Emergency Response and Evacuation Procedures

- Beginning in October 2010, institutions must include a statement of policy regarding the emergency response and evacuation procedures in the Annual Security Report, including:
  - The procedures the institution use to immediately notify the campus community upon confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or employees occurring on the campus;
  - A description of the process the Institution will use to –
    - Confirm that there is a significant emergency or dangerous situation as described in paragraph (g)(1);
    - Determine the appropriate segment of segments of the campus community to receive a notification;
    - Determine the content of the notification; and
    - Initiate the notification system.
- A statement that the institution will, without delay, and taking into account the safety of the community, to determine the content of the notification and 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;
- A list of the titles of the person or persons or organization responsible for carrying out the actions, described in this section;
- The institution’s procedure for disseminating emergency information to the larger community; and
- The institution’s procedures to test the emergency response and evacuation procedures on at least an annual basis including –
  - Tests that may be announced or unannounced;
  - Publicizing emergency response and evacuation procedures in conjunction with at least one test per calendar year; and
  - Documenting, for each test, a description of the exercise, the date, time, and whether it was announced or unannounced.

Please note the following information regarding emergency response and evacuation procedures was extracted from the UTHSC-H Emergency Management Plan, which is available online at www.uthoustonemergency.org or at www.uth.tmc.edu/safety. You may also contact Environmental Health & Safety at 713-500-8100 for additional information.
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHSC-H) seeks to protect its personnel, property, and the community from the effects of spontaneous and predictable emergency situations by establishing methodologies and procedures to assist employees, students, and visitors in responding to emergency situations.

The purpose of the Emergency Management Plan is to provide a protocol and corresponding support mechanism to protect UTHSC-H’s individuals and assets, to avoid injury to individuals, to limit or contain the extent of damage to facilities and property, to permit communication systems to function despite suspension of normal operating conditions, and generally, to enable the institution to respond in a safe, orderly, and efficient manner.

**Scope**
The UTHSC-H Emergency Management Plan is multihazard 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, or departmental plans.

The scope of this 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. The Harris County Psychiatric Center and the University of Texas Physicians maintain specific emergency management plans for their operations, but are included in UTHSC-H emergency communications, the emergency operations command as applicable, and in executive team decision making as applicable.

**Mitigation**
UTHSC-H is committed to programs that mitigate or prevent emergency situations. Facilities, Planning & Engineering (FPE) and Auxiliary Enterprises (AE) is 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. The University of Texas Police Department proactively patrols UTHSC-H properties and investigates suspicious and criminal behavior, while monitoring for emergency situations. Environmental Health & 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 UTHSC-H personnel through the UTHSC-H web site, 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. UTHSC-H 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 & Safety.
Response
Response actions for the highest ranking items on the UTHSC-H’s potential emergency situations risk assessment matrix are included within this plan. Information included assists employees, students, and visitors in responding to emergency situations and evacuating to a safe location when necessary.

Recovery
UTHSC-H 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. BCP’s have also been developed for each of the six schools. In addition to the BCP’s, the institution 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 institution for assistance, and insurance coverage where available and financially feasible.

Psychological Distress
Some emergency situations can induce significant short term and long term psychological distress. After any immediate emergency situation is mitigated, the UT Employee Assistance Program (UT EAP) can be engaged to provide services.

Because each emergency situation is different, the UT 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.

DEFINITIONS

Controlled Access – A suspension of normal operations due to adverse conditions caused by inclement weather or other emergency situations. During a controlled access event, affected UTHSC-H buildings will have limited admittance (essential personnel only) and will require check-in with UTPD upon entrance. Security of the UTHSC-H facilities will be under the direction of the UT Police Department. The UTHSC-H Executive Team retains the authority to suspend operations and move to a controlled access status.

Emergency – Any occurrence, or threat thereof, whether natural, technological, or manmade, which results or may result in substantial injury or harm to the population or substantial damage to or loss of property and is outside UTHSC-H normal operations capabilities.

Emergency Control Team – A group of personnel from Administration, Auxiliary Enterprises, Environmental Health & Safety, Facilities, Planning, and Engineering, Information Technology, and UTPD who assess emergency situations and coordinate the responses to those situations. Generally, management level personnel.

Emergency Level – A classification of an emergency based on degree of severity, the extent of the area involved, and the potential loss of life or property, that assists in facilitating the appropriate response.
Essential Personnel – Employees designated by their department heads as essential to the continued performance of their department or the protection of UTHSC-H assets during an emergency. Essential employees will be required to report to their designated work site even when the institution has issued a controlled access status due to adverse conditions and will be required to check in with UTPD security prior to reporting to their work locations. See Annex H, Personnel Policy Guidelines for more information.

Executive Team – A group of UTHSC-H executives that lead the decision making process during emergencies and act as the incident commander. The Executive Team of UTHSC-H consists of the following members:
1. UTHSC-H President
2. Provost and Executive Vice President for Research
3. Executive Vice President, Chief Operating and Financial Officer
4. Vice President of Facilities, Planning, and Engineering
5. Vice President of Auxiliary Enterprises for AE managed facilities
6. UTPD Chief of Police

National Incident Management System (NIMS) – NIMS is a standardized approach to incident management and response that was developed by the Department of Homeland Security and released in March 2004. It establishes a uniform set of processes and procedures that emergency responders at all levels of government will use to conduct response operations. It includes the use of the Incident Command System (ICS).

Non-essential Personnel – Employees that are not classified as “essential personnel” are not initially required during an emergency. However, they cannot leave their work site until released by their supervisors, and they must return to work as usual, after the emergency condition has ended or as requested by their supervisor. It is the responsibility of all employees to monitor radio, television, telephone hot lines, or the UTHSC-H website to receive instructions regarding the state of the emergency and return to work notification.

REPORTING AN EMERGENCY

For identified security, fire, and medical emergencies call 911 and provide the requested information. For all other emergencies contact UTPD at 713-500-HELP (4357) and provide the following information:
1. Your name
2. Your location and telephone extension
3. Type of emergency
4. Special directions (if any)
RESPONSE TO AN EMERGENCY

There are several groups at the university that play a key role in emergency response and are part of the emergency control team.

1. UTPD
2. Facilities, Planning, and Engineering
3. Environmental Health and Safety
4. Center for Laboratory Animal Medicine and Care
5. Information Technology
6. Office of Institutional Advancement/Media Relations
7. Auxiliary Enterprises

Each group has specific responsibilities under the plan which can be found throughout the emergency management plan. A general description of these responsibilities is listed below.

1. UTPD – Maintains the police department dispatch center. Monitors for emergency situations and receives notification of emergencies through the dispatch center and will contact the appropriate response personnel. UTPD will secure the area, control the scene, confirm emergency situations, and provide communication, as needed.

2. Facilities, Planning, and Engineering – Assists in monitoring for emergency situations and confirming emergency situations. Once notified of an emergency, will report to the scene of the emergency 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.

3. Environmental Health & Safety – Once notified, will report to the scene of an emergency 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.

4. Center for Laboratory Animal Medicine and Care – CLAMC is responsible for the health and well being 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.

5. Office of Institutional Advancement/Media Relations – Once notified, OIA will update information sources and initiate emergency communications as necessary. Will update and inform the Executive Team as necessary.

6. Information Technology – Once notified, will protect and backup information resources as necessary as prescribed in the IT disaster plan.
7. **Auxiliary Enterprises** – Once notified 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**

*Level 1* – A portion of one floor or laboratory, office area or mechanical area. The assignment of response Level 1 emergencies will be made on the authority of any of the following parties: the Executive Team; Facilities, Planning, and Engineering (FP&E); Auxiliary Enterprises (AE), UTPD, or Environmental Health and Safety.

*Level 2* – One or more floor(s) of a facility.

*Level 3* – An entire complex, or two or more entire structures.

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 UTHSC-H 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 UTHSC-H 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 UTHSC-H facility, occupants may be notified by the building fire alarm system or through direct communication by any of the following parties: Area Safety Liaisons, EH&S personnel, UTPD, 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 Institutional Advancement, and/or UTPD.

**Emergencies in Adjacent Facilities**

When UTHSC-H is notified of an emergency in an adjacent facility or institution that may affect UTHSC-H 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, UTPD or designee. Information regarding the emergency will be provided to the Executive Team, who will declare the appropriate emergency response level.

**Communications**

**Emergency Communications**

The Vice President for the Office of Institutional Advancement (OIA) or his/her designee is responsible for managing all external and internal communications before, during, and immediately after an emergency. OIA / Public Affairs will be responsible for communicating the emergency information on the UTHSC-H 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 & Safety, UTPD, 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.

OIA 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.

OIA will also contact the local media to provide updates on the status of UTHSC-H. NOTE: Local television and radio stations are not obligated to provide the information to their viewers or listeners.

**Departmental Communications**

All UTHSC-H supervisors should ensure that the contact information (home and cell numbers) for the employees in their department is up to date, especially during hurricane season. Employees should have the home and cell numbers of their supervisors, so that two-way communication is possible. During weather emergencies, these phone numbers are crucial to ensure that all UTHSC-H employees are aware of the personnel needs for the institution and for employees to communicate barriers to their availability (i.e.: mandatory evacuation, flooding blocking access).
Local, State, and Federal Agencies
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.

Statement of current policies re: campus law enforcement including:

- A statement of current campus policies regarding immediate emergency response and evacuation procedures, including the use of electronic and cellular communication (if appropriate), which policies shall include procedures to –
  
  (i) Immediately notify the campus community upon the confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or staff occurring on the campus, as defined in paragraph (6), unless issuing a notification will compromise efforts to contain the emergency;

The University of Texas Health Science Center maintains a variety of means for emergency notifications including: mass emails, building lobby television screens, building fire alarm public announcement systems, recorded telephone lines that may be called for information, megaphones, the University website, Twitter, and Facebook.

  (ii) Publicize emergency response and evacuation procedures on an annual basis in a manner designed to reach students and staff; and

UTHSC-H 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.

  (iii) Test emergency response and evacuation procedures on an annual basis.

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. In addition, emergency response tabletop drills are conducted at least annually with the executive team and emergency control team.