

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

I. Purpose

The Emergency Action Plan has been developed to ensure the safety of WPI faculty, staff, students and visitors in the event of a fire or other emergency. The plan provides a written documentation that details the actions and procedures to be followed in an emergency. The plan also assigns responsibilities for certain actions to designated individuals.

II. Scope

In accordance with the requirements of the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration and WPI Environmental Health and Safety, the following guidelines have been developed to inform and train our faculty, staff, students and visitors regarding:

- Emergency evacuation and shelter-in-place procedures
- Personnel accountability
- Fire prevention
- Fire extinguisher use
- Medical emergency procedures
- Response to other hazardous situations

Faculty, staff, students and visitors are expected to know how to respond to emergency situations. Appropriate responses may be as simple as evacuating the area, summoning additional assistance, mitigating the hazard, or assisting another member of the WPI community in cases of accident, fire, illness, or injury.

The Emergency Action Plan shall be made available on the EHS web site (www.wpi.edu/+ehs) or via email at ehs@wpi.edu.

III. Application

This program applies to all WPI faculty, staff, students and visitors.

IV. Procedures

1. Emergency Communications

In any emergency it is critical that information be communicated clearly, quickly and to the appropriate person(s). On the WPI campus, emergency information should be communicated to the WPI Campus Police at their emergency number: (508) 831-5555. WPI Campus Police will summons outside help (police, fire, EMS and others) as needed and communicate emergency information to appropriate members of the WPI community.

a. Blue Light Emergency Phones

There are over 106 Blue Light Emergency Phones located across campus. There are also phones in many elevators on campus to provide communications in an emergency. Press the red button to prompt an emergency response from WPI Campus Police.

b. Reporting an Emergency by Phone

Although 9-1-1 is the most common number to call when you are off campus, directing emergency calls directly to WPI Campus Police provides a more rapid and coordinated response to an emergency on campus. When calling 508-831-5555 from a WPI land-line phone, officers will know your location (through caller id) and will respond quickly to help.

When 9-1-1 is called from a cell phone there can be a delay in determining your exact location since the call must be processed through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts 911 call center. If there is ever any problem reaching WPI Campus Police at (508) 831-5555 call 9-1-1 and describe your location and the situation to the dispatcher.

c. WPI Alert System

WPI has implemented an emergency campus alert system that can contact thousands of individuals within minutes if there is an urgent situation or crisis. During critical events, WPI Campus Police will use the WPI Alert System to deliver advisories and instructions to students, faculty, staff and others via cell phones, land lines, email and other communication devices. To find out more information about this important system please visit <https://www.wpi.edu/about/emergency-management/wpi-alerts>

d. Important Telephone Numbers

Emergency Telephone Contacts	
WPI Campus Police <i>(Call for any Emergency including: Police, Fire, Medical, and Hazardous Materials)</i>	508-831-5555

Non – Emergency Telephone Contacts <i>(some of these numbers may not always be attended)</i>	
WPI Campus Police	508-831-5433
Off Campus: City of Worcester Police	911
Facilities Service Center	508-831-5500
Weather Closing Phone	508-831-5744
Environmental Health & Safety	508-831-5216
Residential Services	508-831-5645
Health Services	508-831-5520
Student Disability Services	508-831-4908
Student Development & Counseling Center	508-831-5540
Employee Assistance Program	508-831-5470
IT Helpdesk	508-831-5888
Marketing & Communications	508-831-5305

2. Types of Emergencies

Emergencies can generally be grouped into one of two categories: Events that require building evacuation or events that require building occupants to shelter-in-place.

a. Evacuation

There are several reasons to evacuate a building. Although fire in the building is a primary reason to leave the building, other reasons that may warrant an evacuation of occupants include:

- Fire alarm or active fire
- Chemical spill (evacuation may be limited to room or floor)
- Significant gas leak
- Presence of unwanted animals or other pests
- Prolonged power outage

Emergency Exit Requirements

- In addition to OSHA requirements, Massachusetts building and fire safety regulations dictate how exits are to be constructed and maintained. These regulations apply to exit doors, the exit access (corridors and stairwells that lead to the exit) and the exit discharge (the area past the exit doors which may include exterior ramps, steps, fire escapes and sidewalks).
- Exits are permanent, unobstructed means of egress that must lead to a street, walkway, or other open space outside the building. They can, under certain circumstances lead directly into another building or area of refuge provided that they then lead directly to the outside. Exits must be adequate in number and shall be clearly visible to all occupants in the building. An illuminated sign, readily visible from any direction of exit access, shall mark each exit.
- Exit accesses and discharges must be maintained and remain unobstructed at all times. Exits provide a safe and easily identifiable route out of a building in cases of emergency and allow swift and unhampered ingress for firefighters or other emergency personnel in the event of a fire or rescue. Designated exits must meet the following criteria:
 - All corridor smoke and fire doors must be kept closed to prevent smoke migration to other parts of the building. Fire doors may be held open by magnetic door-holders connected to the building's fire alarm system. These doors will close automatically in the event of a fire. Door chocks and stops must never be used.
 - Corridors and stairwells cannot be obstructed or used for storage. Prohibited items include but are not limited to recycling and trash containers, boxes and paper, combustible decorations, stuffed chairs, couches and other furnishings.
 - Exit doors may never be chained or locked to prevent travel out of the building.
 - Any door located within the means of egress that may be mistaken to be a part of the means of egress shall be labeled "Not an Exit".
 - All exits and exit signage must be maintained at all times. During construction, demolition or repair of a building, any alternate means of egress must be communicated to EHS if the exit is to be blocked during construction or altered in any way.

Know Your Building

Members of the WPI community are urged to become familiar with the layout of the building in which they may be working, studying, living or visiting. You should be familiar with:

- The location of corridors and exterior doors in your building.
- The locations of stairways. Be familiar with at least two ways out of the building.
- The location of fire alarm pull stations
- The location of fire extinguishers

At appropriate times, under the direction of WPI Campus Police evacuation drills may be carried out in any University owned building. Two (2) evacuation drills are required in every University residence hall annually. The drills are conducted to familiarize staff and occupants of the building with the sound of the fire alarm and to initiate the appropriate, desired response during an alarm.

Responding to a chemical spill in your building

In the event of a hazardous substance emergency or spill, the following action should be taken:

- Immediately alert all personnel to evacuate the room.
- Once everyone is out, close the door behind you.
- Find a nearby phone and contact WPI Campus Police at 508-831-5555.
- Tend to injured or contaminated personnel.
- Stay in the general area, at a safe distance away, and wait for emergency responders.
- Introduce yourself to emergency responders as they arrive. Emergency responders want to ensure that the information they have is accurate and that conditions have not changed since the initial phone call was made.

Reporting – As a follow up to any incident, a detailed report must be reported must be submitted to the Laboratory Supervisor, Department Chair, Talent & Inclusion, and EHS by using the form at the following URL: <http://www.wpi.edu/+accident>

Injury – When appropriate, seek medical consultation for injuries that result from a laboratory incident by contacting your physician or Worcester Polytechnic Institute Health Services.

Responding to a fire alarm in your building

When you hear the fire alarm within a building, evacuate the building quickly and calmly. It is state law and WPI policy that you evacuate when the fire alarm is activated. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

- If a door to the hallway is closed, check the doorknob.
- If it is hot, don't open it!
- If the door is cool, open it slowly and check the hallway for smoke.
 - Remember that smoke rises, so the best visibility will be near the floor.
 - If smoke or heat blocks your way, look for an alternate exit. There should be at least two ways out of the building.
 - An elevator is not an exit. Never use an elevator during a fire or fire alarm.
 - Close doors behind you as you leave. This will help prevent the spread of smoke and fire. On your way out, notify others that they should immediately evacuate from the building.
 - Go to the exit and proceed directly to the evacuation location outside of the building. Meet with your supervisor and other members of your department for a head count.
 - Do not re-enter the building until the fire department or WPI Campus Police grants permission.

- If you are unable to evacuate the building because of fire or smoke in the corridor:
 - Remain calm.
 - Close the door to the room and call WPI Campus Police at (508) 831-5555 and describe your location.
 - If smoke begins to come in around the door frame, place tape, blankets, towels or clothing around the door. Wet the fabric with water if possible.
 - Wave a brightly colored article of clothing or similar material in the window to attract attention, but do not break the window.

Evacuation Procedures for Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities should utilize a “buddy system” in the event of an emergency evacuation from the building. This “buddy” will evacuate, seek help and communicate the location and other information about the disabled person to emergency personnel.

In the event of an evacuation within a building remember, the elevator will not operate when the fire alarm is activated. If you need to use the elevator to evacuate the building, proceed to an “area of rescue” in a stairwell or office with a fire door. Communicate with WPI Campus Police at 508-831-5555 to provide your location, other information and wait until firefighters arrive.

If it is necessary for you to evacuate the building, the fire personnel may choose to carry you. Be prepared to explain the quickest way to disengage any equipment to facilitate the evacuation and give them any other necessary instructions. In some cases, you may be asked to shelter-in-place inside your room if firefighters determine that your room will remain safe while the situation is brought under control.

When the fire alarm sounds:

- If you can access an exit without the use of the elevator, proceed to the assigned evacuation location outside of the building. Once you have safely left the building, make sure that Brown Public Safety is aware that you have exited the building safely.
- If you require the use of the elevator, you will need to shelter-in-place until firefighters can respond to assist you. A stairwell or an office with a thick wooden or metal door will provide an “area of rescue” where you can await the arrival of firefighters who will help evacuate you from the building.
- If you are unable to evacuate the building for any reason, call WPI Campus Police at 508-831-5555. Give the dispatcher the following information:
 - There is an emergency in your building.
 - You have a disability and need assistance.
 - Provide the name of the building and your exact location.
 - If you are in a room, wait by the window. If possible, use a brightly colored article of clothing or similar material to attract the attention of emergency responders.

DEEP: Disability Emergency Evacuation Program

The Office of Accessibility Services coordinates and facilitates services for all Students, Faculty, Staff and Visitors with physical, psychological, and learning disabilities.

During an emergency evacuation, the primary responsibility of every member of the WPI community is to exit the building as quickly and calmly as possible. This may be more difficult for some individuals with disabilities. As an individual without a disability, one of the best ways to help a person with a disability is to evacuate the building and contact WPI Campus Police once safely outside. Provide emergency responders with information concerning the location of the

disabled person and the nature of the disability. Emergency responders will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the individual.

Students, faculty or staff members requesting an accommodation due to a qualifying disability should register with the Office of Accessibility Services. The Director will conduct a review and analysis prior to making a determination about the provision of reasonable accommodations. Accommodation requests are evaluated individually, based on documentation and completion of the registration process.

In any emergency situation, if you are unable to evacuate a building without assistance, the WPI Campus Police will need to know your location. Contact them by phone at 508-831-5555. They will direct police officers or firefighters to assist you.

b. Shelter-in-Place

Shelter-in-place is a safety protocol that involves staying indoors and seeking immediate shelter in a specific location. This measure is typically implemented during emergencies such as natural disasters, hazardous material incidents, or public health crises. The purpose of sheltering in place is to protect individuals from potential harm or exposure to dangerous conditions outside. It is crucial to follow instructions and stay informed through reliable sources during a shelter-in-place situation to ensure personal safety and well-being.

3. Fire Alarm and Fire Suppression Systems

Many WPI buildings are equipped with a fire alarm system and fire suppression systems to detect and control fires while providing building occupants with an early warning evacuation signal. In some buildings, an alarm signal is simultaneously sent to both the WPI Campus Police and the Worcester Fire Department so that first responders can be quickly dispatched to the emergency.

a. Alarm Initiation

Early warning fire alarm systems may be activated automatically or manually. Smoke detectors, heat detectors and sprinkler flow switches are all examples of devices that will activate a fire alarm system automatically. A fire alarm pull station can be operated manually to initiate an alarm.

You will find fire alarm pull stations located at the the entrances to stairwells and at building exits.

b. How to Activate a Fire Alarm Pull Station

To activate a fire alarm pull station, follow the directions printed on the device. Pull stations require two actions to initiate an alarm.



To activate this type of fire alarm pull station, lift up the flap, grasp the top of the device and pull towards you. You will hear a click, and the device will lock into position.



This newer style fire alarm pull station requires that you push in and then pull down. Please note - the “Activated” sign will appear when the device has been triggered.

V. Training Requirements:

At WPI, it is mandatory for all employees to participate in Emergency Action Plan Training. This training is crucial for ensuring the safety and well-being of everyone on campus. Newly hired employees are specifically required to attend the training within three months of their hire date. Classroom sessions for the training will be announced and can be registered for at www.wpi.edu/+ehs. While attendance is mandatory for employees, students are also strongly encouraged to attend these sessions to familiarize themselves with the Emergency Action Plan and contribute to a safe campus environment.