Chief Operating and Financial Officer
- Executive Vice President for Academics and Research
- Vice President of Facilities, Planning, and Engineering
- Vice President of Auxiliary Enterprises
- UT Police Department Chief of Police

**Response to an Emergency**

There are several groups at UTHealth that play a key role in emergency response and are part of the emergency control team. Each group has specific responsibilities under the plan.

- UT Police – Maintains the Police Communication Center (PCC). Monitors emergency situations and receives notification of emergencies through the PCC and will contact the appropriate response personnel. UT Police will secure the area, control the scene, confirm emergency situations and provide communication as needed.
- Facilities, Planning, and Engineering – Assists in monitoring for emergency situations and confirming emergency situations. Once notified of an emergency, will report to the scene and assist with evacuations, mechanical shutdowns, damage assessment, and inform, update, and make recommendations to the Vice President of FPE and Environmental Health and Safety.
Environmental Health & Safety – Upon notification, will report to the scene and assist with evacuations, confirm emergency situations, survey the affected area to ascertain the presence of any chemical, radiological, biological, or physical hazards, handle hazardous materials, assist in securing the area, and make recommendations to the appropriate level of authority as needed.

Center for Laboratory Animal Medicine and Care – CLAMC is responsible for the health and wellbeing of laboratory animals used for the institution’s biomedical research programs. The Director of CLAMC will enact the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALC) emergency response plan when the institutions’ animal resources are at risk.

Office of Public Affairs – Upon notification, Public Affairs communication team will update information sources and initiate emergency communications as necessary. Will update and inform the Executive Team as necessary.

Information Technology – Upon notification, will protect and backup information resources as necessary as prescribed in the IT disaster plan.

Auxiliary Enterprises – Upon notification of an emergency at one of the buildings under AE management, will report to the scene of the emergency and assist with evacuations, mechanical shutdowns, assess damage, and inform, update, and make recommendations to the Vice President of AE and Environmental Health and Safety.

Emergency Levels

Emergency response is based on a severity levels scale of 1-3 with Level 1 emergencies affecting a small localized area or a single department and a Level 3 an entire complex or two or more entire structures.

A level 1 emergency will be made on the authority of any of the following parties: the Executive Team, Facilities Planning and Engineering (FP&E); Auxiliary Enterprises (AE), UT Police, or Environmental Health and Safety. The assignment of response Level 2 and 3 emergencies will be made on the authority of the Executive Team.

Emergency situations that are considered immediately life-threatening or threaten the destruction of major portions of UTHealth property or equipment will automatically be assigned a response Level 3 by the Executive Team or Emergency Control Team as appropriate.

Building Evacuation

Any decision to evacuate the building will be made by the Executive Team. If the emergency is immediately life-threatening or threatens to damage a significant portion of UTHealth property, a member of the Emergency Control Team may make the decision to evacuate. In certain emergency situations, evacuation may not be the best action; instead building occupants may be instructed to shelter in place.
Upon the decision to evacuate a UTHealth facility, occupants may be notified by the building fire alarm system, UTHealthALERT emergency text message or through direct communication by any of the following parties: Area Safety Liaisons, EH&S personnel, UT Police, Auxiliary Enterprises or Facilities, Planning, and Engineering personnel.

Employees should secure their work area. Laboratory personnel should turn off equipment and compressed/natural gas, if applicable. Employees should take all personal belongings with them when they evacuate the building, as reentry may not be allowed for an extended period of time.

Building occupants shall move to a safe location away from the affected building. Occupants should contact their Area Safety Liaison or consult their departmental emergency plan for designated emergency evacuation meeting locations. A listing of Area Safety Liaisons, by building, is available on Environmental Health and Safety’s website.

Status reports concerning the building will be made to the Emergency Operations Center by Facilities, Planning, and Engineering, Auxiliary Enterprises, Environmental Health and Safety, Office of Public Affairs, and/or UT Police.

**Emergencies in Adjacent Facilities**

When UTHealth is notified of an emergency in an adjacent facility or institution that may affect UTHealth personnel and/or buildings, communications will be established with the facility or the Texas Medical Center to determine the exact nature of the emergency and the control measures being taken. This will be the responsibility of the Vice President of Facilities, Planning, and Engineering, Vice President of Auxiliary Enterprises, EHS, UT Police or designee. Information regarding the emergency will be provided to the Executive Team, who will declare the appropriate emergency response level.

**Emergency Communications**

The Office of Public Affairs is responsible for managing all external and internal communications before, during, and immediately after an emergency. Public Affairs will be responsible for communicating the emergency information on the UTHealth emergency information website, the emergency information phone lines (713) 500-9996, (713) 500-7999, and (866) 237-0107, building lobby screens, and Twitter. Environmental Health and Safety, UT Police, or Facilities, Planning and Engineering will be responsible for utilizing the buildings’ fire alarm public announcement system or megaphones as necessary to communicate emergency information. UT Police, Public Affairs, or Environmental Health & Safety all have the ability to send emergency text messages via UTHealthALERT, the emergency notification system for UTHealth, for imminent threats such as tornadoes and armed intruder on campus/active shooter. In the event of an imminent threat emergency control team approval is not necessary for UTPD, EHS, or Public Affairs to send a campus wide text message.
Public Affairs in cooperation with the emergency control team will determine the appropriate schools, buildings, or areas that need to receive the emergency notification. The content of any emergency notification and initiation of notification will be approved by the executive team or an emergency control team member if executive leadership is unavailable. The institution will, without delay, and taking into account the safety of the community, determine the content of the notification and the initiate the notification system, unless issuing a notification will, in the professional judgment of responsible authorities, compromise efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency.

Some emergency situations will warrant communicating with local, state, and/or federal agencies. The decision to contact these agencies will be made by the incident commander of the emergency, and the appropriate department head will be assigned to contact the respective agency. The University of Texas System will be the primary conduit for State level communications.

UTHealth publishes its Emergency Management Plan at least annually, which includes emergency response and evacuation procedures. The Emergency Management Plan and the emergency response and evacuation procedures are communicated to students and staff through mass emails, the university website, fire drills, safety trainings and new student orientation.

**Testing the Emergency Response System**

All buildings on campus, with the exception of UT Housing, have at least annual fire drills to test emergency response and evacuation procedures. An annual drill for hurricane preparedness and procedures to close the institutional flood doors is conducted prior to the annual hurricane season. The UTHealthALERT mass notification system is tested twice per year by sending a test text message to everyone entered into the system. All new students are automatically enrolled in the system through the registration process. In addition, emergency response tabletop drills are conducted at least annually with the executive team and emergency control team.

*Note: The information regarding emergency response and evacuation procedures was extracted from the UTHealth Emergency Management Plan, which is available online at [www.uthoustonemergency.org](http://www.uthoustonemergency.org) or at [http://www.uthouston.edu/safety](http://www.uthouston.edu/safety). You may also contact Environmental Health and Safety at 713-500-8100 for additional information.*
The Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) was signed into law in 2008 and contains various vital safety components. One of the main provisions of the HEOA is the Campus Fire Safety Right-to-Know Act. This provision calls for all Title IV eligible institutions that participate in the Title IV programs and maintain on-campus student housing facilities to publish an annual fire safety report that outlines fire safety systems, policies, practices and statistics for campus housing.

The following Annual Fire Safety Report and statistical information is developed and maintained by Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) and discloses all information required by HEOA as it relates to The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth).

**Description of Facilities**

On-campus student housing facilities at UTHealth consist of The University of Texas New Student Housing also known as UT Housing phase II, 500 units; (NSH) located at 1885 El Paseo, Houston, TX 77054 and The University of Texas Student and Faculty Apartments also known as UT Housing phase I, 306 units; (SFA) at 7900 Cambridge, Houston, TX 77054. The facilities are apartment complexes operated by The UTH Auxiliary Enterprises and are the residences of students, residents, faculty, staff and their families.

**Fire Safety Systems**

The New Student Housing phase II fire safety system consists of a fire alarm detection system interconnected to manual fire alarm pull stations located in exit passageways and a fully protected building wide automatic fire sprinkler protection system. Residential smoke detectors are provided in each bedroom and living area for all units. Portable fire extinguishers are located in exit passageways. Activation of the fire alarm system will cause audio/visual devices in apartments and exit passageways to give notification to residents. The fire alarm system is monitored on-site by university personnel and is interconnected to the UT Police dispatch center, who communicates fire alarms to the Houston Fire Department (HFD).

The Student Faculty Apartments phase I fire safety system consists of a fire alarm detection system interconnected to manual fire alarm pull stations located in exit passageways. Residential smoke detectors are provided in each bedroom and living for all units. The SFA are not equipped with a fire sprinkler system. Activation of the fire
alarm system will cause audio devices in the apartments to give notification to residents. Residents are advised to call 911 to report fire incidents and to activate the fire alarm system by pulling the manual fire alarm pull stations on the ground level near the stairs to set off the fire alarm, which will notify the building occupants and alert the UT Police Department dispatch center. The UT Police dispatcher will notify the Fire Department.

In Case of a Fire, Evacuate and Report

If a fire occurs in either housing facility, residents are requested to take appropriate actions to protect themselves and to call 911 and report the situation from a safe location – provide their name, the nature of the incident and their location, and to ensure all other residents are notified of the fire incident by setting off manual fire alarm pull stations located in the exit passageways as they leave the apartment or at the nearest unaffected unit. The fire alarm is designed to alert the residents. If you hear the fire alarm, you are required to heed the warning and evacuate the building immediately and move to an area of refuge. You should be familiar with all exits available to you prior to a fire incident.

Once you have reached an area of safety, one in which you are away from the fire and protected from traffic or activities involved in fighting the fire, DO NOT re-enter the fire scene. Always follow instructions provided by police and/or fire officials.

Fire Alarm and Fire Sprinkler Testing

As required by the Texas State Fire Marshall’s Office, the fire alarm and sprinkler testing and inspection are managed in accordance with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA 25 Standard for the Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Water-Based Fire Protection Systems and NFPA 72 National Fire Alarm Code Chapter 10, Inspection, Testing and Maintenance). The UTHealth Environmental Health & Safety and Auxiliary Enterprises conduct required fire alarm and/or fire sprinkler testing by a license contractor through the State of Texas State Fire Marshall’s Office. All efforts will be made to provide advanced notice of these required events.

Fire Safety

Fire safety and emergency procedure education and policies can be found in the institution’s Emergency Management Plan, which is available online at [www.uthouston.edu/safety](http://www.uthouston.edu/safety). Exhibit A of the UT Housing lease documentation provides the policies regarding fire safety specific to UT Housing, such as barbecue grills may not be used indoors and all barbecue activities must be a minimum of ten feet from apartments and exit passageways.

Any and all fires should be immediately reported by calling 911. All fire incidents must be reported to UT Police, Environmental Health & Safety, and University Housing personnel.
Annual Fire Statistic and Daily Fire Report Log

The Annual Fire Statistics are developed from the UTHealth Fire Report Log, which is developed and maintained by the Environmental Health & Safety to provide concise and accurate information related to fire incidents which have occurred at both NSH and SFA. For the purpose of the fire report log, a fire is “any instance of open flame or other burning in a place not intended to contain the burning or in an uncontrolled manner.”

Each day, UT Police publishes a “Daily Fire Log” that is available to the public. This log identifies the nature of the fire, the general location, date and time the fire occurred and date and time the fire was reported to UT Police. You may obtain a copy of the Daily Fire Log at UT Police Office of the Chief, 7777 Knight Road Houston, TX 77054, during normal business hours (8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday through Friday) or at the Office of Environmental Health & Safety located at 1851 Crosspoint Avenue, OCB 1.330, Houston, TX 77054.

For more information on the Fire Report Log and other safety related topics or to view or download a copy of the fire report log go to the UTHealth Environmental Health & Safety website (www.uthouston.edu/safety) or contact EHS at 713-500-8100.

Plans for Future Improvements in UT Housing Fire Safety

- Continue to provide fire safety educational opportunities to UT Housing occupants to increase fire safety awareness.
- Evaluate feasibility of sprinklering Student Faculty Apartments phase I

Annual Summary: For the calendar year 2012 (January-December) there was one recordable fire incident at The University of Texas Student and Faculty Apartments (SFA) at 7900 Cambridge, Houston, TX 77054.

The fire was caused by a resident discarding a lit cigarette on their balcony leading to a small fire on the balcony that was limited to the balcony. Houston Fire Department responded to the fire and ensured the was extinguished and had not spread beyond the balcony. The fire resulted in no direct damage to the facility and no costs were incurred. No individuals were injured by the fire.
The University of Texas Student and Faculty Apartments (SFA)
7900 Cambridge
2013 Annual Fire Safety Report

2012 Fire Statistics

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Notes
Fire: Any instance of open flame or burning in a place not intended to contain the burning or in an uncontrolled manner.
Deaths: The number of deaths related to the fire.
Injuries: The number of injuries related to the fire that resulted in treatment at a medical facility.
Damage: the value of property damage related to the fire.

Annual Summary: For the calendar year 2012 (January-December) there have been no recordable fire incidents at The University of Texas New Student Housing (NSH) located at 1885 El Paseo, Houston, TX 77054.
Notes
Fire: Any instance of open flame or burning in a place not intended to contain the burning or in an uncontrolled manner.
Deaths: The number of deaths related to the fire.
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