



Carnegie Mellon University

Environmental Health & Safety

FIRE | LAB | WORK

Emergency Evacuation

Are you prepared if a fire occurs? While the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Department works tirelessly to mitigate hazards, decrease the chance of a fire from occurring and ensure all our buildings are compliant with the adopted fire codes, it is inevitable that the time will come when you need to evacuate during an emergency.

Best Practices

- Always know two ways out of a building and familiarize yourself with the general layout of your building BEFORE an emergency occurs. Your evacuation strategy should include the use a stairway to evacuate, never an elevator.
- Check all windows to ensure they will operate during an emergency. Things like screws, nails and even excessive paint build up can prevent a window from opening.
- Never ignore a fire alarm signal. Gather up your personal items (if it is safe to do so), close the door behind you and evacuate quickly.
- If the fire alarm system has not activated, pull the closest fire alarm pull station to alert the fire department and begin the evacuation process for others within the building who may not be aware of the emergency.



- As you exit, you may come across smoke. If you can, find an alternative exit. If not, crawl low and keep one hand against the wall at all times. As you reach any doors, feel the door with the back of your hand to see if it is hot. If so, do not open it as there may be a fire on the other side.
- Familiarize yourself with your building's emergency evacuation map and the location of the evacuation assembly area. If there is no designated assembly area, report to a safe location at least 150' away from the building. This allows others to have room to evacuate and provide room for responding emergency vehicles and personnel.
- During outbreaks of illness or established pandemics (such as the coronavirus pandemic) ensure that you are equipped with a facial covering and practice physical distancing of at least 6 feet from others.
- Never re-enter a building until you are given the "okay" to do so by an emergency responder or a member of EHS.

Refuge and Rescue

It may not always be possible to safely evacuate during a fire emergency. You can quickly be overcome by heat, smoke and toxic gases requiring you to seek refuge and shelter-in-place until you can be rescued by emergency responders. Many of the buildings around campus are set up so that you can exit horizontally into another building or an area of refuge such as a stairway. It is important to familiarize yourself with the locations of these areas so that you are prepared during an emergency.



Additionally, if you have a disability and know that you will require assistance exiting, reach out to the Office of Disability Resources to arrange for accommodations to be made before an emergency occurs.

A multitude of information can be found on the disability resources webpage listed above or you can reach out directly at 412-268-5940 or by emailing access@andrew.cmu.edu.

You may also want to consider carrying things like a flashlight, whistle and cell phone at all times to signal to others that you require assistance and need to be rescued.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are conducted at scheduled intervals to test the overall emergency preparedness of those inside campus buildings. These drills are held at varying times and under varying conditions in order to provide a realistic scenario. After all, fires do not only occur when it is sunny and 70 degrees outside.

The fire drill schedule is broken down into the categories of Housing and Academic/Administration. Housing fire drills are held at the start of each academic semester and all other buildings that fall under the Academic/Administration category are held once a year during the summer.

Prior to each scheduled fire drill, an alert will be sent out via the FMCS Service Response Center so that you can plan accordingly. We recommend that everyone sign up to be added to this list. Below is an example of the email you will receive:

**Facilities, Infrastructure and Risk Management (FIRM)
Facilities Management & Campus Services**

**TO: Shutdown Group, Housing
FROM: Service Response Center
DATE: February 10, 2021
SUBJECT: Housing Fire Evacuation Drills 2/13**

In an effort to demonstrate fire safety awareness and preparedness in compliance with the fire code, Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) will hold a Spring Semester fire evacuation drill on Saturday, 2/13, between 10AM and 1PM.

During the fire evacuation drills, you will hear a siren/horn and/or voice command announcement to evacuate. We ask for your full cooperation during the drills. The expected duration of each drill will be approximately 10 - 15 minutes. We recognize the drills may interrupt your schedule and we apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

Safety concern, training request or other inquiry?
Reach out to the [Environmental Health and Safety Department](#) today!
safety@andrew.cmu.edu
412-268-8182