



Emergency Equipment Inspection Policy

Background

In the event of a fire or other emergency that requires efficient exiting of a building, it is imperative that safety equipment and exit/emergency lighting are fully operational. To ensure that this equipment maintains operability, the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) provide standards that employers must follow.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to maximize safety and emergency preparedness. This policy also ensures compliance with OSHA standards, 29 C.F.R. 1910.157, Portable Fire Extinguishers, 29 C.F.R. 1926.34, Means of Egress and NFPA Life Safety Standard No. 101-31-1.3.7.

Policy

Portable fire extinguishers, exit signs, and emergency lights in campus buildings shall be inspected on a monthly basis to ensure that the devices are in proper working order.

General Guidelines

The Physical Plant Department maintains spreadsheets of every known fire extinguisher on campus. Each sheet includes information on the location and inspection information.

The resident advisors (RAs) are responsible for the dormitories' fire extinguishers. Physical Plant personnel are responsible for the fire extinguishers, emergency lights, and exit signs in all other buildings (excluding Dunmurry Building and the Lake Campus facilities) as well as the exit signs and emergency lights in the dorms.

After the monthly inspection is complete, the completed spreadsheets are to be forwarded to the EHS Manager.

Inspecting Fire Extinguishers

1. Ensure access to the extinguisher is not blocked and that the cabinet door, if applicable, opens easily.
2. The cylinder pressure should be within the recommended level on extinguishers equipped with a gauge. The needle should be situated in the green zone. If the needle is not in green zone, a work order needs to be initiated by the following link (workorders@davidson.edu) to replace the defective extinguisher. This corrective action should be noted on the inspection report. Note: Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) extinguishers do not have gauges and must be verified by weight.
3. Verify that the locking pin is intact and the tamper seal is not broken.
4. Visually inspect the hose and nozzle to ensure they are in good condition.

5. Visually inspect the extinguisher for dents, leaks, rust, chemical deposits or other signs of abuse/wear and note any findings on the inspection report.
6. If the extinguisher is damaged or needs recharging, remove it from service and note this deficiency on the inspection report.

Fire extinguishers must be pressure tested (a process called hydrostatic testing) every six (6) years to ensure the cylinder is safe to use. The campus Environment Health & Safety Manager coordinates this evaluation every January.

Checking Emergency Lights and Exit Signs

1. Exit routes must be unobstructed. No materials or equipment may be placed, either permanently or temporarily, within the exit route
2. Exit signs battery backup is checked monthly by pressing the test button and observing a dimming followed by re-illumination. The green power light will go off when the test button is pressed. The test button is located on the side or bottom of the sign.
3. Self-luminous exit signs do not require an external power source or battery backup and only need to be verified that they are visible.
4. Emergency light operation is verified monthly by pressing the test button and holding for 30 seconds. The lights should stay illuminated for the entire 30 seconds. If an exit sign or emergency light is found inoperable, work order should be submitted to the Physical Plant via workorders@davidson.edu.

Training and Record Keeping

Individuals responsible for monthly fire extinguisher inspections will receive training annually. Annual training will be provided by qualified individuals. The EHS Manager will ensure that training records are accurately documented and maintained.

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