

# **Emergency Action & Fire Prevention Plan**

**OSHA 29 CFR 1910.38  
OSHA 29 CFR 1910.39**

**Prepared By**



**Environmental Health and Safety**

**92 Campus Center Drive  
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# REVISIONS

Original Plan

February 2021

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this Fire Prevention Plan is to eliminate the causes of fire, prevent loss of life and property by fire, and to comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards on emergency action 29 CFR 1910.38 and fire prevention, 29 CFR 1910.39.

### 1.1. Authority and Scope

Southern Maine Community College (SMCC) is committed to minimizing the threat of fire to persons and property. This document spells out employee procedures when responding to fires and serves to reduce the risk of fires in the following ways:

- Identifies materials that are potential fire hazards and their proper handling and storage procedures
- Distinguishes potential ignition sources and the proper control procedures for those materials
- Describes fire protection equipment and/or systems used to control fire hazards
- Identifies persons responsible for maintaining the equipment and systems installed to prevent or control ignition of fires
- Identifies persons responsible for the control and accumulation of flammable or combustible material
- Describes good housekeeping procedures necessary to insure the control of accumulated flammable and combustible waste material and residues to avoid a fire emergency and

### 1.2. Plan Review and Update

This program will be reviewed every 5 years and/or updated whenever:

- A fire occurs which results in employee injury, loss of property or life
- There is a significant change in fire prevention or emergency procedures

## 2. Assignment of Responsibility

Fire safety is everyone's responsibility. All employees should know how to prevent fires and are responsible for adhering to this policy.

## **2.1. Senior Management**

Senior Management will provide adequate controls for a safe workplace, and will provide resources and training to its employees to encourage fire prevention and the safest possible evacuation and response in the event of a fire emergency.

## **2.2. Facilities**

Facilities will:

- Ensure that fire control equipment and systems are properly maintained
- Administer this program

## **2.3. EH&S Coordinator**

The EH&S Coordinator will:

- Assist with development and administration of this program
- Manage the posting and updating of SMCC Emergency Procedure cards

## **2.4. Supervisors and Department Chairs**

Supervisors and Department Chairs will:

- Ensure their employees are familiar with the SMCC Emergency Procedure Card
- Notify Facilities and the EH&S Coordinator when changes within the workspace or classroom could increase the risk of fire
- Encourage good housekeeping practices, found in this Plan, within their classrooms, offices and workspaces
- Report potential fire hazards to Facilities

## **2.5. Employees**

The definition of Employee includes all faculty, staff, adjuncts, seasonal/part-time individuals and student workers employed by SMCC. All employees shall:

- Familiarize themselves with the SMCC Emergency Procedure card(s) applicable to their workspace
- Conduct operations safely to limit the risk of fire
- Report potential fire hazards to their Supervisor
- Follow this plan to the best of their ability
- Ask questions if they do not understand plan expectations
- Participate in emergency drills (e.g. Fire Drills) when they occur
- Notify the EH&S Coordinator if a SMCC Emergency Procedure card is missing from his/her workspace
- Notify the EH&S Coordinator if a SMCC Emergency Procedure card is out of date (i.e. renovations such as addition/deletion of a door or office)

### **3. Best Practices**

#### **3.1. Good Housekeeping**

To limit the risk of fires, employees will take the following precautions:

- Minimize the storage of combustible materials
- Make sure that all doors, hallways, stairs, and exit routes are kept free of obstructions
- Do not block open Fire Doors
- Do not cover Emergency Exit signage
- Use and store flammable materials in well ventilated areas away from ignition sources
- Use only nonflammable cleaning products
- Keep incompatible substances (i.e. chemically reactive) away from each other
- Report all gas leaks immediately
- Repair and clean up flammable liquid leaks immediately
- Keep work areas free of dust, lint, sawdust, scraps and similar materials
- Keep equipment in good working order (i.e. inspect electrical wiring, tools and appliances regularly, keep motors and machine tools free of dust and grease).
- Do not use extension cords where wiring improvements are needed
- No items should be touching, hung from or stored within 18 inches of any sprinkler head. This includes storage closets
- No items should be stored within 24 inches of the ceiling when a sprinkler system is not present. This includes storage closets

#### **3.2. Maintenance of Fire Protection Equipment**

Facilities will ensure that fire equipment is maintained according to manufacturer's specifications. Only properly trained individuals shall maintain, inspect, and test the following equipment:

- Equipment installed to detect fuel leaks, control heating and control pressurized systems
- Portable fire extinguishers, automatic sprinkler systems and fixed extinguisher systems
- Detection systems for smoke, heat or flame
- Fire alarm systems
- Emergency backup systems and the equipment they support

### **4. Types of Hazards**

The following sections address workplace fire hazards at SMCC and the procedures for controlling the hazards.

#### **4.1. Electrical Fire Hazards**

Electrical system failures and the misuse of electrical equipment are leading causes of workplace fires. Fires can result from loose ground connections, wiring with frayed insulation, or overloaded fuses, circuits, motors or outlets.

To prevent electrical fires, employees shall:

- Make sure worn or frayed power cords or wiring are replaced
- Use only appropriately rated fuses
- Ensure electrical equipment is either properly grounded or double insulated

## **4.2. Extension Cords**

An extension cord, power extender, drop cord, or extension lead is a length of flexible electrical power cable with a plug on one end and one or more sockets on the other end.

Extension cords are only to be used for temporary applications, such as moving a projector out into a room, and then moving it back. Any sort of permanent or long-term electrical needs require permanent wiring.

Proper use of an extension cord includes:

- Use of an extension cord with an Underwriters Laboratories (UL), FM Global (FM) designation on the tag.
  - Cord may read “UL Listed” or “FM Approved”
- Not extending extension cords through walls, ceilings or floors, or under doors or floor coverings, nor shall such cords be subject to environmental damage or physical impact.
- Extension cords shall be used only with portable appliances.
- Not use extension cords as a substitute for necessary wiring improvements.
  - Extension cords shall not be used for more than **90** consecutive days to provide power to an item.
  - Exception: Temporary wiring for electrical power and lighting installations is allowed during periods of construction, remodeling, repair or demolition of buildings, structures, equipment or similar activities.

## **4.3. Power Strips**

Power strips, also known as Relocatable Power Taps (RPTs), are a block of electrical sockets attached to the end of a flexible cable, allowing multiple electrical devices to be powered from a single electrical socket.

Power strips often include a circuit breaker to interrupt the electric current in case of an overload or a short circuit. Some, but not all, power strips provide protection against electrical power surges.

Proper use of a power strip includes:

- Plugging the unit into an electrical outlet, never into an extension cord.
- Do not plug one power strip into another power strip (also known as daisy chaining).
- The cords of power strips shall not extend through walls, ceilings, or floors; under doors or floor coverings; or be subject to environmental or physical damage.
- Removing the unit from service if the case, cord, or plug has been damaged.

## **4.4. Portable Heaters**

All portable heaters shall be approved by Facilities. Portable electric heaters shall have tip-over protection that automatically shuts the unit off when it falls over. There shall be a minimum of

three (3) feet between the heater and combustible furnishings or other materials at all times. Portable heaters shall not be left plugged in overnight or left "ON" while unattended for more than short periods of time.

#### **4.5. Battery Charging**

Those who utilize battery chargers to reenergize on road or off road vehicles (including golf carts and forklifts) shall follow all manufacturer directions for the safe use and operation of the charger.

While battery chargers for power tools and personal electronic devices are designed to stop charging once the rechargeable battery reaches capacity, the item may overheat and cause a fire. Individuals **are** encouraged **not to** leave rechargeable batteries or personal electronic devices plugged into charging cords/cables for longer than necessary.

#### **4.6. Office Fire Hazards**

Fire risks are not limited to SMCC's shop areas. Fires in offices have become more likely because of increased use of computers and portable electronic devices. To prevent office fires, employees shall:

- Avoid overloading circuits with office equipment
- Turn off nonessential electrical equipment at the end of each workday (i.e. desk lamps)
- Keep offices and storage areas clear of rubbish and clutter
- Ensure that temporary extension cords are not placed under carpets or rugs
- Ensure that trash and paper set aside for recycling is not allowed to accumulate

#### **4.7. Cutting, Welding, and Open Flame Work**

Only a small group of SMCC employees work with cutting or welding tools as part of their employment. Welding principally occurs in Jewett and Automotive. Cutters, welders, and their supervisors will be suitably trained in the safe operation of their equipment and the safe use of the process.

Employees who perform welding, cutting or open flame work will ensure:

- Cutting and welding is performed by authorized personnel only in designated areas or the job site
- All fire hazards in the vicinity of the object to be welded or cut shall be removed to a safe place
- Cutting or welding shall be permitted only in areas that are or have been made fire safe
- Torches, regulators, pressure-reducing valves and manifolds are Underwriters Laboratories listed (UL listed) or FM Global approved (FM approved)
- Oxygen-fuel gas systems are equipped with listed and/or approved backflow valves and pressure relief devices
- Cutters, welders, and helpers will wear eye protection and/or protective clothing as appropriate

- Where combustible materials such as paper clippings, wood shavings or textiles are on the floor, the floor shall be swept clean for a radius of 35 feet around the item to be welded or cut

In the event the object to be welded or cut cannot be moved and if all of the fire hazards can not be removed specific additional steps (including implementation of a Fire Watch) are required following OSHA 1910.252(a)(2). The Department Supervisor/Chair will consult with the EH&S Coordinator before proceeding.

Cutting and/or welding is prohibited:

- In areas where a sprinkler protection system is not present or the sprinkler system is out of service
- On metal walls, ceilings, or roofs built of combustible sandwich-type panel construction or have combustible covering
- On ducts or piping in close proximity to combustible walls, partitions, ceilings or roofs
- In permit required confined spaces
- On used containers such as tanks, barrels, or drums

An outside vendor, performing this work on behalf of SMCC, will provide SMCC with a copy of the written Hot Works program and Fire Watch procedures to be followed while on site.

#### **4.8. Flammable and Combustible Materials**

Certain types of substances can ignite or pose a risk of catastrophic explosion if ignited. Such substances require special care and handling.

##### **4.8.1. Class A Combustibles**

These include common combustible materials (wood, paper, cloth, rubber, and plastics) that can act as fuel and are found in non-specialized areas such as offices and classrooms.

To handle Class A combustibles safely:

- Dispose of waste daily
- Keep trash in receptacles designed for that purpose
- Keep work areas clean and free of fuel paths that could allow a fire to spread
- Keep combustibles away from accidental ignition sources such as soldering irons, space heaters, hot plates, toaster ovens or similar heat or spark producing appliances and tools
- Dispose of oil or solvent rags in metal bins with self-closing lids
- Do not order excessive amounts of combustibles

Water and multi-purpose dry chemical (ABC) are approved fire extinguishing agents for Class A combustibles.

##### **4.8.2. Class B Combustibles**

These include flammable and combustible liquids (oils, greases, tars, oil-based paints and lacquers), flammable gases and flammable aerosols.



To handle Class B combustibles safely:

- Use only approved pumps to dispense liquids from tanks, drums, barrels or similar containers
- Do not dispense Class B flammable liquids into containers unless the nozzle and container are electrically interconnected by contact or by a bonding wire. Either the tank or container must be grounded
- Store, handle, and use Class B combustibles only in approved locations where vapors are prevented from reaching ignition sources such as heating or electric equipment, open flames, or mechanical or electric sparks
- Do not use a flammable liquid as a cleaning agent inside a building
- Do not use, handle, or store Class B combustibles near stairs or exits
- Do not weld, cut, grind, or use unsafe electrical appliances or equipment near Class B combustibles
- Do not generate heat, allow an open flame, or smoke near Class B combustibles

Carbon dioxide and multi-purpose dry chemical (ABC) fire extinguishers are approved for Class B combustibles. Water should not be used to extinguish Class B fires caused by flammable liquids.

### **4.8.3. Flammable Cabinets**

Flammable cabinets are used to store flammable and combustible materials. Follow the manufacturer's guidelines for proper use and maintenance. Also:

- Store only compatible materials within a cabinet
- Do not store combustible packaging material or cardboard in flammable cabinets

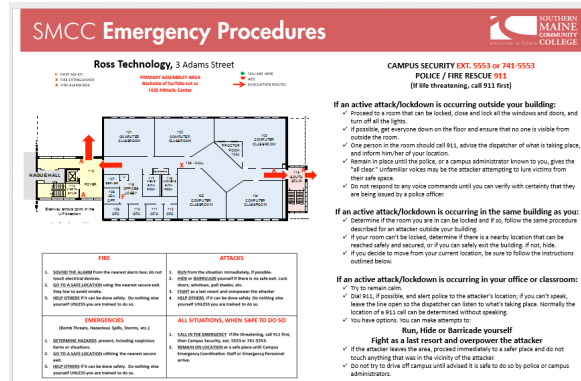
Maximum storage outside of a flammable cabinet: up to 25 gallons of liquids (including aerosol cans). All containers/volumes above these limits must be stored in a flammable cabinet.

## **5. Smoking**

Southern Maine Community College has a smoke and vape free campus policy.

## **6. Fire Emergency Actions**

The SMCC Emergency Procedure card, posted in each occupied room on campus, defines what to do in the event of a Fire and was designed for individuals to "Grab and go" with key contact phone numbers, building location, evacuation route(s) and primary assembly area listed. *The card covers additional emergencies not discussed here including medical and active attacks.*



Example of the SMCC Emergency Procedures Card to aid reader in identifying the document in their workspace

## 6.1. Alarm System

In the event of a fire, buildings on campus are equipped with an audible alarm. Where available visible strobing lights are included.

## 6.2. Fire Evacuation Procedures

In the event of a fire employees will:

- Sound the alarm from the nearest alarm box; do not touch electrical devices
- Go to a safe location using the nearest secure exit. Stay low to avoid smoke
- Help others if it can be done safely.

When it is safe to do so employees will:

- Call in the emergency: If life threatening call 911 first then campus security at 741-5553
- Remain on location at a safe place until Campus Emergency Coordination Staff or Emergency Personnel arrive

## 6.3. Procedures For Employees Who Operate Critical Operations

SMCC expects all employees to evacuate a building once a fire alarm has sounded. No one is to remain in the building. There are no critical operations which occur on campus.

## 6.4. Procedures For Employees Performing Rescue Or Medical Duties

Employees are not required to perform medical duties. Employees with personal training or certification in first-aid may volunteer to provide aid. Employees will never perform rescues.

First Responders (e.g. Fire Department or EMT's) will perform rescues and provide medical treatment including first-aid.

## **6.5. Fire Extinguishers**

In the event of a fire, SMCC does not train, require, or designate employees to utilize a fire extinguisher prior to evacuating the building.

Employees with the skill to properly discharge a fire extinguisher may volunteer to perform this service if doing so does not risk their personal safety.

## **7. Employee Awareness**

SMCC will review this plan with employees when:

- The plan is developed or the employee is assigned initially to a job;
- The plan is substantially changed (not minor editorial/grammatical changes)

Supervisors will review this plan with their employee(s) when:

- The employee's responsibilities under the plan change
  - I.e. newly assigned tasks involving possible fire hazards
  - I.e. new workspace/office with significantly different fire evacuation route

## **8. Contacts**

A copy of this plan is available, to all employees, on the Environmental Health & Safety portal of the MySMCC intranet. For more information contact the EH&S Coordinator at 741-5932 or [environmentalsafety@smccme.edu](mailto:environmentalsafety@smccme.edu).