



LAKE FOREST  
COLLEGE

# FIRE RESPONSE PLAN

## IMPLEMENTED

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## SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

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### Purpose

The purpose of this document is to familiarize the Lake Forest College community with all facets of emergency response to fire incidents at the College. These include exits and evacuation, specific hazard control, fire extinguisher use, fixed fire suppression systems, alarm recognition and response, safe work habits, and training requirements.

### Scope

All employees of the College are responsible for knowledge of this plan. Training for new employees is the responsibility of the director of their department. Additional training may be necessitated by modifications to the plan or its components or by changes in specific employee responsibility. This plan incorporates and complies with requirements set forth by OSHA 29 CFR 1910.38.

The Department of Public Safety offers additional training in many facets of fire prevention at annual Resident Assistant (RA) Orientation and upon request.

Resident students are required to become familiar with the Fire Safety protocol contained in the current academic year Student Handbook.

### Plan Administration

The Department of Public Safety is responsible for developing and maintaining this plan. Employees may review a copy of this plan in the Public Safety Center (South Campus), Personnel Office (1st floor North Hall) or on line at the Public Safety web page.

If, after reading this plan, you find improvements can be made, please contact the Department of Public Safety. We encourage all suggestions and are committed to the success of our written Fire Response Plan. We strive for clear understanding, safe behavior, and involvement from every level of the College.

## OVERVIEW

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Workplace fire safety is an important issue to all members of the College community. There are too-frequently repeated incidents of workplace fires that impose a terrible and tragic penalty on workers across the country and around the globe. It is the responsibility of the College and each employee to be aware of safety designs and practices that can reduce or eliminate fires and fire-related injuries on the campus. Familiarity with specific safety systems and a heightened awareness of potential hazards remains the key to maintaining a safe work environment. This familiarity and awareness can make accidental fires predictable and, therefore, avoidable.

### Responsibilities

All members of the College community share responsibility for general fire safety in their activities. This includes the safe handling and storage of combustible materials, flammable liquids, and other hazardous products. Community members are also expected to respect components of fire detection and suppression systems, and to evacuate any building upon activation of its fire alarm. Tampering with or obstructing any fire alarm or sprinkler system device is expressly prohibited. The Departments of Public Safety and Facilities Management share responsibility for building and systems inspections on campus, as well as compliance with pertinent fire and life safety codes. All community members are expected to comply with directives from College safety officials in matters of fire safety.

### Explanation of Fire Detection and Suppression Systems

All academic and support buildings, residence halls, and public assembly buildings on campus are equipped with, at minimum, fire detection systems. These systems vary by building, depending on the age of the building and its use. The design of these systems typically includes combination smoke/heat detectors throughout the building. These are connected to a locked fire alarm control panel in the building and monitored by a central supervisory panel located in the Department of Public Safety. Ancillary to many of these systems are self-closing fire doors. These doors are normally held open by electromagnets that release on alarm. No obstruction should be placed in these doorways.

Sprinkler systems are present in many campus buildings. An understanding of these systems is important to assure they will function as designed in the event of fire. The systems on campus are wet systems. This means that there is a water supply in the piping of the system. The sprinkler heads are closed; nozzles holding back the flow of water with a plug that is designed to open in the presence of high heat. Each head is an independent sensing and suppression tool. They will individually open and spray water when exposed to high heat, typically a minimum of 155 to 165 degrees Fahrenheit. The entire system does not spray water when one head senses heat. To operate as intended, sprinkler heads should be kept free of obstruction that would deflect the flow of water or the accumulation of heat at the head. No storage is allowed for a vertical distance of 18 inches below the level of the sprinkler heads in a given area. Heads are not to be painted, used as anchors for decorations, or covered or obstructed in any manner.

Sprinkler systems also activate the building fire alarm when water flow is detected.

## Emergency Notification

Despite the presence of automatic alarm systems in College buildings, members are expected to notify the Department of Public Safety of any fire emergency, providing such notification does not expose the member to personal hazard. The College emergency phone number is (847) 735-5555 (Ext. 5555 for campus phones). Alternately, the Lake Forest Fire Department may be contacted by dialing 911.

## Fire Doors

Fire doors are an important part of the fire protection in each building. These doors are rated to provide a certain amount of protection from smoke, heat, and flame in the event of fire. As noted above, some of these doors are normally held open and only close when the fire alarm activates. Most of the campus buildings are not so equipped, but do have rated doors that must remain closed. These doors are found at all stairwells and in corridors providing access to an exit. Propping a fire door open is not only a violation of fire safety codes, it creates an extreme danger to building occupants.

## Extinguishers

All campus buildings are outfitted with fire extinguishers. There are a variety of sizes and extinguishing products that are used. Extinguishers are to remain in or on their mounting unless needed for firefighting. Do not remove an extinguisher for use as a door prop or for any other use. Faculty and Staff members are encouraged to participate in annual fire extinguisher training sessions that can be scheduled with the Department of Public Safety. No person should attempt to fight a fire with an extinguisher unless they have attended a training session.

## Elevators and Stairwells

Elevators are not to be used during a fire alarm, whether real or not. The campus elevators are designed to descend to the first floor upon fire alarm activation. Calling for an elevator during a fire alarm will only waste precious escape time. Building stairwells are built to offer an increased level of protection (see "Fire Doors" above) and should be used to evacuate from upper floors. College community members with mobility limitations should make their whereabouts known to Public Safety, in terms of both permanent locations and in the event of a fire.

Stairwells are not to be used for storage of any kind. Such storage obstructs evacuation and can, in the case of combustibles, create a fire hazard in the stairway. The prohibition of storage specifically includes the areas under the stairs. These storage prohibitions also apply to student residence hall balconies.

Note: Young Hall is equipped with fire-protective shutters at the windows in its stairwells. These shutters will descend to cover the windows by manual activation of a switch in the building's fire alarm control panel.

## Exits

In the event of fire or fire alarm, all occupants are expected to immediately evacuate the affected building. To this end, the maintenance and availability of emergency exits is of paramount importance. Fire exits include main doors also used as entrances, occasionally used side doors, as well as doors designed specifically for emergency use. Exit doors typically have lighted exit signs above them or

pointing to them and emergency latch hardware designed to be easily operable. Even if locked to prevent ingress, these doors can be opened from inside by pushing on the emergency latch bar.

It is a priority of the College to maintain the integrity of all components of the exit and access to it. No obstructions are allowed in front of, or in the pathway to, any exit door. (In general, the aisle or corridor leading to an exit door must be at least the same width as the door opening). Exit doors may not be barred or chained to prevent their opening. All members are encouraged to report any failure of exit door lighting, obstruction of exit doors or exit pathways, or any exiting hardware problems to Facilities Management or Public Safety immediately.

## Open Flame

The College recognizes the legitimate uses for open flame in some classroom and outdoor areas. However, the College also recognizes the serious hazard created by its presence, and has instituted significant restrictions on its use. Candles and incense or potpourri burners are prohibited in residence halls and public assembly venues, including theatrical programs, but excluding religious services. Smoking materials are also limited to designated smoking areas. The disposal of smoking material must be done safely and in a manner that will prevent the propagation of fire. Outdoor cooking grills must be attended at all times, and only used at a safe distance (at least 50 feet) from any building or combustible materials.

Pyrotechnical devices, fireworks, explosives, and any flame-lit amusement devices are prohibited on campus.

## Storage

The following items are not allowed to be stored in College residence halls:

- Flammable liquids
- Newspapers
- Motor-driven vehicles
- Any item that impedes access or egress to/from rooms
- Live cut trees
- Fireworks (as above)
- Halogen lamps
- Candles and other burners (as above)

## Open Burning

Open burning is restricted to ceremonial fires such as the annual Homecoming bonfire, training fires, and controlled burning of open land. Persons or organizations wishing to conduct open burning must have and comply with a Burn Permit issued by the Lake Forest Fire Department. A copy of the Burn Permit shall be forwarded to the Department of Public Safety at least two (2) business days prior to the burn. Public Safety Officers and the Lake Forest Fire Department are authorized to allow or prohibit the burn depending on weather and other conditions at the time and place of the burn. Any open burning not in compliance with this section will be treated as an incendiary event.

## Flammable Liquids

Flammable liquids are prohibited except for sanctioned use by faculty and staff. Allowed flammable liquids must be stored in approved containers and kept in designated safe areas (such as the Flammable Liquids Room in the Johnson Science Center).

## Fire Lanes

Fire lanes provide access to both buildings and their fire protection systems. Parking or standing in fire lanes is absolutely prohibited except for emergency vehicles. The Department of Public Safety and/or the Lake Forest Police Department will ticket unauthorized vehicles found in fire lanes.

## Fire Hydrants

Fire hydrants on campus are not to be blocked or obstructed by vehicles, refuse, shrubbery, or any other potential obstruction. Vehicles found obstructing fire hydrants may be ticketed or towed at the owner's expense.

Opening, attempting to open, tampering with, or damaging fire hydrants is expressly prohibited. Hydrants are not to be marked, painted, or otherwise decorated or altered in any way.

College hydrants are flow tested and inspected annually by Facilities Management.

## Fire Drills

The College may, at its discretion, conduct fire drills and training sessions for employees when such drills and sessions are deemed necessary and practicable.





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## SECTION 2    RESPONSE

## WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF FIRE

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All fire alarms are to be treated as actual fires. The presence of smoke or flame, or the activation of a building's fire alarm requires immediate action. The safest actions to take in the event of fire are those that you have already considered and practiced. The first priority is to immediately evacuate the building. Know where the nearest exit from your location is, as well as a secondary escape route.

Don't panic! Proceed to the nearest exit and leave the building. If that exit is not accessible or blocked by smoke, heat, or flame, go to your secondary exit. Do not breathe smoke. Since smoke often tends to rise, cooler, cleaner air may be found near the floor. Crawl if you have to. People have escaped major fires by crawling to an exit while others ran through smoke and perished.

If you know there is a fire in the building, but the alarm has not activated, trigger a fire alarm pull station as you leave the building, only if doing so will not delay your own escape.

If you are unable to evacuate the building due to mobility restrictions or obstruction to your escape path, call 911 or Public Safety (847-735-5555) and report the problem and your exact whereabouts. Stay on the line, if possible, until the dispatcher tells you to hang up.

Once safely out, do not congregate near the affected building, but move away or to another building in the area.

From outside of the building, call 911 or Public Safety (847-735-5555) and report the fire or alarm if the fire department or other emergency agencies are not already on the scene. Do not make repeated calls to prevent tying up emergency phone lines. Notify others that the call has already been made.

Attempt to conduct a head count of all persons you know to have been in the building. Do not re-enter the building until told by the fire department or Public Safety officials that it is safe to do so.

As noted above, do not attempt to fight a fire with an extinguisher unless you are trained and competent in its use and limitations.