



University of New Haven

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Fire Safety Policy

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1.0 Introduction

1.1. Scope

The University of New Haven Fire Safety Policy intends to provide essential information to protect the campus community from the effects of fire and is applicable to all university faculty, staff, students, visitors, and contractors.

1.2. Policy Statement

This policy provides a fire prevention and safety document for the campus community to follow.

1.3. Purpose

Any fire in a University of New Haven building has the potential to endanger lives and destroy property. The Purpose of this policy is to promote fire safety in an effort to minimize the risks associated with fire and comply with applicable codes

2.0 Definitions

- **Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)**

An organization, office, or individual responsible for enforcing the requirements of a code or standard, or for approving equipment, materials, installations, or a procedure.

- **Automatic Sprinkler Systems**

A fire suppression, control device, or series of pipes (typically water-filled) that, when activated, are proven to be effective in suppressing fires. It operates automatically when its heat-activated element is heated to its thermal rating or above, allowing water to discharge over a specified area.

- **Fire Alarm Systems**

A system or portion of a combination system consisting of components and circuits arranged to monitor and annunciate the status of fire alarm or supervisory signal-initiating devices and to initiate the appropriate response to those signals.

- **Means of Egress**

A continuous and unobstructed way of travel from any point in a building or structure to a

public way consisting of three separate and distinct parts: (1) the exit access, (2) the exit, and (3) the exit discharge.

- **Exit**

That portion of a means of egress that is separated from all other spaces of a building or structure by construction or equipment as required to provide a protected way of travel to the exit discharge.

- **Exit Access**

That portion of the means of egress that leads to an exit.

- **Exit Discharge**

That portion of the means of egress between the termination of an exit and a public way.

- **Muster Location**

Pre-determined location to assemble during alarms. Locations may be found on [MyCharger](#).

- **Fire Door Assembly**

Any combination of a fire door, a frame, hardware, and other accessories installed in a horizontal plane, which together provide a specific degree of fire protection to a through opening in a fire door.

- **Smoke alarms**

Single or multiple station alarm responsive to smoke.

- **Carbon Monoxide Alarms**

Alarm that responds to the presence of Carbon Monoxide. CO is a colorless, odorless gas produced by incomplete combustion of a fossil fueled appliance.

- **Pull Stations**

Manual fire alarm devices which activate the fire alarm system when pulled.

- **Notification Devices**

Part of the fire alarm system that alerts occupants that a fire alarm is activated. These devices can be horn, strobes, or horn strobe.

3.0 How to Prepare for a Fire Emergency

Review the following periodically and ensure you're familiar at all times:

- (a) Fire evacuation and egress routes for your area.
- (b) Muster locations for your area.

- (c) The location of the nearest fire extinguishers.
- (d) The location of manual pull stations.

Always report faulty alarms, pulls stations, or fire extinguishers to the Department of Public Health immediately.

If you are a person with a disability that may inhibit your ability to evacuate safely and quickly in the event of an emergency, it is recommended to alert the Department of Public Health ahead of time so that arrangements can be made to ensure your safe egress. Any disclosures are voluntary and will be kept confidential.

4.0 What to Do If You Smell or See Smoke

Fire is a risk in every building you visit, work in, or sleep in. If you encounter smoke or fire, follow the steps below:

- (a) Exit the building through the nearest safe exit notifying others as you exit.
- (b) Activate the nearest fire alarm pull station if the alarm is not already sounding.
- (c) Call **911** and provide the fire department as much information as possible.
- (d) Report to your buildings muster location (found on [MyCharger Muster Meeting Points](#)) and stay clear of emergency vehicles.
- (e) Do not re-enter the building until emergency personnel say it is safe.
- (f) Report all fires or evidence of a fire immediately to University police.

4.1. Trapped by Smoke or Fire

- (a) Keep calm.
- (b) Do not open the door.
 - a. Place clothing or other materials under door to block any gaps to limit smoke from entering. Call 911 and give your location. If this isn't possible... Open a window, remove screen if necessary and wave an object to draw attention to your location. Your phone's flashlight may attract the most attention.
 - b. Be ready to close the window if smoke starts to enter.
- (c) If smoke does enter, wet a cloth and hold it over your mouth to help filter out some of the smoke.

- (d) Smoke rises, so lay as flat on the floor as possible.
- (e) Stay where you are and wait for emergency responders to assist.

5.0 What to Do If the Fire Alarms Start Sounding

- (a) Feel the door with the back of your hand. Open slowly if not hot to check for smoke. If hot or you encounter heavy smoke, do not open! Follow the directions in section 4.1.
- (b) If not in immediate danger, make sure to have your keys and proper clothing (coat, shoes, etc.) for the elements. However, do not risk getting your items if it puts you in an unsafe condition or prolongs your evacuation.
- (c) Close the door to your room or office to limit the spread of smoke or fire. If it's safe to do so, close all windows as well. Air fuels fire.
- (d) Exit the building through the nearest safe exit.
- (e) Never use the elevator.
- (f) If you encounter smoke as you exit, cover your nose and mouth with a cloth (dampened, if possible) and stay low, below the smoke.
- (g) Meet outside at your buildings muster location and stay clear of emergency vehicles.
- (h) Report anyone missing, trapped or unable to evacuate to university police or fire personnel.
- (i) Never re-enter the building until emergency personnel deem safe.

Means of Egress

The means of egress is the continuous unobstructed way of travel from any point in the building to the exterior. During emergencies, being able to leave the building quickly is essential to your safety. Having a plan prior to any emergency that includes several ways out could save your life.

- (a) **Never** store items in the means of egress (corridors, stairs and doors) as it can block or delay egress.
- (b) **Never** wedge open fire doors as this may cause smoke and fire to travel throughout the building and potentially trap people.

6.0 Evacuation

- (a) Evacuations occur whenever an alarm sounds or ordered to do so by emergency personnel.
- (b) Evacuation should be through the nearest safe exit.
- (c) Assist disabled individuals evacuate if possible. Obtain their permission first.
- (d) If disabled and unable to completely evacuate, seek refuge in a safe area such as a room or stairwell and call for help. Follow directions listed in section 4.1.
- (e) Never use the elevators during a fire.
- (f) Once outside, report to your buildings muster (meeting) location and stay clear of emergency vehicles.
- (g) Report anyone missing, in an area of refuge or stairwell to emergency personnel.
- (h) Do not re-enter until emergency personnel deem safe.
- (i) Do not block entry routes for emergency personnel.
- (j) Do not congregate directly outside of an exit as this will slow the evacuation of those still inside.

7.0 Fire Drills

Drills are conducted once per semester in all residence halls. All Fire Alarms/drills require immediate action and should be taken seriously and treated every time as an actual fire.

- (a) Upon receipt of an alarm, ALL occupants must evacuate the building.
- (b) Gather your keys and close the door as you leave.
- (c) Report to your buildings muster (meeting) location ([MyCharger Muster Meeting Points](#)).
- (d) Report any fire alarm equipment problems immediately.
- (e) Do not reenter unless authorized to do so.

8.0 Fire Lanes

No vehicles except emergency response vehicles shall park in designated fire lanes, in front of fire hydrants or block emergency vehicle access (usually in front of buildings) at any time, even briefly. Any vehicle found in fire lanes, blocking fire hydrants and

emergency vehicle access is subject to ticketing/towing at the owner's expense. The University of New Haven is not responsible for any damage incurred to vehicles obstructing emergency vehicle response.

9.0 Fire Safety Equipment

9.1. Automatic Sprinkler Systems

During fires as the temperature rises, sprinkler heads will activate at a certain temperature allowing water to pass through those heads only. Approximately 98% of all fires are controlled by one or two sprinkler heads. In order for sprinkler systems to be effective:

- (a) Do not hang anything from sprinkler components.
- (b) Report any damage or leaks immediately to the facilities department.
- (c) Maintain storage so that there's a minimum of 18" clearance below sprinkler heads.

9.2. Fire Alarm System

Most buildings on campus have fire alarm systems which can consist of detection equipment (smoke/CO detectors), sprinkler system water flow devices, manual pull stations (usually located within 5 feet of an exit) and notification appliances (horns/strobes). When activated, a fire alarm system provides an audible and visual alarm warning occupants to evacuate. In addition, a fire alarm will notify university police and the fire department to respond and investigate the source. In order for fire alarm systems to be effective:

- (a) Never block any component of the fire alarm system.
- (b) Report any of the following problems immediately to the facilities: Damaged, loose, hanging, blocked, tampered or beeping equipment, or if you are unable to hear the alarm.
- (c) Never silence an active fire alarm. This should only be done by authorized fire professionals or university police personnel.

False fire alarms create serious safety implications. Anyone maliciously creating a false fire alarm will face disciplinary action by the University and will be subject to

prosecution under the laws of the State of Connecticut.

9.3. Fire Extinguishers

Extinguishers should only be used on small fires by individuals trained, competent and comfortable with the use.

- (a) Become familiar with the locations of the nearest extinguisher.
- (b) Don't delay calling 911 in search of fire extinguishers.
- (c) Always work in the direction of an exit.
- (d) If the fire gets too large, close the door and activate the fire alarm as you exit.
- (e) Remember **P.A.S.S.**

P- Pull Pin

A- Aim nozzle at the base of the fire

S- Squeeze the handle to discharge agent

S- Sweep the base of the fire

Fire extinguishers are serviced annually by a third-party vendor, and are visually inspected monthly. If you notice an extinguisher with inadequate pressure (needle on the gauge is in the red rather than the green), damaged hosing, or with the tamper evident seal missing or the pin pulled out, alert the Department of Public Health immediately.

9.4. Fire Doors

Doors designed to provide a barrier between a fire and egress paths. These doors have various ratings depending on the location. Propping these doors open is a violation of the fire code and renders this safety barrier useless. Fire doors should be equipped with a self-closing device that automatically closes the door after opening. Unauthorized use of emergency exits violates school policy and will be investigated for possible disciplinary action. Any issues with fire doors not closing or being wedged open should be reported immediately.

9.5. Tampering with Fire Equipment

Unauthorized modifications of or tampering with any fire safety device is a violation of the fire code and school policy. Anyone found guilty of tampering with fire safety equipment will face discipline/prosecution.

10.0 Fire Prevention

Measures directed toward avoiding the inception of fire. Fire prevention is accomplished through education, inspection and enforcement.

10.1. Smoking

Smoking and tobacco product use are prohibited in all facilities and areas of the University of New Haven campus. This includes, but is not limited to all indoor and outdoor areas on the Main, North, Sawmill and Orange Campuses. This policy applies to any individual on campus property, including but not limited to: students, employees, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers, visitors, and members of the public, and is applicable twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. A full copy of the policy can be found at:

10.2. Cooking

Cooking is the leading cause of home fires and injuries. Unattended cooking is the reason most cooking fires start.

To prevent cooking fires:

- (a) WATCH WHAT YOU HEAT! NEVER LEAVE FOOD UNATTENDED.
- (b) Cook only where permitted such as approved kitchens using university supplied appliances.
- (c) Use only approved devices from a recognized testing agency.
- (d) Keep cooking area clean and uncluttered.
- (e) Cook only when alert. Never cook when tired or impaired.
- (f) If a fire starts in an oven or microwave, turn off power, unplug the oven or microwave (if the outlet is accessible) and keep door closed.
- (g) Call 911 if a fire occurs.

10.3. Candles/Open Flames

Any open flames or flame-producing candles are prohibited on campus except for labs, approved cooking locations, and for previously-approved educational purposes. This means that open flames, candles, and incense are never acceptable in residential halls.

However, Open flame devices may be permitted in the following situations, provided safety precautions satisfactory to and prior approval from the Fire Marshal are obtained:

- (a) For ceremonial or religious purposes
- (b) On stages and platforms where part of a performance
- (c) Where candles on tables are securely supported on substantial noncombustible bases and candle flame is protected.

10.4. Electrical

- (a) All electrical appliances should be approved/listed by a recognized testing company such as Underwriters Laboratory (UL) and in good operating condition.
- (b) Do not overload electrical outlets.
- (c) Extension cords are for temporary use and should not be a substitute for permanent wiring.
- (d) Extension cords are never acceptable in residential halls.
- (e) Extension cords should be unplugged when not in use and at the end of the day.
- (f) Use light bulbs with the wattage intended for the appliance.
- (g) Never pin, tack or run cords under carpet or through walls.
- (h) All electrical work must be performed by the Facilities Department.
- (i) Electrical closets are not intended for storage. A 3 square foot clearance must be maintained around all electrical panels, boxes, and disconnects.
- (j) Due to the inherent risk, the following electrical items are prohibited within Residence Halls:
 - open-coil cooking units, small convection ovens, homemade lighting devices, neon lights and signs, octopus style lamps with multiple arms, extension cords, halogen lamps, heating blankets, multi-outlet adapters (UL approved power strips are allowed-one per outlet), sun and heat lamps, in-door portable stove top grills, small freezers, and larger than 3.2 – 3.3 cubic feet non-University supplied refrigerators. Non-university supplied air conditioners, dishwashers, washers, driers. Additional information can be found in the Student Handbook.

10.5. Space Heaters

Problems with heat should be reported to Facilities before the use of space heaters. If unable to resolve, facilities may issue an approved device.

- (a) Only University of New Haven issued space heaters are allowed.
- (b) Use of approved space heaters must follow the [Portable Electric Space Heater Policy](#) located on MyCharger.

10.6. Laundry

- (a) Do not overload washers or dryers with articles of clothing.
- (b) Dryer lint screens must be cleaned prior to and after each use.
- (c) Empty pockets before placing clothing in washer and dryers.
- (d) Turn off washer or dryer if any problems are encountered.
- (e) Keep laundry room door closed.
- (f) Report any problems immediately to facilities or ORL staff.

10.7. Grilling

Must be in accordance with the [University of New Haven Grilling Policy](#) located on MyCharger.

11.0 Lithium-Ion Batteries

Lithium-ion batteries are found in most electronic devices including cell phones, laptops, tablets, electric toothbrushes, and electronic scooters. There is an increased risk of fires and even explosions when these are damaged or improperly used, charged, or stored. Fires involving lithium-ion batteries also has the added danger of releasing toxic gases. Only purchase batteries that are listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory and labeled accordingly.

11.1. Hoverboards, eBikes, and Electric Scooters

Hoverboards (self-balancing scooters), electric bicycles, and electric scooters are prohibited from being operated, stored, or charged inside of any building or on a property owned or controlled by the University of New Haven. This policy is intended to minimize the risk associated with the lithium-ion batteries overheating, catching fire, or exploding while charging or riding.

Anyone found to be in possession of these items will be asked to remove them from the property immediately. If this is not possible, Office of Residential Life staff may escort the owner to secured containers located outside the gatehouse where the items may be stored for safekeeping until they are able to be removed. The University Police

Department keeps this container locked at all times.

Additional information may be found in the [Hoverboard Policy](#) located on MyCharger.

11.2. Storage

- (a) Store devices containing lithium-ion batteries in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight and sources of heat.
- (b) Do not store these devices if they show signs of damage. Dispose of immediately and properly.
- (c) Handle with care to avoid physical damages like punctures.

11.3. Charging

- (a) Do not leave an electronic device containing a lithium-ion battery unattended while it's charging.
- (b) Stop charging once the battery is full. Overcharging can lead to overheating.
- (c) Never charge the device in direct sunlight. Keep away from temperature extremes, whether excessively hot or cold.
- (d) Do not charge the device in an area that may block the exit or egress route.
- (e) Avoid using chargers that did not come with the device, as the charger may be incompatible.
- (f) Unplug the charger immediately if you notice unusual odors, swelling, smoking, heat, popping sounds, or a change in color.

11.4. Disposal

Lithium-ion batteries are regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency as a universal waste, and therefore must not be disposed of in the regular trash. Contact the Department of Environmental Health & Safety for disposal.

11.5. Damaged Batteries

Signs of damage include leaking, swelling or bulging, bumps, heat, unusual odor, smoking, and popping, hissing, or sizzling sounds. If your battery exhibits any of these behaviors, do the following:

- (a) Stop use of the device immediately. If charging, unplug the charger immediately.
- (b) If possible, bring the device or battery outside. Keep it away from people or crowds.
 - a. If not possible, put it in a cool, dry place away from flammable or combustible materials.

- (c) Contact the campus police immediately and follow their instructions.

12.0 Inspections

Resident Assistants conduct health and safety inspections during the semester in every residence hall room. The local and campus fire marshals perform fire code inspections in accordance with the Connecticut Fire Prevention Code. Any issues found during these inspections are reported to the Facilities Department for corrections.

12.1. Self-Inspections

You are most responsible for your safety. Performing safety inspections of your area can increase your chances for surviving from a fire or other emergencies. Ensure the following:

- (a) Means of egress is maintained, functional and unobstructed, doors not wedged open, and hardware works as designed.
- (b) Electrical outlets are not overloaded, extension cords are unplugged when not actively being used, and devices are listed from a recognized testing agency such as Underwriters Laboratory (UL).
- (c) Fire Safety devices are not obstructed, missing or damaged (extinguishers, pull stations, exit/emergency lights, sprinkler components, fire doors).
- (d) No excessive storage.

13.0 Fire Safety Education

Fire safety education is provided by members of the Department of Public Safety. Fire safety education programs are provided for all students living on and off campus. Faculty and staff are encouraged to attend fire safety training announced throughout the year.

- (a) Office of Residential Life staff receive fire safety training prior to the start of each school year.
- (b) ORL staff provide basic fire safety training during floor meetings at the beginning of semesters.
- (c) First year students receive fire safety training during orientation covering;

residence hall fire safety, prevention, evacuation and muster locations.

- (d) Students living off-campus are offered training throughout the year.
- (e) Fire safety bulletins are provided to all members of the University of New Haven community throughout the year.
- (f) Fire extinguisher training is provided upon request.

14.0 To receive additional training, contact creed@newhaven.edu or call 203-932-7010.
References

Owner	Title
University of New Haven Department of Public Safety Policies	MyCharger Fire Safety & Office of Fire Marshal Hoverboard Policy Online UNH Student Handbook 2024-2025
Connecticut Department of Administrative Service's Office of State Fire Marshal	Connecticut Fire Prevention Code
National Fire Protection Association	NFPA 1: Fire Code NFPA 101: Life Safety Code Lithium-Ion Batteries