



EMERGENCY PLANNING

Scope

This SOP is a compliment to the information available on the SAFETY AT UNL website (<https://safety.unl.edu/>), particularly the plan templates for Business Continuity Planning and Building Emergency Action Plans. This SOP provides guidance related to pre-planning, training, and evacuation drills. Questions regarding Emergency Planning and Fire Safety should be directed to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Director of Emergency Management and the university Building Code Official.

Pre-Planning – General Considerations

- A workplace must have at least two permanent exit routes to permit prompt evacuation of occupants during an emergency, and egress routes must be maintained during building construction, repairs, or alterations.
- Exit routes must be located as far away as practical from each other in case one is blocked by fire or smoke.
- Exit doors must permit unimpeded passage from the inside.
- Exit routes must be free of explosives, flammable/combustible furnishings, and decorations.
- Exit routes should not require employees to travel toward or through high-hazard areas.
- Exit routes must not be obstructed by materials, equipment, locked doors, or dead-end corridors.
- Exit signs must never be obscured by decorations or signs.
- Doors or passages along an egress route that could be mistaken for an exit should be marked or labeled, such as "Storage" or "Closet."
- Doors to hazardous locations (i.e., science laboratories, shops, etc.) must be posted with emergency and hazard information. See EHS SOP **Door Posting for Potentially Hazardous Locations**.

- Shelter-in-place locations as well as points of refuge for mobility-impaired people must be designated.

Pre-Planning – Gathering Locations

- All persons should be made aware of the evacuation routes from their workplaces and the gathering location after evacuation.
- Following evacuation, building occupants should convene at the predetermined gathering location. An alternate location should also be predetermined in the event that the primary location is not safe (i.e., smoke, vapors, etc., are blowing toward the gathering location). Designated gathering locations should be at least 100 feet from the building but may need to be extended further based on the severity of the hazard.
- To the extent possible, account for all building occupants following evacuation and notify on-site emergency responders of personnel that are not accounted for. Generally, employees should gather and stay with their supervisors; and supervisors should conduct a head count and report missing people.

Pre-Planning – Written Emergency Plans

In addition to the requirements discussed above, certain areas on campus pose increased hazard because of the presence/use of flammable/combustible chemicals or open flames/hot processes. Science laboratories and shops generally fall into this category. These types of hazardous locations should have a written building specific emergency response plan and the plan should be updated as necessary to remain current. A Building Emergency Action Plan template is available from the UNLPD and a PDF is viewable/available at <https://safety.unl.edu>. Additional information to consider including in the plan includes:

- Description of the type of emergency equipment available, its location, and a brief description of applicable testing or maintenance programs.
- Description, location, and approximate quantities of chemicals and other hazards (i.e., biological agents, lasers, radioactive materials, etc.) within the building (or the location where this information is readily available).

This plan is supplemented by general emergency procedures applicable to UNL. These procedures are available on the SAFETY AT UNL emergency planning and preparedness website (<https://safety.unl.edu/>) and discussed in the online training program, **Emergency Preparedness**, available through the EHS website.

Pre-Planning - Training

Life Safety and Fire Protection Codes require that employees receive instruction in emergency evacuation plans and procedures. Instruction can be achieved by participation in the EHS **Emergency Preparedness** training with supplemental building-specific instruction related to evacuation routes, alarms, designated gathering locations, etc., provided by the employee's supervisor. This instruction should occur immediately upon hire and reviewed on a periodic basis.

Post-Event – Returning to the Building

Occupants are not to return to the building evacuated until given permission to do so by the Incident Commander (generally the Lincoln Fire Department) or other on-site emergency response authority (for example, UNL Police).

Drills

It is recommended that fire drills be held at least annually, which is the same frequency that the alarm systems are tested by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Building Systems Maintenance. Beginning in late 2025, the UNL Police Department will be establishing a schedule for annual evacuation drills in all university buildings. As you read this, if your building has not been contacted and you would like to organize a drill, contact the Service Desk.

Alarms

If the fire alarm sounds in your area never assume it is a drill. Evacuate.