



# Frequently Asked Questions Fire Safety

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## General Information

### What should I do in the event of a fire or fire alarm activation?

#### ***EXIT THE AREA IMMEDIATELY!***

- Close all doors as you leave, taking keys and medications with you if possible. DO NOT delay evacuation to retrieve these items.
- Activate the closest fire alarm pull station along your evacuation route.
- Notify others as you leave.
- Call 911 and report the emergency after you are out of the building and safe.
- If the fire is small enough, you may attempt to extinguish it with a portable fire extinguisher, ONLY IF:

-The fire alarm pull station has been activated

-911 has been notified

-You are properly trained

- If leaving a room, feel the door with the back of your hand before opening it. Do not open any door that feels hot.
- If smoke is present, stay low. The best quality air is near the floor.
- Always use the stairs to exit upper floors.
- DO NOT use the elevator.
- Once the building is evacuated, do not re-enter it for any reason. Return to the building ONLY when instructed to do so by emergency responders or administrators.
- DO NOT return for personal belongings.
- Direct and assist visitors and persons with disabilities who appear to need direction or assistance.
- Notify Risk Management & Safety (RMS) at 334.844.4870 that a fire has occurred AFTER you exit the building.

### IF YOU ARE TRAPPED AND CANNOT EVACUATE

- Close any doors between you and the fire.
- If available, wedge wet towels or cloth materials along the bottom of the door to keep out smoke.
- Call 911 and notify the dispatcher of your location.
- Remain on the phone with the 911 dispatcher as long as possible.
- Break a window only as a last resort, such as needing oxygen to breathe.
- Use caution when breaking any window.

### RESPONSE TO FIRE ALARMS

- If the alarm sounds and/or emergency strobes begin to blink, evacuate immediately.
- NEVER assume that a fire alarm is a false alarm.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/rms/pdf/fire-emergency.pdf>

**What should I do if I have a fire safety concern on campus?**

Contact Risk Management and Safety at 334.844.4870 or e-mail us at [haneyjd@auburn.edu](mailto:haneyjd@auburn.edu) or [mzm0036@auburn.edu](mailto:mzm0036@auburn.edu) to let us know your concerns. In the event of an emergency or fire, please call 9-1-1 immediately.

**What agency provides fire suppression services at Auburn University?**

Auburn University contracts with the City of Auburn's Fire Division to provide fire suppression services on our main campus.

**What fire safety services does Risk Management and Safety provide?**

The mission of Risk Management and Safety's Fire Safety Program is to ensure the safety and welfare of University students, faculty, staff and visitors, protect the university's infrastructure, and minimize disruption of academic programs through fire prevention and life safety efforts. The Fire Safety Program provides the following services to support our mission: fire safety training, fire and life safety code consultations, fire and life safety permitting, fire and life safety construction plan reviews, fire and life safety inspections of new construction, renovations and existing buildings, oversees the acceptance testing of new fire protection systems installation, inspection, testing and maintenance of all water-based fire protection systems, special hazard fire extinguishment systems and portable fire extinguishers.

## Training

**Who needs to take portable fire extinguisher training?**

We encourage all members of the University community to enroll in a portable fire extinguisher training session. Anyone who uses a laboratory or works with flammable and/or combustible materials or performs hot work should enroll in a portable fire extinguisher training session. In this class you will learn the five classifications of fire, types of extinguishers and the safest way to use them. Remember: you should never attempt to fight a fire if you are not trained in the use of portable fire extinguishers. Contact Risk Management and Safety at 334.844.4870 or e-mail Patricia Davis at [davispp@auburn.edu](mailto:davispp@auburn.edu) to schedule a training session.

**Who needs to take building evacuation training?**

You should enroll in a building evacuation training session if you are an:

- educational instructor
- residential assistant
- building evacuation coordinator

We welcome all interested members of the University community to enroll in a session, and we encourage you to always have an exit strategy for everywhere you study, work, and play. Contact Risk Management and Safety at 334.844.4870 or e-mail us at [haneyjd@auburn.edu](mailto:haneyjd@auburn.edu) or [mzm0036@auburn.edu](mailto:mzm0036@auburn.edu) to schedule a training session.

## Special Events

**Do I need to notify Fire Safety if I am planning a special event on campus?**

Yes, you need to notify the RMS Fire Safety Staff any time you are planning a public event on campus. We provide site visits and consultation to ensure required fire and life safety codes are addressed before

the event (i.e., allowable occupant loads adequate means of egress, required fire protections systems, portable fire extinguishers and permits for special hazard operations).

## Fireworks

### **Are fireworks permitted on campus?**

There is a general prohibition on fireworks on campus, which means you are not allowed to use sparklers, poppers, or similar devices anywhere on campus. Fireworks are only permitted on campus for special events when the location and use has been approved in advance by Risk Management and Safety, the City of Auburn Fire Division, and the State Fire Marshal. The required permits must be completed, submitted, reviewed and approved prior to the event. For additional information, please refer to the University's Standard Operating Guidelines for Fireworks/Pyrotechnics at: <http://www.auburn.edu/administration/rms/pdf/fireworks-approval.pdf>.

## Seasonal Decorations

### **Are Christmas trees allowed in University buildings?**

Natural Christmas trees are not allowed in campus buildings. Artificial trees are permitted, but they should be located in a common area (such as a lobby or reception area). Christmas trees should not be placed in exit corridors or obstruct exit doors, exit aisles, fire hose cabinets, manual fire alarm pull-boxes, or portable fire extinguishers. For additional information, please refer to the University's Standard Operating Guidelines for Holiday Decorations at: <http://www.auburn.edu/administration/rms/pdf/holiday.pdf>.

### **Can I use Christmas tree lights in my office?**

Yes, you can use Christmas tree lights in your office only if they are U.L. listed and approved lights. Always unplug them when you leave. For additional information, please refer to the University's Standard Operating Guidelines for Holiday Decorations at: <http://www.auburn.edu/administration/rms/pdf/holiday.pdf>.

### **How can I prevent fires when using seasonal decorations?**

The best way to prevent fires due to seasonal decorations is to limit the amount of decorations you use. Make sure your decorations do not obstruct doorways, walkways and stairs, and limit the amount of combustible materials you put on the walls. Always keep combustible decorations, such as cloth flags, paper streamers, or plastic garlands, away from lights and other ignition sources. For additional information, please refer to the University's Standard Operating Guidelines for Holiday Decorations at: <http://www.auburn.edu/administration/rms/pdf/holiday.pdf>.

## Smoking

### **Is smoking permitted in University buildings?**

No. Auburn University policy prohibits smoking of any tobacco products inside University facilities. For additional information, please refer to the AU Smoking Policy at: <https://sites.auburn.edu/admin/universitypolicies/Policies/SmokingPolicy.pdf>.

## Candles

### **Are candles and incense allowed in University buildings?**

No. Burning candles or incense is not permitted in University buildings. Please refer to the Guide for Residential Living at: <https://fp.auburn.edu/housing/pdf/2013-2014%20Guide.pdf> for information specific to Housing and Residence Life.

## Halogen Lamps

### **Are halogen lamps allowed in University buildings?**

Halogen lamps are not allowed in residence halls, and Risk Management and Safety strongly discourages using them in other campus facilities. If you decide to use a halogen lamp in your office or other non-residential campus facility, follow these guidelines:

- Make sure the lamp is labeled as “listed” by Underwriters’ Laboratory (U.L.) or another recognized testing agency.
- Do not use Halogen bulbs that exceed 120 watts.
- Make sure lamps have a glass or wire guard that protects the bulb.
- Keep lamps away from drapes, curtains, and other combustibles.
- Do not place lamps in a high-traffic area, or anywhere someone may easily trip over them.
- Turn lamps off when you leave the room.

## Space Heaters

### **Are portable space heaters allowed in campus facilities?**

The use of portable space heaters is a temporary measure and is permitted if properly and appropriately used. However, the use of portable space heaters is strictly prohibited in residence halls. Portable heaters fueled by gasoline, kerosene or propane are not permitted in campus facilities. For additional information on the use of portable space heaters, please contact Risk Management and Safety at 334.844.4870 or e-mail us at [hanejyd@auburn.edu](mailto:hanejyd@auburn.edu) or [mzm0036@auburn.edu](mailto:mzm0036@auburn.edu).

## Extension Cords and Power Strips

### **Can I use extension cords on campus?**

In accordance with the 2006 International Fire Code, Section 605.5, you must not use extension cords in place of permanent electrical wiring. In other words, you can only use extension cords for temporary purposes, such as accommodating the wiring needs of a meeting or setting up special lighting for a short term project. If you need additional outlets installed in your office, classroom, or lab, you must submit a Project Initiation Form to the AU Facilities Division.

### **Can I use power strips on campus?**

You may use U.L listed power strips on campus, as long as you plug them directly into the wall and never plug more than one power strip into a single outlet. Because power strips need to be plugged directly into a wall outlet, you should never plug a power strip into another power strip. Always use power strips that are equipped with overload protection.

## Storage near Electrical Panels

### **Can I store things near electrical panels or transformers?**

You should always maintain a clear space around all electrical panels. Keep storage at least 36 inches away and do not store anything on top of electrical panels or transformers.

## **Storage in Boiler, Mechanical and Electrical Rooms**

### **Am I allowed to store things in boiler rooms, electrical rooms or mechanical rooms?**

No. Combustible materials should not be stored in boiler rooms, mechanical rooms, or electrical equipment rooms. The intent is to keep ignition sources inherent in the use of the indicated rooms from coming in contact with combustible materials that might be stored in the rooms and to increase the likelihood that authorized personnel will be able to easily reach critical controls, such as electrical circuit disconnects, in case of an emergency.

## **Storage in Exit Corridors**

### **Is it okay to store things in exit corridors?**

Combustible materials should not be stored in exits or exit enclosures. Exit corridors are to be kept free of all obstructions or impediments at all times to ensure full instant use in the event of a fire or other emergency. Storage of any kind or use of laboratory or office equipment in hallways is not permitted unless approved by Risk Management and Safety. Normally, only water foundations, fire protection equipment, and safety equipment will be installed in hallways. Permanently attached lockers, bulletin boards and display cabinets of non-combustible construction may be permitted in some locations, subject to approval of RMS Fire Safety. Transparent covers on bulletin boards and display cabinets should be safety glass or other non-splintering material. For additional information, please contact Risk Management and Safety at 334.844.4870 or e-mail us at [haneyjd@auburn.edu](mailto:haneyjd@auburn.edu) or [mzm0036@auburn.edu](mailto:mzm0036@auburn.edu).

## **Storage in Stairwells**

### **Is it okay to store things in stairwells?**

No, storage is prohibited in stairwells. This means you are not allowed to store anything on the stairs, in the stairwell, or under the stairs. For additional information, please contact Risk Management and Safety at 334.844.4870 or e-mail us at [haneyjd@auburn.edu](mailto:haneyjd@auburn.edu) or [mzm0036@auburn.edu](mailto:mzm0036@auburn.edu).

### **Is it okay to leave stairwell doors blocked or wedged open?**

No. Stairwell doors should never be blocked or wedged open, unless they are being blocked open for an isolated period of time (for example, while someone is moving in furniture).

## **Automatic Sprinkler Systems**

### **What are the safety guidelines for automatic sprinkler systems on campus?**

If there is an automatic sprinkler system in your classroom, office, or residence hall, make sure all storage is kept at least 18 inches below the sprinkler heads and never attach items to the sprinkler heads or pipes. The intent of this requirement is to allow adequate space below sprinkler heads so that discharge patterns of the sprinkler heads are unobstructed and can fully develop to provide adequate coverage in the event of a fire emergency. If you notice a violation, please correct it or notify Risk Management and Safety. RMS performs inspections, testing, and maintenance on all campus automatic fire sprinklers

systems, standpipes and fire pumps in accordance with the National Fire Protection Association 25, *Standard for the Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance of Water-Based Fire Protection Systems*.

## Fire Alarm Systems

### **What are the safety guidelines for fire alarm systems on campus?**

Campus fire alarm systems are inspected, tested and maintained in accordance with the National Fire Protection Association 72, *National Fire Alarm Code*, through Facilities Division.

## Campus Notification for the Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Fire Protection Systems

### **What department is responsible for notifying building occupants of utility and/or fire protection systems outages and testing?**

Facilities Work Management Center is responsible for emailing utility outage notifications to designated personnel within each campus building affected by any service work to be performed on a fire alarm and/or sprinkler system. The designated personnel that receive outage/service notifications should notify anyone else they feel should be advised within their building. It is standard practice for Facilities Work Management to send notifications five days in advance when possible; however, in the event of emergency situations, notifications will be sent out upon the receipt of the request for an emergency fire alarm and/or sprinkler system outage. Questions regarding utility outage/service notifications should be directed to Facilities Work Management at 334.844.4357.

## Portable Fire Extinguishers

### **Who do I contact if I discover a fire extinguisher is missing or needs to be serviced?**

RMS inspects all campus portable fire extinguishers in accordance with the National Fire Protection Association 10, *Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers*. To report a missing fire extinguisher or an extinguisher requiring service, contact Risk Management and Safety at 334.844.4870 or e-mail Patricia Davis at: [davispp@auburn.edu](mailto:davispp@auburn.edu).

## Range Hood and Special Hazard Fire Protection Systems

### **What department is responsible for the Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Special Hazard Fire Protection Systems on campus?**

Risk Management and Safety is responsible for the inspection, testing and maintenance of all campus special hazard fire protection systems. These services are performed semi-annually in accordance with the National Fire Protection Association Codes and Standards.

### **Who do I call when a range hood fire extinguishment system or other type of special hazard fire suppression system has been activated?**

Call 9-1-1 if there is a fire emergency. Then call Risk Management and Safety at 334.844.4870 to report the activation so they can investigate the cause of the activation and recharge and reset the system.



## Building Fire and Life Safety Inspections

**When are fire and life safety inspections performed on campus buildings and what agencies perform the inspections?**

- **Residence Halls**

RMS Fire Safety staff performs fire and life safety inspections at residence halls annually. Inspection components include: means of egress, fire rated construction, emergency lights, exit signs, portable fire extinguishers, fire alarm systems, and automatic sprinkler systems. Risk Management and Safety manages the inspection, testing and maintenance of fire sprinkler and standpipe systems in accordance with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 25, *Standard for the Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Water-Based Fire Protection Systems*. Facilities Division manages the inspection, testing and maintenance of fire alarm systems in accordance with NFPA 72, *National Fire Alarm Code*. Auburn University's Housing and Residence Life's Safety staff perform routine safety inspections in all residence halls throughout the year.

- **Fraternity Houses**

Auburn University contracts with the City of Auburn's Department of Public Safety to provide regular fire and life safety code compliance inspections at all on-campus and off-campus fraternity houses at the beginning of Fall and Spring semesters. In addition, each fraternity is required to attend fire safety education provided by RMS Fire Safety at the beginning of the Fall and Spring semester. Each fraternity is required to appoint a member that resides in the fraternity as the Chapter Fire Marshal. All Chapter Fire Marshals and Chapter Presidents are required to attend the fire safety class. Chapter Fire Marshals are required to conduct monthly fire self-inspections of their houses and to submit self-inspection reports to the Interfraternity Council. Fire drills are conducted by the City of Auburn Fire Division at the beginning of Fall and Spring semesters. Failure to comply with these requirements can result in fines and/or the fraternity being placed on social probation.

- **Other Campus Buildings**

RMS Fire Safety staff perform building fire and life safety inspections of campus facilities to ensure safe building environments.

## Plan Reviews for Fire and Life Safety

**What University unit performs construction plan reviews for fire and life safety code compliance?**

RMS Fire Safety staff performs fire and life safety plan reviews of new construction and renovation projects to ensure the applicable building/fire and life safety codes and University standards have been met in the design plans and specifications. We work closely with Facilities Design and Construction Services throughout the design and construction of University projects.

## Permits

**What permits are issued by the RMS Fire Safety Staff?**

- Request to Disable Fire Protection Systems
- Fire Watch Permit
- Hot Work Permit
- Burn Permit (RMS Fire Safety facilitates issuing of burn permits by the City of Auburn Fire Division)

If you have questions regarding any of the above permits, please contact us at 334.844.4870.

## **New Construction and Renovation Inspections**

### **Who conducts inspections on new construction and renovation projects?**

RMS Fire Safety staff performs fire and life safety inspections on new construction and renovation projects. Items inspected include: building fire apparatus access, water supply, fire rated construction, fire protection and life safety systems, portable fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, exit signs, and elevators. Mechanical, electrical, plumbing and structural inspections are performed by AU Facilities Division personnel. The Alabama Building Commission inspects state funded construction only. If the project is state-funded, the University's fire safety staff also performs fire and life safety inspections in conjunction with the Alabama Building Commission.

## **Fraternity House New Construction and Renovation Projects**

### **Who is responsible for inspecting new construction and renovation projects at fraternity houses located on and off campus?**

RMS Fire Safety staff, City of Auburn fire inspectors and/or the State Building Commission perform fire and life safety inspections in fraternity houses under construction and during any renovations. Fraternity house construction and renovation projects built on off-campus property is inspected solely by the City of Auburn Department of Public Safety.

### **What are the required fire protection systems and equipment in fraternity houses?**

Auburn University requires commercial range hood fire protection systems and a Class K portable fire extinguisher inside kitchens, a building fire alarm system that is monitored 24/7, hardwired smoke alarms with battery backup inside each bedroom, and portable extinguishers within 75 feet of travel distance located in the exit corridors. In 2004, Auburn University required automatic sprinkler systems be retro-fitted in all fraternity houses and party barns by Fall 2008. To date, of the 23 fraternity houses, 22 houses have been retro-fitted and the remaining house is vacant until a sprinkler system is installed.

For additional fire safety information at Auburn University, please contact Auburn University Risk Management and Safety's Fire Safety Staff at 334.844.4870 or visit Risk Management's website for Fire Safety at <http://www.auburn.edu/administration/rms/fire.html>.