



SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH, SAFETY
& RISK MANAGEMENT

FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY PROTECTION STANDARD

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard is to prescribe minimum requirements necessary to establish a reasonable level of fire and life safety and property protection from the dangerous conditions that could result in fire or explosion on all SHSU properties.

References: NFPA 1 - National Fire Code
NFPA 30 – Flammable and Combustible Liquids Code
NFPA 70 – National Electric Code
NFPA 80 – Standard for Fire Doors and Other Opening Protectives
NFPA 101 – Life Safety Code

II. SCOPE

This standard is applicable to all SHSU staff, faculty, students, contractors, visitors and property.

III. APPLICATION

This standard applies to the control and elimination of potential fire hazards on all SHSU properties and applies to both new and existing conditions. The University is committed to following fire safety practices, as articulated by both National Fire Codes and other standard-setting organizations. Fire and Life Safety systems are designed to provide staff, students and visitors safe, secure structures that meet and/or often exceed, fire and building codes.

IV. EXCEPTIONS

This standard does not apply to the following:

1. Operations involving welding, cutting, brazing or grinding are exempt from this standard and are governed by the Hot Work Program Procedure.



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V. DEFINITIONS

1. NFPA OFFICIAL DEFINITIONS

- a. Approved: Acceptable to the AHJ
- b. Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ): An organization, office, or individual responsible for enforcing the requirements of a code or standard, or for approving equipment, materials, an installation, or a procedure.
 - i. The Texas State Fire Marshal is the Authority Having Jurisdiction over a state-owned building for the purposes of fire safety (Ref: Texas Government Code – Title 4 / Chapter 417).
 - ii. The Executive Director of Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management serves as the local AHJ for SHSU.
- c. Code: A standard that is an extensive compilation of provisions covering broad subject matter or that is suitable for adoption into law independently of other codes and standards.
- d. NFPA: National Fire Protection Association
- e. Shall: Indicates a mandatory requirement.
- f. Should: Indicates a recommendation or that which is advised but not required.

2. GENERAL DEFINITIONS

- a. Alarm: A warning of danger.
- b. Alcohol-Based Hand Rub: An alcohol-containing preparation designed for application to the hands for reducing the number of visible microorganisms on the hands and containing ethanol or isopropanol in an amount not exceeding 95 percent by volume.
- c. Clear Space: An area free of all materials that are combustible.
- d. Combustible (Material): A material that, in the form in which it is used and under the conditions anticipated, will ignite and burn; a material that does not meet the definition of noncombustible or limited-combustible.
- e. Combustible (Liquid): Any liquid that has a flash point at or above 100 degrees F.
- f. Common Path of Travel: The portion of exit access that must be traversed before two separate and distinct paths of travel to two exits are available.



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- g. Detector: A device suitable for connection to a circuit that has a sensor that responds to a physical stimulus such as gas, heat or smoke.
- h. Emergency: A fire, explosion, or hazardous condition that poses an immediate threat to the safety of life or damage to property.
- i. Fire Door: Any combination of a fire door, a frame, hardware, and other accessories that together provide a specific degree of fire protection to the opening.
- j. Flammable Liquid: Any liquid that has a flash point below 100 degrees F.
- k. Means of Egress: A continuous, unobstructed and protected path of travel from any point in a building to an exterior exit and consisting of three distinct parts: (1) the exit access, (2) the exit, and (3) the exit discharge.
 - i. Exit Access: The path of travel that leads to an exit door and/or exit discharge.
 - ii. Exit: The space separated from other interior spaces (hall, stairs) by fire-resistance-rated construction that is between the exit access and exit discharge door.
 - iii. Exit Discharge: The door(s) that open(s) to the exterior of a building.
- l. Safe Area of Refuge: An area that is either:
 - i. A story in a building where the building is protected throughout by an approved automatic sprinkler system and has not less than two accessible rooms or spaces separated from each other by smoke-resistant partitions.
 - ii. A space located in a path of travel leading to a public way that is protected from the effects of fire, either by separation from other spaces in the same building or by virtues of location, which permits a safe delay in egress travel from any level.
- m. Safety Can: An ANSI/UL listed metal or nonmetallic fuel container with a capacity limited to 5 gallons equipped with:
 - i. A spring-loaded, self-closing spout cover, held open with a handle.
 - ii. The ability to relieve internal pressure if the can is exposed to a fire.
 - iii. A screen or strainer in each spout.
- n. Temporary wiring: Approved wiring for power and lighting during a period of construction, remodeling, maintenance, repair, or demolition, and decorative lighting, carnival power and lighting, and similar purposes.



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VI. PROCEDURES

FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY EQUIPMENT (i.e., fire alarms, smoke alarms, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, emergency lighting and exit signs) ARE MAINTAINED FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL INDIVIDUALS AND PROTECTION OF UNIVERSITY PROPERTIES.

1. Fire Alarms:
 - a. Individuals shall evacuate campus buildings upon the activation of the building fire alarm.
 - b. Mobility impaired individuals on upper floors of buildings who cannot evacuate the building without the use of an elevator, should relocate to a Safe Area of Refuge.
 - i. These individuals should inform faculty, staff or students they are moving to the Safe Area of Refuge and if possible, notify first responders via cell phone of their location.
 - ii. Faculty, staff and students should make every attempt to notify first responders of the location of any mobility impaired individual that requires assistance in exiting the building.
 - c. Building occupants shall not be allowed back into buildings until authorized by proper authority or notified via the KatSafe messaging system.
2. No one shall obstruct, disable, or alter any fire or life safety system or component including but not limited to:
 - a. Fire detection systems (smoke detectors and alarms).
 - b. Suppression systems (building sprinkler heads and systems).
 - c. Fire extinguishers.
 - d. Fire alarm pull stations.
 - e. Fire doors.

NOTE: It is a criminal offense to tamper with or intentionally damage fire and/or life safety systems.
3. Clear corridors and exit pathways (Means of Egress):
 - a. No storage is allowed in exit corridors, stairwells or under stairs.
 - b. An unobstructed minimum width of 44 inches shall be maintained in all corridors and hallways that provide access to emergency exits (common paths of travel).
4. Storage:
 - a. Storage shall not block or interfere with the operation of emergency exits, fire protection systems, or electrical circuit breaker panels.
 - b. Combustible material may not be stored in common paths of travel (corridors).



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- c. Racked or shelved materials (boxes, paper goods, etc.):
 - i. Shall not be stacked within 18 inches of the ceiling in areas protected by a fire sprinkler system.
 - ii. Shall not be stacked within 24 inches of the ceiling in areas not protected by a fire sprinkler system.
- d. Laboratory and office equipment (i.e., refrigerators/freezers, centrifuges, incubators, desks, printers, etc.) shall not be maintained or stored in corridors.
- e. Combustible waste shall not be allowed to accumulate in offices, classrooms or workshops.
 - i. All waste should be disposed of on a daily basis.
- 5. Fire doors:
 - a. Fire doors shall not be wedged or blocked open; unless they are held open by an approved device connected to the building fire alarm system, which will release the door upon activation of the fire alarm.
 - b. Combustible materials (paper/decorations) should not be attached to fire doors nor the vision panels (glass) of fire doors.
- 6. Alcohol Based Hand Rubs: Alcohol based hand rubs are permitted in campus buildings following the guidelines established by NFPA 1 and NFPA 101.
 - a. The maximum individual dispenser fluid capacity shall be 0.32 gal (1.2L) for dispensers in corridors and areas open to corridors.
 - b. Where aerosol containers are used, the maximum capacity of the aerosol dispenser shall be 18 oz. (0.51kg).
 - c. Dispensers shall be separated from each other by horizontal spacing of not less than 48 in. (1220 mm).
 - d. Dispensers shall not be installed within 1 in. (25mm) above, beside or beneath an ignition source.
 - e. Dispensers installed directly over carpeted floors shall be permitted only in sprinklered areas of the building.
- 7. Fire/Emergency Drills.
 - a. Fire and emergency drills are conducted once each semester for on campus student housing in accordance with SHSU Residence Life policies:
<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/residence-life/communitylife/firesafety.html>
 - b. Fire and emergency drills are conducted for all other University buildings periodically, and scheduled through the building liaison and the EHS&RM Fire & Occupational Safety and Health Coordinator



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VII. SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS

1. Candles and Incense:
 - a. Candle/oil warmers, wax sculptures, potpourri pots, paraffin baths, incense, and any open flame device are prohibited in offices, work spaces and student dormitories.
 - b. Candles shall not be used during power outages or in holiday season decorations such as jack-o-lanterns, Christmas wreaths or menorahs
2. Open Flames:
 - a. No open flames are allowed on campus grounds: sky lanterns, tiki torches, fire pits, etc. are not to be utilized for celebrations or events.
 - b. Questions regarding the use any open flame device should be directed to the Fire and Occupational Safety and Health Coordinator at: 936-294-1921 or safety@shsu.edu.
3. Electrical Power Strips:
 - a. All power strips shall be listed and have a grounded (3-prong) attachment plug and be equipped with a resettable fuse/circuit breaker.
 - b. Plugging additional power strips into one power strip (piggybacking) is not allowed.
4. Extension Cords:
 - a. Extension cords shall not be utilized as a substitute for permanent wiring.
 - b. Cord use should be limited to no longer than 30 days.
5. Festival Lighting:
 - a. Decorative light strips and cords (Christmas lights, rope lights, etc.) shall be UL listed and not utilized for more than 30 days.
6. Flammable and Combustible Liquids (i.e., gasoline, paint, glue, chemicals, etc):
 - a. Flammable and Combustible liquids shall not be stored in university buildings, unless stored in an approved Flammable Storage Cabinet or room.
 - b. Flammable Storage Cabinets shall be placed in laboratories, work rooms and maintenance shops and shall not be placed in corridors or exit access routes.
 - c. It is recommended that no more than 2 gallons of flammable liquids be kept outside of a flammable storage cabinet during the class or workday.
 - d. Flammable and combustible liquids used as fuel for maintenance and lawn equipment (gasoline and diesel) shall be stored in and dispensed from approved ANSI/UL rated Safety Cans; unless fueled directly from bulk storage fuel stations.
 - e. Storage of compressed flammable gasses is regulated by the Storage and Use of Compressed Gasses Procedure.



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7. Space Heaters and Radiators:
 - a. Personal space heaters and radiators shall be UL listed and equipped with an automatic shut-off device that will disconnect power to the heating strips in the event the heater or radiator is tipped over.
 - b. Personal space heaters should be connected to a fuse equipped power strip and not plugged directly into wall outlets.
8. Light Coverings:
 - a. The use of acetate, cellophane, tissue paper, or other combustible materials over or in light fixtures is prohibited.
9. Smoking:
 - a. Sam Houston State University is a tobacco free campus. The use or possession of tobacco products or related items (snuff, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, electronic cigarettes, hookahs and water pipes) is prohibited on campus.
(Ref: Presidents Office Policy PRE-19)
10. The SHSU Residence Life Department publishes specific fire and life safety rules and procedures governing all on campus student housing. These rules and procedures are found at: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/residence-life/communitylife/firesafety.html>

VIII. COMPLIANCE

1. All SHSU staff, faculty, students, contractors and visitors are to comply with this Standard while on University properties.
2. Exemptions to compliance with this standard:
 - a. The annual spirit bonfire held at the North end of the Recreational Sports Intermural Fields.
 - b. Open burning at Gibb's Ranch, Bearkat Camp and the Applied Anatomical Research Center, contingent on Walker County posted burn bans.
 - c. Laboratory use of Bunsen Burners, open flames or pyrotechnics for the purpose of instruction and/or experiments under the supervision of Faculty or Graduate Student Assistants.
 - d. Formal President and University sponsored memorial events and dinners where the lighting of ceremonial candles is an essential part of the service.
 - e. Other events where the lighting of candles may be a part of the ceremony require prior written approval from the Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management Department.
3. Authorities:
 - a. Questions regarding compliance with fire and life safety codes and standards should be directed to the Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management Department at: 936-294-1921 or email: safety@shsu.edu.
 - b. The Executive Director of EHS&RM serves as the local AHJ for SHSU and as the liaison between the University and the State Fire Marshal's Office.