FIRE MANUAL



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

Department of Safety &
Environmental Compliance

Revised 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
Introduction	2
Fire Prevention Measures	4-5
• Prevention, Housekeeping, and Electrical Safety	
Fire Safety Education and Training	6-7
• Training, Safety Equipment, Alarm Activation Procedure, • Evacuation and Fire Drills	
Fire Safety Inspections and Corrective Actions	8
Emergency Evacuation Procedures	9-10
Fire Drills	11
• Purpose and Procedures	
Means of Egress	12-13
• Doors, Corridors, Routes, Fire Lanes, and Emergency Access	
Public Assembly Events	14-17
• Definition, Fire & Life Safety, Indoor, Outdoor, Tent, • Decorations, Open Burning, Fireworks, and Bonfires	
Storage	18
Fire Extinguishers	19-22
Contact Information	23

INTRODUCTION

Fire causes many deaths each year and untold millions of dollars in damages. Many of these fires occur in University settings. YOU are the key factor in making the fire safety programs work. The lives of our students, visitors and co-workers may depend upon your actions. It is essential that you study the fire plan for your particular department, dorm and area so that you can take immediate action when the alarm is sounded. The families of our students, staff, and visitors are depending on you to **KNOW** the contents of this fire manual. You may be the first person to detect a fire in your area and there should be no doubt in your mind as to the action you should take. It is imperative that every employee becomes familiar with:

- Locations of fire alarm pull stations (generally near stairwells)
- Locations of fire extinguishers and how to use them
- At least two evacuation routes from your work area and the location of the nearest exit
- Emergency numbers for reporting fire
- Designated meeting area in the event of a building evacuation
- Fire procedures explained on the following pages

The Fire Safety Program was implemented to protect the students, faculty, staff, visitors, property and assets of the University of South Alabama (USA). This Fire Safety Manual serves as a guide for establishing fire safety procedures at the University. USA is served by the City of Mobile Fire-Rescue Department (MFD). However, the Fire Safety inspections are primarily conducted by USA's Office of Safety and Environmental Compliance. The University Fire Marshal makes regular inspections at all USA facilities. The Fire Marshal works, interacts and assists the entire University community with fire safety needs. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the International Fire Code (IFC) are the primary standards utilized in the development of this Manual. Any areas not specifically covered may be referenced in one of the above standards and will apply as necessary.

FIRE PREVENTION MEASURES

It is of the utmost importance to be aware of conditions that may cause a fire emergency and thereby endanger the safety of occupants in the workplace, classroom, assembly areas and the residence halls. Some major causes of fire in these areas include overloaded electrical outlets, extension cords, misuse of space heaters, mishandling of flammable materials and improper storage of combustibles, unsupervised cooking, and improper disposal of smoking materials on campus grounds. Implementing fire prevention measures is the key in an attempt to ensure one's personal safety and the safety of roommates, co-workers and friends.

In cooperation with Safety and Environmental Compliance, you should do the following:

Prevention Measures

- Have an understanding and knowledge of the contents of the "Fire and Emergency Procedures."
- Regularly observe emergency evacuation routes, fire extinguishers, emergency and exit lights.
- Encourage occupants to actively participate in fire drills that are conducted regularly.
- Regularly observe the lobby, corridors, stairwells and keep them clear of obstructions.
- Regularly observe all exits to keep them clear of obstructions **AT ALL TIMES**.
- Report any tampering with the fire alarm, smoke detection and suppression systems to Safety and Environmental Compliance and/or University Police.
- Regularly observe fire doors to make certain they are closed at all times. Report inoperable doors to the respective maintenance offices.
- Do not use candles or any other open-flame devices for any purpose in the University buildings.
- Respect the "No Smoking Policy" in all USA facilities.
- Obey all USA safety regulations. If there are questions, contact Safety and Environmental Compliance
- The use of halogen lights is not permitted on campus.
- Use of "plug-ins" and diffusers is prohibited
- Chargers for electronics shall be removed from receptacle when not in use.

Housekeeping

- Fire doors must be kept closed at all times unless they are held open by an approved device connected to the fire alarm system.
- Flammable and combustible materials should be present in the work area only in the quantities required for the day's job. These materials must be placed in an approved storage area at the end of each day.
- A minimum of 18 inches of clear space is required below ceiling levels and/or sprinkler heads.
- Flammable and combustible materials should be in approved containers and prohibited indoors. This includes use of lighter fluid and charcoal lighter.
- All temporary structures on any University campuses must be reviewed and approved by the Safety & Environmental Compliance Department and/or USA's Fire Marshal prior to construction.

Electrical Wiring and Appliances

- Supervisors should periodically inspect all electrical equipment and cords to ensure proper use and safe conditions. Improper use of electrical devices to obtain more outlet capacity can result in overloaded circuits and fire.
- Extension cords should only be used when a flexible, **temporary** (less than 24 hours) connection is necessary. The cord and the outlet should be checked periodically to ensure overheating is not occurring.
- Extension cords cannot be used as fixed wiring, and should never be tacked, stapled, tied, hidden under rugs, draped over pipes or other supports, fastened to or through woodwork, ceilings or walls. Extension cords should not be in use when the work station is unoccupied. When there is a permanent need of an electrical outlet, one should be installed.
- Cords with integrated surge protection may be used.
- Surge protection (strips) with circuit breakers can be used but shall not be used in tandem or used for motorized equipment. (Examples are: microwaves, small refrigerators, space heaters, etc.)
- Be sure all electrical equipment is properly grounded. If any evidence is found of frayed, cracked or damaged wiring or electrical outlets, the equipment affected should be taken out of service until repairs are made.
- Space heaters, coffee makers and all other appliances with exposed heating elements should never be left unattended while in operation.

GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF SPACE HEATERS

The University of South Alabama recognizes that individuals have different levels of comfort associated with temperatures and heat. We understand that some areas are more difficult to heat than others. In areas where this problem exists, the temporary use of electric space heaters may be permitted if the following guidelines are followed:

- Fuel powered (propane, kerosene) space heaters are not permitted in offices or classrooms. Space heaters must not take more than 110 volts.
- Any space heaters used must be UL (Underwriters Laboratory) approved.
- Approved space heaters must be fan driven. Space heaters with heated coils are not permitted.
- Space heaters will have a thermostat that shuts off when a certain temperature is reached.
- Space heaters will have a tip-over shutdown feature.
- Space heaters with wattage controls will not be set above 1500 watts.
- Space heaters without manual controls will not be more than 1500 watts.
- Space heaters must always be turned off and unplugged when the area being heated is not occupied.
- Space heaters are not permitted under desk or in other enclosed areas.
- Space heaters must be kept at least 3 feet away from combustible materials. Not permitted under desk.
- Nothing will be placed on top of space heaters.
- Hot plates and toaster ovens should never be used for space heating.
- Space heaters are **not** permitted in labs or patient care areas.

The University of South Alabama Safety and Environmental Compliance Department reserves the right to inspect and declare as “unapproved” any space heaters that create a hazard or are inappropriate to a particular location based on specific circumstances, or code and/or legal requirements.

FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Educating and training the University community is a vital component of the fire safety program. This section has been designed to address these issues and should be used as a resource for all employees and students. Specific training requirements can be provided by Safety and Environmental Compliance upon request. The goal of Safety and Environmental Compliance is to educate and train staff, faculty, residence hall assistants, student clubs and organizations in the following areas:

- Fire prevention and safety measures.
- Proper use of fire equipment.
- Fire drill and emergency evacuation procedures.
- Dangers of tampering with safety equipment and failing to respond to safety procedures.
- Detection and reporting of fire and safety hazards.

Fire Safety Training

- Fire reporting and fire drill evacuation procedures - this type of training is site specific since various buildings have different reporting and evacuation procedures.
- Proper use of fire extinguishers.
- Fire prevention and safety measures.
- Emergency response - this training is specific to those individuals designated to respond to certain types of emergencies in order to perform specialized functions.

Fire Safety Equipment

New office buildings are designed with fire detection and suppression systems to protect life and property from fire. These fire safety systems will include sprinkler systems, smoke alarms and heat detectors. A major step has been made in the installation of addressable fire safety systems in USA buildings. Today, many of USA's buildings are sprinkled and equipped with updated fire alarm systems.

Fire Alarm Activation Procedure

All employees should be familiar with fire alarm pull station locations in their building. The building's alarm should be immediately activated in the event of a fire, or if a person smells or sees smoke. Even if the fire is small, the alarm should be activated, because a fire can grow quickly and endanger building occupants. After activating the alarm, get out of the building and call 911 from a safe location.
Provide the emergency dispatcher with the name and location of the building, number of occupants (if known) and any information you have about the fire. Any attempts to extinguish the fire can be made only after the alarm has been activated, if the fire is small and if you have been trained. For an unknown fire alarm (alarm is ringing but no visible flame or smoke is detected) dial 9-251-460-6312 or 6-6312 (University Police).

Evacuation

The primary concern in the event of a fire is to evacuate everyone from the building as quickly and safely as possible. In order to accomplish this, occupants must be prepared in advance for a quick and orderly evacuation. Evacuations must be practiced periodically in order to get familiar to the procedures. It is suggested that people with disabilities prepare for emergencies in advance by learning the locations of exit corridors, areas of refuge, exit stairways, by planning an escape route and by showing a classmate, co-worker, or instructor how to assist him/her in case of an emergency. (Evacuation procedures are discussed further on pages 10-11).

Fire Drills

Safety and Environmental Compliance conducts fire drills as required by State law. Before the drill is held, USA's Police Department and other monitoring systems will be notified in advance of the time and location of the drill. Following each drill, the person in charge of administering the drill must complete a Drill Report. USA Hospitals conduct and maintain all documentation for their facility's drills. (Fire drill procedures are discussed further on pages 10-11).



FIRE SAFETY INSPECTIONS AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

Fire Marshal

University buildings are inspected periodically by USA's Fire Marshal to ensure they comply with all applicable State and Local Fire Codes. All fire code deficiencies identified are subsequently noted in a detailed report and forwarded to facility manager, Deans/Chairs and Maintenance Department to coordinate corrective actions.

Facility Managers, Department Chairs and/or Deans are responsible for correcting deficiencies that are reported by the USA Fire Marshal. Each of the above must forward a corrective actions report to the USA Fire Marshal within the time frame as specified in the inspection report.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

The purpose of the Emergency Evacuation Procedures is to establish minimum requirements that will provide a reasonable degree of life safety from fire and similar emergencies in University of South Alabama (USA) buildings and structures. The Emergency Evacuation Procedures will be utilized to evacuate all occupants regardless of the type of emergency.

GENERAL

A fire emergency exists whenever:

- A building fire evacuation alarm is sounding. (**Buildings must be immediately and totally evacuated whenever the building fire alarm is sounding.) Healthcare facilities may relocate patients to safe zones if designed for refuge.**
- There is presence of smoke or the odor of burning.
- An uncontrolled fire or imminent fire hazard occurs in any building or area of the campus.
- There is a spontaneous or abnormal heating of any material, an uncontrolled release of combustible or toxic gas or other material, or a flammable liquid spill.

When a fire emergency exists, an individual will accomplish, or attempt to accomplish, the following actions:

- Activate fire alarm system located along exit routes.
- Evacuate the building. **Do not use elevators**.
- Call 911 then USAPD at 251-460-6312 from a safe area
- Remain at the assigned designated meeting area or at least 500 feet away from the building until you are told to re-enter by the City of Mobile Fire-Rescue Department, University Fire Marshal or other University Officials.

NOTE: This information does not apply to USA Hospitals.

EVACUATIONPROCEDURES

When a fire evacuation alarm is sounding, all occupants should:

- Shut down any experiments or procedures that should not be left unattended.
- Take or secure all valuables, wallets, purses, keys, etc.
- Evacuate the building immediately and in an orderly manner. The last occupant to leave a room should close the door leading to the corridor.
- Never use the elevators. In most university buildings, elevators are automatically recalled to the street floor or transfer level upon the activation of the buildings' fire alarm system.
- Proceed to the nearest and safest exit.
- If possible, assist non-ambulatory occupants to areas of refuge, or to ground level exits. (All members of the University Community are responsible, within the limits of their abilities, to assist those individuals requiring assistance prior to, during or after an emergency. Normally, assistance is in the form of notifying emergency workers of the location of these individuals or by actually providing guidance to safe areas.

- Remain at a safe location or at least 500 feet away from the building until instructed to re-enter by the City of Mobile Fire Department, University Fire Marshal or other University Officials.

INDIVIDUALS REQUIRING ASSISTANCE

Individuals requiring assistance should proceed to the nearest stairway and request assistance from other evacuees. **Do not obstruct the stairway or door leading to the stairway**. If the location becomes unsafe, move to a different exit stairway and call for help until rescued. It is suggested that people with disabilities prepare for emergencies in advance by learning the locations of areas of refuge, exit corridors and exit stairways, by planning an escape route and by showing a classmate, co-worker or instructor how to assist him/her in case of an emergency. Individuals with speech impairment should carry a whistle or have other means of attracting attention. All exit corridors and stairways are marked with exit signs and are protected with self-closing fire rated doors. These and other areas of refuge are the safest areas during an emergency. It is sometimes safer to move these individuals to an area of refuge till emergency responders arrive to assist in removal. Rescue personnel will check all exit stairways first for trapped persons.

Ways to help individuals who require assistance

- Become familiar with the individuals who require assistance in your area.
- Inform hearing impaired/deaf persons when a fire evacuation alarm is sounding.
- Assist visually impaired/blind persons to an exit stairway.
- Inform University Police, Command Post outside the building or 911 of disabled persons located inside the building that you are unable to evacuate safely.

Area of Refuge

An area of refuge is either:

1 A story in a building where the building is protected throughout by an approved, supervised automatic sprinkler system and has not less than two accessible rooms or spaces separated from each other by smoke-resisting partitions; or
2 A space located in a path of travel leading to a public way that is protected from the effects of fire, either by means of separation from other spaces in the same building or by virtue of location, thereby permitting a delay in egress travel from any level. (NFPA 101 Chap. 3)

NOTE: Designated Areas of Refuge may include stairwell landings in multi-story buildings. Utilize rescue assistance call buttons if available.

FIRE DRILLS

Safety and Environmental Compliance conducts fire drills in University buildings, with the exception of USA hospitals, as required by State law. The primary concern in the event of a fire is to get everyone out of the building as quickly as possible. To do this, occupants must be prepared in advance for a quick and orderly evacuation. A trained group will act more calmly under emergency situations, thereby dispelling panic, which has caused more casualties than fire itself. Slow evacuation and panic account for the large majority of all fatalities in fires.

Purpose of Fire Drills:

- To allow occupants to familiarize themselves with drill procedures, location of fire exits and the sound of the fire alarm.
- To allow Safety and Environmental Compliance to monitor the timeliness and effectiveness of evacuations.
- To detect technical problems with the fire alarm equipment.
- To gauge whether or not persons evacuate the building as legally required.
- To check if fire protection equipment, such as fire doors, are being used properly.
- To gauge how long it takes to evacuate each building and which exits are generally used.
- Residential Occupancies will have a Fire Drill once per semester.

General Fire Drill Procedures

- Fire drills are arranged and supervised by the University's Fire Marshal with the cooperation of Central Utilities representative, USA Fire Alarm Specialist, Building Supervisors, RAs, USA's Police Department, and/or Facility Security Department.
- The date and time will be scheduled when most occupants are in the building.
- The University Fire Marshal will inform Campus Police and/or Facility Security of the exact times the alarm will be pulled for the drill.
- The University Fire Marshal or designee will activate the fire alarm.

WHEN THE EVACUATION ALARM SOUNDS, "EVERYONE MUST LEAVE THE BUILDING"

- After evacuation, occupants shall proceed to a pre-determined location and wait for the instruction of emergency personnel to re-enter.
- University Officials have the system silenced and reset when everyone has evacuated the building.
- Fire drills will be monitored for effectiveness and documented annually.
- At the instruction of the Building Representative or the discretion of the USA Fire Marshal.
- At the conclusion of the Fire Drill, a copy of the Fire Drill Report will be kept, and a copy made available at the request of the Building Representative, at the Safety and Environmental Compliance Office.

MEANS OF EGRESSES

As a member of the USA community you have a very definite responsibility to provide a safe environment to anyone working, learning or attending events within a building. It is therefore essential that there is access for quick evacuation during an emergency.

The following fire safety requirements must be strictly observed with regard to means of egresses.

Fire/Smoke Doors

Two of the most important functions of doors in terms of life safety are to act as a barrier to fire and smoke and to serve as components in a means of egress.

- Fire and smoke rated doors shall not be blocked open.
- The self-closing devices shall not be disconnected or rendered inoperable.
- For special situations that the door must be held open such as movement of furniture, equipment or other large size items, the person responsible for the move will provide an individual at the door to ensure the door is not left open, if the building is evacuated.
- Door chocks or foot stops may not be installed on any fire rated door. Also, furniture, appliances, etc., may not be used to hold the door open.
- Doors that need to be left open for high traffic areas or for visual security may be authorized by USA's Fire Marshal. If authorized, the door will require an automatic magnetic release device installed which will release the door when any emergency alarm device is activated.
- Obstructions that will prohibit fire and smoke rated doors from closing and latching without human intervention are not permitted.

Corridors, Egress Routes and Exit Doors

In an emergency, one of the most important requirements is to ensure that all occupants can leave the building safely. To accommodate this, corridors, hallways and exits are designed and constructed to allow people to leave the building by the safest and quickest method possible.

- No corridor, aisle way or component of a means of egress may be obstructed.
- Non-combustible furniture in lobbies must not obstruct the minimum width of egress and must be arranged so there is a direct path through the lobby to the EXIT.
- Wires, cables or extension cords may not be laid across corridors, aisles or pathways.
- EXIT doors must remain unlocked during hours in which the building is occupied. Special locking devices must be approved by the USA Fire Marshal.
- Furniture, artwork, wall hangings, statues, etc. which protrude from the walls must not obstruct the minimum width, nor present a tripping, injury or other safety hazard.
- Exits and exit pathways shall be free from furnishings, storage, decorations, and trash at all times.
- Minimum aisle widths must be maintained at all times. (See NFPA 101 for details)
- Minimum ceiling height in exit passageways and doorways must be maintained at 7 ft. 6 inches or higher as per NFPA 101 and IFC 1003.2.

Items Not Permitted in Corridors

- Flammable storage cabinets of any size.
- Compressed gas bottles of any size.
- Carts, cabinets, shelves or other items on which combustibles or flammables are likely to be stored.
- Chemicals, munitions, pyrotechnics or any other hazardous material.
- Any item that will impede the normal or emergency flow of traffic, or will obstruct any emergency device.
- Other devices that may present a hazard.
- Unprotected high voltage, electrical or gas powered equipment of any sort.
- Any overstuffed furniture, boxes, etc.

Atriums and Large corridors

The open spaces at the base of atriums and large corridors must be left clear at all times. If there is a need to use these open spaces temporarily for any kind of function, it must be done in a way that does not obstruct exit passage. Safety and Environmental Compliance must be consulted in advance for proper safety precautions.

Fire Lanes and Emergency Access

In the event a fire should occur, it is critical that emergency responders be able to access the building, or location of the emergency. Fire lanes and emergency access routes have been provided for this purpose.

- Fire Lanes (normally marked in red on the curb) may not be blocked at any time. This includes temporary parking for the purpose of "just dropping something off."

- Fire hydrants, fire department connections or other emergency equipment may not be obstructed at any time. Parking is prohibited within marked areas around fire hydrant or fire department connections.

All drivers will, when an emergency vehicle approaches from any direction, immediately pull over to the right side of the road to allow the vehicle to pass.

PUBLIC ASSEMBLY EVENTS

Persons planning events should contact Safety and Environmental Compliance for safety requirements at public assembly events and events that attract large crowds.

Definition of Public Assembly

The Fire Prevention Code defines a "Public Assembly Occupancy "as follows:

> Assembly occupancies include, but are not limited to, all buildings or portions of buildings used for gathering together 50 or more persons for such purposes as deliberation, worship, entertainment, eating, drinking, amusement, or awaiting transportation (NFPA Life Safety Code).

Fire and Life Safety

Public assembly events involve various risk factors associated with having large numbers of people in one location. The primary risk factors are the high occupant density and occupants not being familiar with the area. This risk can be reduced through proper event planning and management. Examples of assemblage occupancies found on USA campuses include large meeting rooms and classrooms, auditoriums with fixed or loose chair seating, multi-purpose rooms, concert halls, theaters, sport arenas, field houses, libraries and outside areas etc. In order to comply with the requirements of the Fire Prevention Code, it is necessary for the USA Fire Marshal to make certain approvals for events as noted in these guidelines. Required approvals and inspections should be requested as far in advance as possible.

Indoor Events

The events coordinator must:

- Become familiar with the location of fire alarms, fire extinguishers, and emergency exits. In the event of an emergency, the coordinator will pull the fire alarm, supervise evacuation of the building, and call 911, then USAPD at 251-460-6312 from a safe location.
- Ensure the maximum allowable occupant load numbers posted inside the assembly area are not exceeded.
- Ensure exits are unobstructed at all times during the event.
- Ensure decorations are in accordance with event decorations guidelines.

Outdoor Events

The events coordinator must:

- Provide a site plan to Safety and Environmental Compliance indicating locations of activities, fire extinguishers, equipment, tents and canopies, electrical outlets and cords, propane heaters, booths, etc. to verify that proper clearances and access are maintained.
- In the event of an emergency, supervise evacuation of the area and call 911, then USAPD at 251-460-6312 from a safe location.
- Provide fire extinguishers throughout the event site. Contact USA Fire Marshal for the type, quantity, and placement of the fire extinguishers.

Tents

Tents are considered buildings and must meet many of the same requirements, depending on size. All tents four hundred (400) square feet and larger must be permitted and include a “Dig Permit" when using stakes (or similar devices) to stabilize. Tents, sides, and canopies must have must have a Certificate of Flame Resistance (found sewn onto the fabric) as per NFPA 701 and the International Fire Code Chapter 24. When labels are not attached, sponsors, promoters, rental companies, or other production personnel must have documentation that certifies the tent material is flame retardant. Flooring for tents must be non-combustible; straw, hay, wood chips, mulch, or other similar materials are prohibited. Cooking or the use of equipment with open flame is not permitted under tents. If used for evening events, emergency lighting may be required. Tents used for events off, Non USA properties must be permitted through the City of Mobile, Permitting Department and approved by Mobile Fire-Rescue Department.

Event / Holiday Decorations

Decorations are common factors in the spread of fire. It is necessary to ensure that all decorations used meet the requirements of safety and fire resistance.

- Decorations cannot block, cover, or in any way obstruct any part of the fire alarm or sprinkler system. Extinguishers, emergency lights, exit lights, shall not be covered or obstructed.
- All decorations used in corridors, lobbies, assembly rooms; dining rooms, classrooms and offices must be non-combustible or flame retardant. Exit pathway and exit doors must be maintained at 7’6” height.
- Use of live trees is discouraged. A flame retardant spray (certificate must be attached to the tree) or flocking are acceptable. Lighting must be UL listed, in good condition and disconnected when the area is not occupied. Keep them out of corridors and away from doorways.
- No candles or open flame devices are permitted
- Paper, streamers, and plastic decorations must be labeled "Fire Proof" and test flame resistant. Plastic bags and/or sheeting is prohibited due to their highly combustible properties.
- Remove all decorations, wrappings and trees immediately after the event.
- Decorations for holidays, special events, and public assembly events presents unique challenges. Materials used shall be certified as flame retardant and meet the wall coverage percentage of 10-15%.
- Decorative material shall not be hung from ceilings in any building. Use of any portion of the sprinkler system (pipes or heads) is strictly prohibited.
- All temporary structures on any University campuses must be reviewed and approved by the Safety & Environmental Compliance Department and/or USA's Fire Marshal prior to construction.
- Due to their combustible nature, the following materials are not to be used for decorations: Corn Stalks, leaves, Branches, Raffia, Hay and Bamboo. Other natural materials such as pumpkins, squash or gourds are permitted.

Decorative Lights/ Holiday Decorations

- Use only electric decorative lights and associated wiring for decorative lights that are UL or FM listed. **EXTENSION CORDS ARE NOT PERMITTED FOR THIS USE.**

- Mixing and matching lights can create a fire hazard. Keep outside lights outside and inside lights inside.
- Check the light bulbs, sockets, wires and plugs to make sure nothing is cracked, broken or exposed. Discard any defective light strands.
- Keep lights away from flammable and/or combustible materials.
- Do not connect more than three sets of lights to each other.
- Keep all cords out of high-traffic areas where they could create a tripping hazard.
- Do not run cords through, under or behind a door, furniture or carpet. Such practices could lead to a fire.
- Electrical outlets should not be overloaded.
- All lights should be turned off before leaving the building.
- Halogen lights are prohibited.

Open Burning

Open burning is not allowed within the city limits of Mobile. Consult the office of Safety and Environmental Compliance and submit a request in writing to prior to scheduling a bonfire, campfire, leaf burning, artwork projects, pyrotechnics, or any event involving open flames. Open burning is defined as any open/exposed flame, whether indoors or outdoors, which could cause a potential fire hazard. Examples are bonfires, campfires, leaf burning, artwork involving flames, pyrotechnics of any kind, etc. Open burning on any USA property must be approved in writing by Safety and Environmental Compliance. (Also see bonfire section on page 18).

Open burning will be authorized only under the following conditions:

- A written request is sent to USA's Fire Marshal at least ten (ten) business days prior to the event.
- The proposed burning will not endanger any adjacent buildings, vehicles or vegetation.
- The burn location will not block access for emergency vehicles to any building, street or emergency device.
- Open flame fires will not be within fifty feet from any building, vehicle or vegetation or twenty-five feet from any flammable storage. The distance may vary according to the size of the event.
- The event coordinator will be responsible for providing Fire Guards in the burn area.
- The event coordinator will contact USA Fire Marshal, Campus Police and occupants of adjacent buildings 24 hours in advance prior to the event or operation for final coordination.
- A fire hydrant must be within 250 feet of a burn site.
- The location for open burning shall not be less than 50 feet from any structure and provisions shall be made to prevent fire spread.
- The Event host will be responsible for complete extinguishing and removal of all materials.
- A five to thirty minute watch will be made of the area to ensure there is no residual heat left in the material.

Fireworks

Fireworks displays will be coordinated through Safety and Environmental Compliance, and will be authorized under the following conditions:

Written notification from the host/sponsor must be forwarded to the USA Fire Marshal's Office / Safety and Environmental Compliance Office a minimum of ten (10) business days prior to the event.

It is the responsibility of the pyrotechnic provider to make application to the State Fire marshal's Office and the University's Fire Marshal and pay any associated fees that apply.

The Lead Pyro Technician shall be licensed, certified, and approved by the State of Alabama and is responsible to oversee the handling, transporting, discharge, clean-up and disposal of all products. In addition, it is the responsibility of the Lead Technician to ensure adequate assistants to assist with on-site set up, safety, and clean-up activities. All assistants will meet the guidelines as stated by the State of Alabama and NFPA Standards, specifically, pyrotechnic assistants must be a minimum of 18 years old, preferable with prior experience, and will be under the control of the Lead Technician at all times (Picture ID Provided on request).

A site inspection will be conducted prior to the firing of pyrotechnics by USA's Fire Marshal and/or representative and the Mobile Fire-Rescue Inspection Bureau. All discharge distance will be approved as per the NFPA criteria and as allowable within the preferred site.

Any changes in the Pyrotechnic Application must be made and approved 24 hours prior to the event.

The Safety and Environmental Compliance Director and/or Fire Marshal have the final authority to suspend a fireworks show if weather conditions warrant.

Hand firing of pyrotechnics is not allowed.

Bonfires / Ceremonial Fire

Bonfires have a greater number of requirements placed upon them from fire safety and environmental aspects. A permit from the City of Mobile Fire-Rescue Department is required for bonfires. The following requirements must be met in order to ensure everyone's safety:

- Bonfires and/or ceremonial fires may be allowed if weather conditions permit and with approval from the Safety and Environmental Compliance Office. Wind speeds exceeding 10 miles per hour will automatically cancel any previous permissions.
- Accelerants are not permitted to ignite the fire.
- Only natural wood product is allowed. No plastics, rubber, treated wood or other potentially toxic materials allowed.
- If possible, a water hose should be available; otherwise a 4A or larger chemical extinguisher or two-2A rated water extinguishers must be provided.
- The site must be restricted to unauthorized persons once prepared.
- A barrier should be constructed around the bonfire to keep spectators back.
- The sponsoring organization is responsible for lighting the fire, monitoring the extinguishing and cleaning up the site.
- The fire cannot maintain burn more than 3 hours
- The host of the event will assign a Fire Watch for the length of the bonfire. A 30 minute post watch must be made to ensure there is no residual fire left in the burned material.
- The host/sponsor must meet any other requirements as instructed by the Safety and Environmental Compliance Office and/or the USA Fire Marshal

STORAGE-FIRE SAFETY

Storage in itself does not constitute a fire hazard. A fire hazard is created when items are stored improperly or in a hazardous location or block egress and exits.

General Storage

This section pertains to any room or building used for temporary or long-term storage of combustibles:

- Combustible materials must be separated from other hazardous materials such as flammables, corrosives, explosives, oxidizers etc. Contact Safety and Environmental Compliance for approval of separations.
- Stored materials must be kept at least eighteen inches away from ceiling.
- Aisles in storage rooms must have a minimum width of twenty-eight inches to allow for evacuation, and permit firefighters to gain access to the most remote area of the room.
- Storage cannot block fire extinguishers, fire alarm pull stations, emergency or exit lighting, access to evacuation routes or the exit door, emergency equipment or prevent entry of emergency personnel.
- Storage under stairs is not permitted unless the area is enclosed and protected with a one-hour fire-rated enclosure and a detection and/or suppression system (except by approval of Fire Marshal).
- Doors to storage rooms may not be "propped" open at any time. (Except when approved safety measures are in place.)
- Stored materials must be kept at least thirty-six inches from any heat source.
- Smoking is not permitted in any storage area under any conditions.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

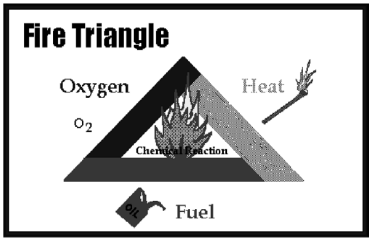
Fighting Fires and Rescue

Search and rescue is the responsibility of emergency personnel. If the emergency is fire and it is small or in its earliest stages and can be fought effectively with the available extinguishers, then trained persons may attempt to extinguish such fires providing there is no life safety hazard to the user, and such action will not endanger others. The proper selection of a fire extinguisher and knowledge of its operation are critical to containing and extinguishing the fire and preventing injury to the user. Fire fighting procedures for University buildings have been pre-planned by the City of Mobile Fire-Rescue Department and the University Fire Marshal.

Fire extinguishers are special pressurized devices that release chemicals or water to aid in putting out a fire. They keep small fires from spreading, assist in fighting fires until the Fire Department arrives and may help provide an escape route for you. ***REMEMBER****: a fire extinguisher is no substitute for the Fire Department.* ***Always call the Fire Department first*** *no matter how small you think the fire is. In order to understand how a fire extinguisher works, you need to know about fire.*

The Fire Triangle

Four things must be present at the same time in order to produce fire



1. Enough oxygen to sustain combustion
2. Enough heat to raise the material to its ignition temperature
3. Some sort of fuel or combustible material and
4. The chemical, exothermic reaction that is fire

Oxygen, heat and fuel are frequently referred to as the "fire triangle." Add the fourth element, the chemical reaction, and you actually have the "fire tetrahedron." The important thing to remember is when you take any of these four things away, you will not have a fire or the fire will be extinguished. Essentially, fire extinguishers put out fires by taking away one or more elements of the fire triangle/tetrahedron. Fire safety, at its most basic, is based upon the principle of keeping fuel and ignition sources separate.

Rules for Fighting Fires

Fires can be very dangerous and you should always make certain to not endanger yourself or others when attempting to put out a fire. For this reason, when a fire is discovered:

- Assist any person, who is in any immediate danger to safety, if it can be accomplished without risk to you.
- Activate the building fire alarm system or notify the fire department by dialing 911. When you activate the building fire alarm system, it will automatically notify the fire department and get help on the way. It will also sound the building fire alarm system to notify other occupants.
- Only after completing the above two, you may use an extinguisher if you are trained and the fire is small.

NEVER FIGHT A FIRE IF:

- **You do not know what is burning and you do not know what type of fire extinguisher to use.** Even if you have an ABC extinguisher, there may be something in the fire, which could explode or produce toxic smoke. Chances are you know what is burning, or at least have a pretty good idea, but if you do not know, let the fire department handle it.

- **The fire is spreading rapidly beyond the spot where it is started.** The time to use the fire extinguisher is in the recipient or beginning stages of the fire. If the fire is spreading quickly it is best to simply evacuate the building, closing windows and doors as you leave.

Classes of fires

There are five classes of fires. All fire extinguishers are labeled using symbols for the classes of fires they can put out. A red slash through any of the symbols tells you the extinguisher cannot be used on that class of fire. A missing symbol tells you only that the extinguisher has not been tested for that class of fire.

1. **Class A** fires involve paper, wood, and other ordinary combustibles.

2. **Class B** fires involve flammable liquids such as gasoline, oil and some paints and solvents.

3. **Class C** fires involve energized electrical equipment such as power tools, wiring, fuse boxes, appliances, TVs, computers, electric motors, etc.

4. **Class D** fires involve combustible metals, such as magnesium, potassium, lithium and sodium.

5. **Class K** fires involve grease in commercial cooking equipment.

Types of Fire Extinguishers

The extinguisher must be appropriate for the type of fire being fought. Multi-purpose fire extinguishers labeled ABC may be used on the three classes of fires. Using the wrong type of extinguisher can cause harm to a person and make the fire worse. In some cases, it may be dangerous to use a fire extinguisher

regardless of the type. For example, an extinguishing agent released under pressure could spread a grease fire in a frying pan rather than put it out.

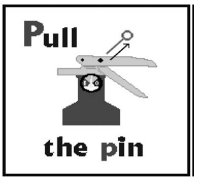
1. **Pressurized water** extinguishers are being phased out because they do not work with class B and C fires. They can be used for ordinary combustibles like wood, paper, many plastics, cloth and rubber.

2. **Carbon dioxide** extinguishers are generally used in areas of sensitive electrical or electronic equipment since it is gas and leaves no residue that damages the equipment. Carbon dioxide functions by removing or displacing the oxygen in a fire.

3. **Dry chemical** fire extinguishers are by far the most common on campus. They are effective on all three classes of fires. Dry chemicals function by interrupting the chain reaction of the fire tetrahedron.

How to Use a Fire Extinguisher

It is easy to remember how to use a fire extinguisher if you can remember the acronym **PASS**, which stands for **PULL, AIM, SQUEEZE** and **SWEEP**.



Pull the pin**.**

This will allow you to discharge the fire extinguisher.



Aim at the base of the fire**.**

If you aim at the flames (which is usually the temptation), the extinguisher agent will fly right through and do no good. You have to hit the fuel.



Squeeze the top handle or lever**.**

This depresses a button that releases the pressurized extinguishing agent in the extinguisher.



Sweep from side to side until the fire is completely out.

Start using the extinguisher from a safe distance away moving forward sweeping the nozzle from side to side. Once the fire is out, keep an eye on the area in case it re-ignites.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Department of Safety and Environmental Compliance
600 Clinic Drive | EOB Room 220
Mobile, Alabama 36688
Phone: (251) 460-7070
Fax: (251) 460-7278
safetyandenv@southalabama.edu

USA Fire Marshal (251) 460-6676

For confidential reporting of environmental or hazardous waste issues please click on the link below:

https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/environmental/confidentialreport.html

Safety & Environmental Compliance QR Code

