

Public Assembly Evacuation & Safety Guidelines



General

This policy applies to all university buildings or portions of buildings used for gatherings of 300 or more persons for such activities as entertainment, dining, amusement, lectures, seminars, etc. (e.g., Bender Arena, Mary Graydon Center dining facilities, Ward Circle Building, Greenberg Theater). These are the minimum criteria for emergency evacuation planning and fire prevention practices to be implemented by university departments responsible for activities at such locations.

Emergency Planning

The employees or attendants at places of assembly should be trained in the duties they are to perform in case of fire, panic, or other emergency, to ensure the orderly exit of those assembled.

- Attendants should know the location of fire exits and portable fire extinguishers. Attendants should know how to use fire extinguishers.
- An announcement should be made at the beginning of the event, such as the following example.

Sample Announcement for Bender Arena

ATTENTION: Emergency exit doors are located at the north and south ends of the arena floor. Look for the red exit signs. In the event of an emergency, please exit in a calm and orderly fashion and follow the directions of university officials. Thank you.

- If evacuation is necessary, another announcement should be made repeating initial instructions.
- If possible, it is preferable that the fire alarms in the assembly area not be suddenly sounded as this may cause panic.

NOTE: In some buildings, the fire alarms will automatically activate. In this situation, consideration should be given to making an announcement concerning this possibility before the event.

- Refer to the university's Emergency Management Procedures, "Department Evacuation Plans" for evacuation sites on campus.



Safety Checklist

A Public Assembly Safety Checklist (attached) is to be completed 90 minutes prior to the event by the person responsible for the event to ensure that safety measures are in place. The checklist will apply to all places of public assembly with 300 or more people. If emergency exits or other means of egress are obstructed, the admittance to the assembly is not permitted until necessary corrective actions have been completed.

Overcrowding

The number of people in any building or portion thereof shall not exceed the amount specified.

Smoking

Smoking in assembly areas is prohibited.

Flammable Liquids

The storage or use of flammable liquids in assembly areas is prohibited.

Decorations and Stage Scenery

Combustible materials must be treated with an effective flame-retardant material. Stage settings made of combustible materials must also be treated with flame-retardant materials as indicated below:

- Plywood, wood, particle board, mineral and fiber board, hardboard, etc. must be flame treated or otherwise be UL listed with a flame spread of 75 or less (class B).
- Fabrics such as draperies and curtains must be flame treated or non-combustible.
- Plastics must be UL labeled with flame spread of 75 or less and must not exceed 10% of the wall or ceiling area. Pyroxylin plastics are prohibited.
- Cardboard should be flame treated or painted with fire retardant paint and must not exceed 10% of the wall/ceiling area.
- Carpet must meet Federal Flammability Standard FF-1-70.
- Christmas trees and decorations need prior approval from the director, Risk Management & Safety Services (Tony Newman, x2706). Trees will need to be artificial having the Underwriters Laboratories label ("UL") or live trees composed of a root ball wrapped in burlap. Cut trees must be sprayed with a fire retardant material.

Maintenance of Exit Ways

Per university safety guidelines, aisles, passageways, stairways and exit doors must never be obstructed or restricted by tables, showcases, or other objects.



Public Assembly Safety Checklist

Please fill out this form 90 minutes prior to the event and return it to the event sponsor. Call 2-FIX (x2349) and request immediate help if the answer is “No” to any of the items on the checklist. For insurance purposes, event sponsors should keep the form on file for one year.

	Yes	No	Comments
I. Building (Lobby, Reception Area, Entrance, etc.)			
A. Are floors, aisles, and passageways dry and free of debris?	_____	_____	_____
B. Are ramps and stairways clear and unobstructed?	_____	_____	_____
C. Are wet floor signs displayed when necessary?	_____	_____	_____
D. Are hazards clearly marked with warning signs?	_____	_____	_____
E. Are emergency exits not obstructed and/or locked shut?	_____	_____	_____
F. Are EXIT signs operational and visible?	_____	_____	_____
G. Are means of egress marked and clear of debris?	_____	_____	_____
H. Are directions to exits marked with visible signs?	_____	_____	_____
I. Are handrails in place and securely connected?	_____	_____	_____
J. Are there other areas of concern?	_____	_____	_____
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II. Event Space			
A. Are floors, aisles, and passageways dry and free of debris?	_____	_____	_____
B. Are ramps and stairways clear and unobstructed?	_____	_____	_____
C. Are wet floor signs displayed when necessary?	_____	_____	_____
D. Are hazards clearly marked with warning signs?	_____	_____	_____
E. Are emergency exits not obstructed and/or locked shut?	_____	_____	_____
F. Are EXIT signs operational and visible?	_____	_____	_____
G. Are means of egress marked and clear of debris?	_____	_____	_____
H. Are directions to exits marked with visible signs?	_____	_____	_____
I. Are bleachers or seats in good repair?	_____	_____	_____
J. Are handrails in place and securely connected?	_____	_____	_____
K. Are there other areas of concern?	_____	_____	_____
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III. First Aid			
A. Is the first aid kit stocked and accessible?	_____	_____	_____
B. If appropriate, is the first aid room available and marked?	_____	_____	_____
C. Has public safety been notified of the event?	_____	_____	_____
D. Are there other areas of concern?	_____	_____	_____
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Name _____ Event _____

Building/Location _____ Inspection Date and time _____

Other _____