

Northwestern

Emergency Evacuation Plans
and Exercises

Environmental Health and Safety

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I. Purpose

The purpose of this program is to provide Northwestern faculty, staff, and students guidance on emergency evacuation plan development and the execution of emergency evacuation exercises as required by Environmental Health and Safety and the Department of Safety & Security.

II. Scope

This program applies to all Northwestern faculty, staff, and students involved in building evacuations on Northwestern property related to fires, chemical spills, or gas leaks that make the building no longer safe to occupy. For emergencies related to bomb threats and active shooter incidents, follow the **Emergency Response Framework**.

III. Responsibilities

For the safety and security of everyone, it is important for everyone to know what to do in an evacuation; refer to **Section VII** for evacuation procedures.

A. **Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) and the Department of Safety & Security**

- i. Develop and maintain the emergency evacuation and planning framework.
- ii. Support evacuation plan development, exercises, and training needs.
- iii. Serve on evacuation committees.

B. **Building Managers**

- i. Partner with building evacuation teams and committees to schedule exercises.
- ii. Participate in building evacuation exercises.

C. **Department Heads, Managers, or Supervisors**

- i. Elect employees to serve on evacuation teams or to be floor wardens; evacuation teams should be comprised of both normal and off-hours employees, where applicable.
- ii. Allow evacuation team members at least 1 hour per quarter to perform duties.
- iii. Contact EHS or the Office of Equity with questions or concerns regarding individuals requiring rescue assistance.

D. **Evacuation Committee**

Evacuation committees include EHS, the Department of Safety & Security, building managers, department heads, managers, and supervisors. The responsibilities of the committees include:

- i. Assist in the development and review of evacuation plans, and participate in exercises.
- ii. Maintain building evacuation plans, host debrief meetings, participate in evacuation exercises, and oversee any items that require follow-up.
- iii. Implement systems to account for employees and students during exercises and true evacuations.

E. **Evacuation Teams (Wardens and Other Key Personnel)**

- i. Develop and review evacuation plans for their respective areas.
- ii. Notify occupants to exit the building during an emergency or evacuation exercise.
- iii. Participate in evacuation exercises and post-evacuation debriefs.
- iv. Provide information to respective departments/units regarding evacuation procedures, announcements, and updates.
- v. Report any individuals who require assistance during an evacuation to the evacuation team and the authorities during an emergency.

- F. **Faculty, Staff, and Students**
 - i. Participate in evacuation exercises.
 - ii. Become members of evacuation teams.
 - iii. Inform your area's evacuation warden if you require evacuation assistance.
 - iv. Faculty must notify students to evacuate the building in academic settings.
- G. **Facilities Operations**
 - i. Develop and install evacuation maps.
 - ii. Participate in evacuation exercises.
 - iii. Become members of evacuation teams.
 - iv. Document procedures for shutting down building systems.
- H. **Residential Services**
 - i. Elect employees to serve on evacuation teams.
 - ii. Residence assistants must notify students to evacuate the buildings.
 - iii. Participate in evacuation exercises.
 - iv. Install evacuation maps in residence halls.

IV. Emergency Evacuation Plans and Maps

- A. All buildings are required to have evacuation plans.
- B. At a minimum, evacuation plans must include the following:
 - i. Notification and reporting procedures for each emergency type.
 - ii. Egress routes, exterior assembly areas, and processes to for individuals.
 - iii. Procedures for shutting down critical operations before an evacuation (including labs and building systems).
 - iv. List of evacuation team members and committee representatives.
 - v. Description of alarm types and means for evacuation communication.
 - vi. Clear outline of how to communicate plan changes and who must be contacted.
 - vii. Location(s) of areas of rescue assistance.
- C. Designated exterior assembly areas must meet the following criteria:
 - i. Located in an open area (i.e., park, sidewalk, parking lot), far enough from the building to avoid any immediate danger, but close enough to prevent prolonged travel times and/or fatigue for individuals to reach the assembly area.
 - ii. Must not impede emergency response access.
 - iii. Sufficient space to accommodate all evacuated individuals.
 - iv. If possible, located:
 - a. Away from noisy areas where it may be difficult to take a head count or receive instructions from emergency responders,
 - b. In areas where evacuees do not have to cross high vehicle traffic streets or areas to access, and
 - c. Up-wind of the building from the most common or prevailing wind direction.
- D. Departments and units may utilize their own emergency evacuation plan format, as long as it meets the minimum requirements of the template available in **Appendix 1**.
- E. Plans must be reviewed after initial creation, building structure updates, before an exercise, and annually.
- F. Current plans must be available to all occupants electronically or in hard-copy form.
- G. Evacuation maps must be posted in common areas (i.e., outside of stairwells, in elevator lobbies).

V. Chicago Campus Evacuations

Chicago campus buildings or floors are designated as high-rise, school, or mixed, depending on the occupancy type, which determines how buildings or floors are evacuated in an emergency (see **Table 1** for the building and floor designations).

A. High-rise Designation

Fire alarms are silent and the Chicago Fire Department is alerted and dispatched. Once on scene, the fire department will determine which floors to evacuate and alert occupants with instructions using the building’s voice annunciation system.

B. School Designation

An audible fire alarm with strobe lights will alert building occupants to evacuate the building.

C. Mixed Designation

Buildings with floors identified as a school will adhere to the school designation, and floors identified as a high-rise will adhere to the high-rise designation.

Table 1 – Chicago Building Occupancy Designations

Building(s):	Floor(s):	Designation:	Evacuation Activated by:
Abbott Hall, Ward Memorial Building, Searle Medical Research Building, Morton Medical Research Building, Lurie Children’s Hospital, 345 E. Superior St., Simpson Querrey Biomedical Research Center	All floors	High-rise	Chicago Fire Department
Gary Law Library, Levy Mayer Hall, McCormick Hall, Wieboldt Hall	All floors	School	Horns and strobes
Tarry Research and Education Building	1-17	High-rise	Chicago Fire Department
	Basement	School	Horns and strobes
Rubloff Building	Basement-4	School	Horns and strobes
	5-12	High-rise	Chicago Fire Department

VI. Planning and Completing Evacuation Exercises

- Exercise frequencies are determined in accordance with federal and local requirements by EHS and the Department of Safety & Security (refer to **Table 2** for the Evanston Campus and **Table 3** for the Chicago campus; note, buildings listed individually are identified as high-hazard/high-occupancy).
- Evacuation committees must collaborate with EHS and the Department of Safety & Security to schedule an exercise (see **Appendix 2** for the evacuation drill checklist).
- Evacuation committees will review and update the building evacuation plan (if necessary) with EHS prior to the exercise.
- Evacuation committees will meet with evacuation teams prior to the exercise to discuss roles and responsibilities, assembly areas, etc.
- Evacuation committees must send an email to all building occupants reminding them about the emergency evacuation procedures and where they are located; this email should include instruction on how to request rescue assistance if needed.

Table 2 – Evanston Campus Frequency of Evacuation Exercises

Building(s):	Exercise Type(s):	Frequency:
Searle Hall (Health Services) and Sports Arenas, Complexes, and Stadiums	Combination of exercises, tabletop exercises, and plan review	Quarterly
Fraternities, Residence Halls, and Sororities (excluding Graduate Residence Halls)	Evacuation exercise	Bi-annually (the first exercise must occur within the first ten days of school)
Academic and Professional Buildings	Combination of exercises, tabletop exercises, and plan review	Annually
Technological Institute	Evacuation exercise	Annually
Kellogg Global Hub	Evacuation exercise	Annually
Cook Hall	Evacuation exercise	Annually
Ford Motor Company Engineering Design Center	Evacuation exercise	Annually
Norris University Center	Evacuation exercise	Annually
University Library, Deering Library, and Mudd Hall	Evacuation exercise	Annually

Table 3 – Chicago Campus Frequency of Evacuation Exercises

Building(s):	Exercise Type(s):	Frequency:
345 E. Superior St.	Combination of exercises, tabletop exercises, and plan review	Annually
Abbott Hall		
Gary Law Library		
Levy Mayer Hall		
Lurie Children’s Hospital		
McCormick Hall		
Rubloff Building		
Simpson Querrey Biomedical Research Center		
Wieboldt Hall		
Morton Medical Research Building, Searle Medical Research Building, Tarry Research and Education Building, and Ward Memorial Building		

VII. Emergency Evacuation Procedures

A. Preparation

Prior to an evacuation, become educated on how to safely exit a building.

- i. Identify all available exits and exit routes. This will not always be the same way that you came into the building. Knowing multiple ways out may save your life.
- ii. Know your assembly area. Once you exit the building, you should move away from the building to your assembly area. If everyone is in one place, it makes it easier to give/receive information essential to everyone’s safety.
- iii. Understand your building’s capabilities; each building is different and has different fire safety systems. It is important to know what your building’s alarm looks and sounds like and if your building is protected by a sprinkler system.
- iv. Identify areas of rescue assistance for individuals who require rescue assistance.

B. Rescue Assistance

Individuals unable to exit a building without assistance during an evacuation have options. Awareness, communication, and planning are fundamental to ensure these individuals are aware of what will happen in the event of an evacuation.

- i. Certain buildings have stairwells that are designated as areas of rescue assistance, which are identified with a placard, because they are designed to stage individuals during an evacuation.
- ii. If your building does not have stairwells designated as areas of rescue assistance, employees who need evacuation assistance can shelter in place in an office behind a closed door that is in an area as far from the threat as possible.
- iii. Plan ahead so you are prepared. If you feel as though you may need assistance during an evacuation, contact your supervisor or manager and make them aware of your situation.

C. Alarm Activation

Once your building's alarm system has been activated or you smell smoke:

- i. Evacuate as quickly and safely as possible, and proceed to the assembly area.
- ii. Always use designated routes and stairs and never elevators to evacuate.
- iii. If you can aid someone needing assistance to a designated area, you may do so.
- iv. If you require rescue assistance and cannot get to an area of rescue assistance, call 911 immediately and inform the operator of your situation and location.

D. Reporting

Once you have evacuated, contact emergency response by dialing 911 and calmly state:

- i. Your name and department,
- ii. The building and room location(s) of the emergency,
- iii. The nature of the emergency (i.e., fire, smoke, chemical spill),
- iv. The location of any individuals requiring rescue assistance,
- v. Any injuries that have occurred as a result of the emergency,
- vi. Hazards present that may affect emergency response personnel, and
- vii. A phone number or email that can be used to contact you.

If you are unsure if the situation you are experiencing is an emergency, it is always best to call 911 and let them determine after you have given them all of the above details.

E. Accounting for Individuals

Immediately begin taking a head count of the building occupants at the assembly area. Inquire with the evacuees if there were any known additional individuals in the building (i.e., suppliers, customers, students). Identify the names and last known locations of anyone not accounted for, and communicate this to emergency responders.

F. Next Steps

Stay at your designated assembly area, and await further instruction from the authorities (i.e., fire or police department). Never re-enter the building until the authorities have announced it is safe to do so.

VIII. Post-Evacuation Exercise Protocol

Evacuation Committees will:

- A. Complete an evacuation exercise debrief after all exercises (see **Appendix 3**).
- B. Distribute post-exercise surveys for building occupants to complete.
- C. Review the survey results and determine if action is required.
- D. Review and monitor responses from the survey and post-exercise findings.

IX. Training

Evacuation exercises serve as the primary training related to this program. Supplemental, online training will teach details on plan development and exercises.

X. Regulatory Authority

Northwestern will comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) standards, National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) codes, International Code Council's (ICC) codes, and any other applicable codes and standards, including:

[NFPA 1616 – Standard on Mass Evacuation, Sheltering, and Re-Entry Programs \(City of Chicago Ordinance\)](#)

[ICC International Fire Code 2012 \(City of Evanston Ordinance\)](#)

[OSHA 29 CFR 1910.38 – Emergency Action Plans](#)

[OSHA 29 CFR 1926.35 – Employee Emergency Action Plans](#)

XI. Contact

For questions, contact Environmental Health and Safety at ehs@northwestern.edu.

Appendix 1 – Evacuation Plan Template

Emergency Evacuation Plan

This is your departmental emergency evacuation plan. This document must be reviewed and updated, if necessary, at least annually. Plans must be distributed to all employees within the department and stored in a place (electronically or physically) where all employees within the department can access it at all times. If you have questions regarding your emergency evacuation plans, contact Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) at ehs@northwestern.edu

Date Prepared	Date of Last Review	Date of Last Exercise
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Section 1 - Building Information

Building Name Department Floor

Building Address

Section 2 - Safety Information

Building Fire Safety Systems (check all that apply)			Evacuation Alarm System (check all that apply)		
Smoke/Heat Detection <input type="checkbox"/>	Carbon Mon. Detection <input type="checkbox"/>	Sprinkler System <input type="checkbox"/>	Visual Strobes <input type="checkbox"/>	Audible Horns <input type="checkbox"/>	Voice (Fire Department) <input type="checkbox"/>

Designated Assembly Area(s)

Area(s) of Rescue Assistance

Critical Operation Shutdown Procedures

Section 3 - Emergency Contacts

Dial 911 from any phone for all emergencies

	Evanston Campus	Chicago Campus
<p>Northwestern EHS and Risk Management</p> <p>Environmental Health and Safety <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (847) 491-4936</p> <p>Insurance Claims <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (847) 491-4334</p> <p>Workers' Compensation <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (847) 491-5582</p> <p>General Inquiries <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (847) 467-7795</p>	<p>Northwestern Police (non-emergency) <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (847) 491-3456 or 456 from any campus phone</p> <p>Northwestern Facilities Operations <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (847) 491-5201</p> <p>Northwestern Research Safety <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (847) 491-5581</p> <p>City Police Department (non-emergency) <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (847) 866-5000</p> <p>City Fire Department (non-emergency) <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (847) 448-8191</p>	<p><input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (312) 503-3456 or 456 from any campus phone</p> <p><input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (312) 503-8000</p> <p><input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (312) 503-8300</p> <p><input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (312) 746-6000</p> <p><input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/> (312) 745-3705</p>

Section 4 - Emergency Reporting Procedures

In the event of fire, hazardous materials release, or other hazardous situation requiring emergency response activate the fire alarm by pulling an alarm pull station, evacuate the building, and call 911*

When reporting an emergency, calmly state:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Your full name and department ✓ Nature of the emergency (fire, smoke, chemical spill, etc.) ✓ Hazards present which may affect emergency responders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Building and room location of the emergency ✓ Any injuries that have occurred as a result of the emergency ✓ Phone number that can be used to contact you
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** If you are unsure if the situation you are experiencing is an emergency, it is always best to call 911 and let them make a determination after you have given them all of the above details.*

Appendix 2 – Evacuation Drill Checklist

Building Information	
Name:	
Building Manager:	
Evacuation Committee Members:	
Checklist	
	Assemble the evacuation committee (i.e., building manager and evacuation team members).
	Review and update the building evacuation plan (as necessary) with Environmental Health and Safety.
	Collaborate with Environmental Health and Safety, and identify drill type and date. (Ensure there are no critical operations on the drill date, and identify a makeup date to accommodate for any severe weather.)
	Invite the Fire Department and Northwestern Police Department to participate in the drill.
	Prior to the drill, hold an evacuation warden meeting to review the responsibilities and procedures.
	Send out an email reminder one month prior to the drill to all building occupants about the building’s evacuation procedure and where to find it.
	Immediately after the drill, have the building occupants complete post-drill surveys , provided by the evacuation committee.
	Conduct a post-drill debrief with Northwestern’s evacuation debrief form and the post-drill survey report, provided by Environmental Health and Safety.
Comments	

Drill Information	
Building Name:	
Building Manager:	
Evacuation Committee Members:	
EFD/CFD Drill Presence? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Fire Department Comments:
Drill Date:	
Drill Time:	
Duration of the Drill*:	
*Drill duration is the time it took from when the alarm was raised to when the building was fully evacuated or a group was successfully relocated.	
Drill Summary	
Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
Action(s) Needed	