

## FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY

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**Originating Office:** Office of the  
Vice-President, Services

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### PREAMBLE

Concordia University (the “University”) has a legal obligation to comply with all federal, provincial and municipal legislation regarding the provision, inspection, testing and maintenance of fire safety equipment and the development and maintenance of a comprehensive fire safety plan (“Fire Safety Plan”) and related procedures.

### PURPOSE

This Policy establishes the requirements for a fire safety program (the “Program”) at the University and defines responsibilities for the implementation of the Program. The objective of the Program is to ensure that:

- Maintenance procedures, tests, inspections and after-incident investigations are carried out to verify that fire safety procedures as well as detection and suppression equipment operate properly
- Activities that create a fire risk or may contribute to conditions that favor the spread of fire are identified and mitigated
- Building Fire Safety Plans contain all information specified by the municipal Fire Department
- Dedicated responders and building occupants are trained in fire response and evacuation procedures
- Appropriate fire safety training is developed and implemented to provide faculty, staff and students with a working knowledge of fire and life safety practices and emergency procedures.

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### SCOPE

This Policy applies to all employees, students and visitors on University premises (“University Facilities”). All members of the University are responsible for respecting this Policy and for familiarizing themselves with the different University emergency procedures and the locations of fire alarms and evacuation routes in the area they use or occupy.

### POLICY

#### Fire Detection and Suppression Equipment

1. Appropriate fire detection and suppression equipment must be installed in all University Facilities according to the relevant provincial and municipal regulatory requirements.
2. The Facilities Management Department (“Facilities Management”) shall develop and maintain a comprehensive maintenance program for University Facilities, including complete documentation to ensure that all fire safety detection and suppression equipment is regularly inspected and tested in accordance with the relevant legislation, regulations and standards. Furthermore, Facilities Management shall ensure that similar contractual obligations are included in lease agreements for University Facilities rented by or leased by the University.

#### Fire Safety Plans

3. Fire Safety Plans are developed by the Office of Environmental Health & Safety (“EH&S”) and are provided to the municipal Fire Department, the University’s Security Department and Fire Evacuation Personnel. Such Plans consist of uniform, building-specific information concerning building systems, fire and evacuation procedures. These Fire Safety Plans specify the duties of Fire Evacuation Personnel.

#### Fire Evacuation Personnel

4. Fire Evacuation Personnel include personnel from the University’s Security Department, EH&S, Facilities Management and Concordia Emergency Response Teams (“CERT”). Duties and training of Fire Evacuation Personnel are coordinated by EH&S.

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### Members of Concordia Emergency Response Team (CERT)

5. The CERT is made up of building occupants, on a volunteer basis, who carry out specific roles and assignments during fire evacuations and other emergency situations. CERT members receive mandatory training on emergency procedures, fire prevention, first-aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (“CPR”).
6. It is the obligation of University Departments to identify employees that are able and willing to participate in the CERT program. No less than two (2) CERT members are required per floor in large buildings or per small Annex. A floor with a large surface area may require more CERT members, in which case a ratio of one (1) CERT member per forty (40) occupants can be adopted. In order to ensure adequate coverage, University Departments that share floor space must also share CERT responsibilities.
7. CERT members shall be provided with time off work, without penalty, to attend mandatory CERT training. Training consists of eight (8) hours on emergency procedures, four (4) hours on fire prevention training, and sixteen (16) hours on first-aid and CPR training. Each training session is renewable every three (3) years.

### Fire Drills

8. Fire drills are held at least annually in all University owned buildings.

### General Fire Prevention Regulations

9. When a fire alarm system is activated in a particular University building, all building occupants must safely stop all activity and evacuate the building, utilizing identified emergency exits and stairwells as specified in relevant University emergency procedures.
10. Individuals on University Facilities are urged to immediately report any fire or smoke conditions by pulling an available fire alarm and/or by placing a telephone call to Campus Security at 514-848-3717.

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11. [Special procedures](#) are established and are to be utilized for building occupants who are mobility impaired.
12. Corridors, exits stairs and fire escapes are the escape routes in an emergency. Storage in corridors, exits and stairs is strictly prohibited, including but not limited to temporary, short term or long term storage or spill over from offices, laboratories, classrooms, and shipping and receiving areas.
13. Fire doors are doors with a fire-resistance rating used to reduce the spread of fire and smoke between floor sectors to enable safe egress from buildings. Self-closing fire doors are maintained in an open position and close automatically during fire alarms. It is prohibited, at any time, to block, prop, or wedge a fire door in the open position, or prevent the self-closing of a fire door.
14. Designated emergency exit doors are to be readily opened from the inside at all times, and must not be, at any time, locked, chained, blocked, or barred to prevent exiting.
15. It is a violation of municipal regulations for bicycles to be in University Facilities unless stored in appropriate designated rooms. It is also a violation of these same regulations for bicycles to be in locations where they may impair the use of stairways, access ramps or exit doors. Furthermore, a locked bicycle poses a serious threat to the life safety of the occupants of a building in the event of an emergency evacuation.
16. The distribution, storage and manipulation of flammable, explosive or reactive chemicals must be conducted in accordance with the University's *Policy for the Management of Hazardous Materials* ([VPS-47](#)).
17. Combustible material (paper, cardboard, etc.) and other flammable materials are to be kept to a minimum. When stored, such materials must be located at least six (6) to twelve (12) inches from any heat source including fixed heaters, space heaters, water heaters, furnaces, and electrical panels.

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18. The use of candles or any other device that uses an open flame in areas not designated for this purpose is prohibited. Special permission, to use candles or other open flame devises, can be requested via the [Hot Work authorization procedures](#).
19. Overloading electrical outlets or circuits is a significant fire risk and must be avoided. Before purchasing, utilizing or installing new equipment or increasing the demand on wall outlets and/or electrical circuits, Facilities Management must be consulted. The use of extension cords is prohibited for long term usage; the installation of additional outlet(s) is recommended to resolve the misuse of extension cords. When needed for temporary use, only gauged extension cords should be used. When in doubt, the Electrical Department should be consulted.
20. Only authorized and/or inspected space heaters are permitted for use in University Facilities. Space heaters must never be left on if unattended.
21. Any defective electrical equipment, such as frayed cords, loose connections, and overheating equipment should be reported to Facilities Management and taken immediately out of service.

### Fire Detection and Suppression Systems

22. Fire detection devices include smoke and heat detectors as well as manual fire alarm pull stations. Fire suppression systems include sprinkler systems (water and wet chemical), fire extinguishers and hose lines.
23. It is strictly prohibited to tamper with, use or activate any fire detection devices or fire suppression systems without just cause.
24. It is strictly prohibited to modify or obstruct any fire detection device or fire suppression system. A clearance of eighteen (18) inches must be maintained for both fire detection devices and fire suppression systems at all times.

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### Hot Work & Interruption of Fire Prevention Systems

25. "Hot Work" is defined as any welding, cutting, grinding, or any other activity involving open flames, sparks, or other ignition sources which may cause smoke or fire or which may trigger fire detection devices.
26. Fire prevention systems may be partially or completely interrupted by authorized University trades personnel or authorized external fire alarm and/or sprinkler service providers for Hot Work, renovations, theatre performances, or cooking in public spaces where fumes, smoke or dust particles could initiate a fire alarm. Such interruption may also be necessary during maintenance or repair of the building's fire alarm and/or sprinkler system as well as other valid purposes.
27. One can obtain authorization for Hot Work and/or the interruption of fire prevention systems by completing a [Hot Work & Interruption of Fire Prevention Systems Request Form](#).
28. University Fire Prevention Personnel have the authority to review all Hot Work & Interruption of Fire Prevention Systems requests and to authorize or deny such requests and/or impose special requirements and/or equipment conditional to the authorization of the requests. University Fire Prevention Personnel are also authorized to inspect the work site and if necessary, immediately stop all activities, if the established requirements and/or terms and conditions of the [Hot Work and Fire Protection Interruption Agreement](#) have not been adhered to or if any other safety or fire risk is identified.

### Responsibilities

#### Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S)

29. It is the overall responsibility of EH&S to coordinate, investigate and advise on fire safety issues. EH&S will:
  - develop and maintain Fire Safety Plans and response procedures

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- manage the CERT program
- investigate fire and fire alarm incidents
- liaise with representatives of Municipal Fire Departments
- conduct and coordinate fire drills, building safety inspections and emergency simulations
- monitor, review, assess and approve Hot Work & Interruption of Fire Prevention Systems requests.

### Security Department

30. Security personnel are responsible for responding to all fire alarm activations, reported fires or reported odours of smoke. The Security Department will:
- monitor fire alarm panels, Hot Work & Interruption of Fire Prevention Systems requests
  - in the event of an alarm activation, validate the alarm and apply the appropriate procedures
  - initiate building evacuations and take necessary action to save lives and minimize damage
  - notify and coordinate activities with EH&S and Facilities Management
  - support and assist Municipal emergency services when they arrive on campus; directing them to the appropriate location of the fire / fire alarm activation by providing appropriate building related information
  - secure information and/or evidence for follow-up debriefings or investigations
  - consult and coordinate with EH&S and Facilities Management prior to the re-integrations of building occupants following an evacuation.

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### Facilities Management Department

31. Facilities Management is responsible for all maintenance contracts and preventative maintenance of fire detection devices and fire suppression systems and must respond to building emergencies to provide assistance as required. Facilities Management will assist with, conduct and/or monitor:
- inspections of the fire prevention systems as per relevant legislation, regulations and standards requirements
  - testing of fire pumps
  - bypasses and resets on the fire alarm panels, when required
  - repairs on the fire prevention systems
  - bi-annual inspections of kitchen chemical wet systems
  - investigations and corrections of deficiencies concerning fire prevention systems
  - procedures related to Hot Work & Interruption of Fire Prevention Systems
  - weekly testing on all power generators.

### Residence Life

32. Residence Life Administrators and Residence Assistants will participate in the following fire prevention activities:
- conducting occasional room inspections to verify fire / smoke detection systems and sprinkler systems are in good order and unobstructed
  - conducting daily floor inspections to ensure exit signs and stairwells are unobstructed, and fire doors are properly functioning
  - reporting any non-working fire doors and obstructed stairwells or non-illuminated or obstructed exit signs to Facilities Management



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- conducting fire alarm and evacuation drills at least once per semester. If appropriate, an incident that has caused a fire alarm and evacuation of a residence during a semester, can replace a mandatory drill for that period.
33. Residence Assistants will receive training with respect to first aid, fire alarm and evacuation procedures as well as other emergency procedures deemed necessary.

### Faculty, Department and Unit Heads

34. The Heads of Faculties, Departments, and Units shall use their best efforts, within their area of control to:
- minimize the risk of fire as a result of activities under their control
  - ensure that staff, students and visitors are aware of the actions to take in the event of a fire, fire alarm activation and other emergencies, and refresh relevant training, information and instruction at appropriate intervals
  - keep records of such information, instruction and training
  - provide information to the University Fire Safety Officer, EH&S concerning activities that pose a fire risk
  - provide assistance and information to assist in mitigating fire risks as well as support during emergency response in areas under their control
  - identify and appoint CERT members for each floor / area / building that the Faculty, Department and/or Unit occupy
  - inform the University Fire Safety Officer, EH&S of any significant proposed changes in use of a building, room or laboratory that might affect the fire risk assessment.  
Faculty, Teaching Assistants, Guest Lecturers and Laboratory Technicians
35. Faculty, Teaching Assistants, Guest Lecturers and Laboratory Technicians must be aware of the actions to take in the event of a fire, fire alarm activation or other emergency situations and direct students, under their supervision, to take the appropriate actions during an emergency.

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### Enforcement

36. Non-compliance with applicable laws, regulations, standards, and implemented guidelines related to this Policy may result in disciplinary action.
37. An individual responsible for the malicious or accidental activation of a fire detection device or a fire suppression system may be held accountable for any monetary charges incurred by the University from the City of Montreal for responding to a false fire alarm. Such conduct may also result in disciplinary action by the University and/or charges by the local police authorities.