

Angelo State University



Fire & Life Safety Program

Office of
Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management

Introduction

Purpose

Angelo State is responsible for developing and implementing procedures that will enhance the safety and welfare of the university community. The Office of Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management (EHSRM) offers this program as an information resource to assist both individual employees and departments within the university community create and maintain a safer environment. This program will empower employees to take appropriate action to ensure their own safety, the safety of co-workers, students, and visitors in the event of an emergency.

This program was developed to support EHSRM's mission of helping individuals and departments to prevent incidents and achieve compliance with all state and federal regulations and university policies. Finally, this program directly supports the university's mission to establish and maintain a safe living, learning, and working environment.

Scope

The Fire and Life Safety Program contains policies and procedures, when implemented and maintained, will satisfy the code and legal obligations of Angelo State University. This program will also help prevent loss of life, reduce injury, and property damage due to fire or other emergency.

Responsibilities

The safety of university students, employees, and visitors to our campus is of paramount importance to everyone working and learning at the university. It directly impacts both the quality and value of the university. The concern the university displays for its students, employees, and visitors mirrors the character and strength of Angelo State's commitment to its academic mission. Each employee and every department is expected to perform work in a safe manner and in compliance with regulatory requirements.

Employer

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires employers to provide each employee "a place of employment which is free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm." All employees play a vital role in helping the university meet this general duty obligation. In accordance with part of the university's mission to provide a safe and healthy campus environment; the Facilities Management Department, Housing & Residential Programs, and Dining Services, and the EHSRM office all strive to obtain the highest level of safety that can reasonably be achieved.

Supervisors

Departments are expected to maintain safe and healthy living, learning, and working environments for faculty, staff, students, and visitors to our campus. Supervisors must implement the requirements of this program to assure compliance with applicable codes, regulations, and policies. They must also be aware of applicable training and other requirements directed under OSHA programs and the fire code. Supervisors should periodically inspect and/or coordinate the inspection of all workplaces to identify hazards. EHSRM will assist supervisors with finding solutions for eliminating identified hazards. This responsibility will fall to the highest supervisory level of each department unless otherwise specified.

Employees and Students

Faculty, staff, students, and visitors play an important part in assuring safety and must do what they can to protect themselves and others within the university community by responding appropriately during emergencies. Employees must avail themselves of information pertaining to the safe conduct of their work, regardless of the setting. Students must also participate in fire and life safety programs and respect the safety of others and their own safety. EHSRM offers fire safety training programs for both employees and students.

Contractors

Departments sponsoring contractors or vendors are responsible for ensuring the contractor or vendor working at the university is aware of and complies with state and federal codes and regulations as well as university established fire and life safety policies and procedures.

Emergency Response

Responding to a Fire Emergency

If a fire emergency occurs, all facility occupants have a responsibility to take immediate and appropriate action to take care of themselves. For those facilities that do not have a fire alarm, you may notify other occupants by knocking on doors and shouting “fire” as you exit the facility. Do not jeopardize your own safety to do this. The Emergency Action Plan will be implemented and all personnel will be directed to evacuate the facility. To determine if your facility is equipped with an automatic fire alarm and/or a fire suppression system, contact the EHSRM Office at 325-942-2180.

There is no employer expectation for employees to attempt to extinguish a fire or otherwise remain in their workplace for any reason upon being notified of a fire emergency.

IF THERE IS A FIRE

SOUND THE ALARM

If you discover or suspect a fire, immediately notify occupants by activating the nearest fire alarm pull station

OR

If there is no fire alarm system, knock on doors and shout
“FIRE”
as you leave the facility

LEAVE THE FACILITY

Move away from the facility at least 300 feet (preferably upwind) and out of the way of first responders.

CALL THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Dial 911 from campus or other phones

Do **NOT** go back into the facility until “**all clear**” is issued by fire department or police.

Emergency Planning and Preparedness

No one expects an emergency or disaster to affect their workplace but they can strike anyone, anywhere, and at anytime. A workplace emergency is an unforeseen situation that threatens, disrupts, or shuts down part or all of the university community. University Police and EHSRM assess potential hazards/threats and develop emergency response plans to mitigate their effects. The success of their efforts depends upon the cooperation of faculty, staff, and students to understand and implement the procedures in the event of an emergency.

Fire Alarm System Monitoring

The University Police Department (325) 942-2071 is staffed 24/7 and monitors the campus fire alarm system. Police respond to all alarm activations to assess the facility, ensure occupants are safely evacuated and assume first responder duties until relieved by San Angelo Fire Department.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

An emergency action plan (EAP) details the actions persons should take during an emergency. [EAP Templates](#) provide planning considerations and checklist templates which departments should utilize to develop their plans. They should be tailored to the facility, comprehensive, and address all issues specific to the department that may arise during an emergency, as well as the conditions of your workplace (e.g., are their extraordinary hazards present, is there specialized equipment or systems that must be deployed, etc.)

Emergencies may be natural or manmade and include incidents such as fire, severe weather, power outage, major health crisis, bomb threat, or active shooter.

Plans are developed to mitigate emergency incidents and are typically divided into three categories: Evacuation, Shelter-in-Place, and Lockdown.

- *Evacuation* is the systematic departure of all occupants from a facility or location when a threat emanates from within the facility or area.
- *Shelter-in-Place* restricts the movement of the campus population to specific locations or an area to minimize the risk of harm that could result from a particular hazard or threat.
- *Lockdown* is directed to prevent exposure to a specific threat such as an active shooter. Evacuation, shelter-in-place, and lockdown can involve the entire campus or only a single facility, depending on the nature and scope of the hazard or threat.

For more information on developing plans, visit the Emergency Management website or contact the EHSRM Office at 325-942-2180.

Fire and Other Emergency Drills

Once you have reviewed your emergency action plan with your employees and everyone has had the proper emergency response training as stated in the previous section, it is a good idea to conduct practice drills as often as necessary to keep employees prepared. The EHSRM office can assist you with drills and involve agencies such as the city fire department and university police department.

Fire drills are a vital part of a comprehensive campus fire safety program. Drills are held to familiarize occupants with drill procedures and to make the drill a matter of established routine.

- Fire drills are conducted two times during the fall and spring semester in residential housing facilities.
- It is recommended at least one fire drill be conducted annually in all other facilities.

Always React To Fire Alarms

If a fire alarm sounds and you have not been notified prior to the alarm that the system is being inspected or undergoing maintenance, take immediate action to evacuate yourself and other facility occupants.

EHSRM offers assistance with training and conducting fire and other emergency drills. Training exercises and drills will be conducted each year to test and practice the emergency action plans. These exercises will include university tabletop simulations or small-scale scenarios and full-scale exercises that may include outside emergency response services, such as the City of San Angelo. All exercises will be planned well in advance and the Office of Communication and Marketing may issue information regarding the exercise.

Fire Prevention

Fire prevention starts with identifying fire hazards. All members of the university community; faculty, staff, and students have a personal obligation to be aware of fire hazards and to reduce or eliminate the risk of fire on our campus.

Elements of Fire Prevention Planning

Develop a list of all major fire hazards

- Assure proper handling and storage procedures for hazardous materials.
- Identify potential ignition sources and the means used to control them.
- Develop a list of fire protection equipment necessary to control each major hazard.
- Establish procedures to control accumulation of flammable and combustible materials.
- Establish procedures for regular inspection and maintenance of safeguards installed on heat-producing equipment to prevent accidental ignition of combustible materials.
- Identify by name or job title employees responsible for control of fuel source hazards.

In addition, the department must communicate certain information to employees, to include:

- Informing each employee of the fire hazard(s) to which he or she is exposed.
- Review with employees, when they are initially assigned to a job, those parts of the fire prevention plan that are necessary for employees to protect themselves from potential fire hazards.
- Review the fire prevention plan again with any employee that is reassigned to a new job with different hazards.
- Review the plan with all employees any time a change is made to the plan.
- Review the plan with all new hires.

Identifying Common Fire Hazards

The following is a list of common fire hazards that may be in your workplace.

Careless smoking

Smoking and/or vaping is prohibited inside or within 50 feet of entrances to facilities owned or leased by the university. Outdoors, discarded smoking materials carelessly tossed in waste containers or into landscaping can easily start a fire. Use approved waste containers to discard smoking materials.

Use of extension cords and multiple plug adapters

Extension cords and multiple plug adapters may only be used for temporary operations. Overloaded circuits damaged wiring and defective switches and outlets can all lead to electrical fires. Each power strip must be plugged directly into the wall.

Unsafe use, storage, dispensing or disposal of flammable materials

Flammable materials can be a prime source of fire or explosion.

Scrap, waste materials, dust and trash

When these items are allowed to accumulate, the risk of fire is increased. Under the right conditions, the buildup of dust from wood, plastic or certain metal operations can lead to a fire or explosion.

Materials that spontaneously combust

Oily rags or other materials soaked in oil can start a fire by themselves if placed in areas where the air does not circulate.

Hot work hazards

Any operation involving heated materials or open flames presents a fire hazard. The University follows guidelines established in OP 34.27, Campus Hot Work Usage.

Inadequate machine and equipment maintenance

Machines that are not lubricated properly can overheat and start a fire. Electrical problems and equipment defects can lead to a fire. Routine inspection and maintenance of all machines and equipment can prevent fire hazards.

Space heaters

The use of these devices is strictly limited and must be approved by EHSRM. Portable heaters can pose a fire safety hazard and are prohibited in residential housing rooms, laboratories, or areas where chemicals or combustible materials are stored. All faculty, staff, students, and visitors are required to comply with the following portable heater requirements:

- Must be electrically powered, UL or FM approved, and labeled accordingly.
- Must have a sealed element and not produce flames, fumes, or use any fuel.
- Must have a thermostat that shuts the device off at a certain temperature.
- Must be equipped to turn off automatically when tilted or turned over.
- Must be turned off and unplugged when not in use.
- Always plug the heater directly into a wall receptacle when in use. Do not operate if the electrical cord is damaged or if the plug is missing the grounding pin.
- Never plug the heater into an extension cord because it may overheat and cause a fire.
- Maintain a clear area of at least three feet in all directions of the heater.
- Keep in good working condition and immediately remove if damaged or defective.

Periodic monitoring will be conducted by EHSRM and devices that are not being properly used or don't meet the safety requirements listed above shall be disposed of or removed from university property.

Basic Fire Prevention Strategies

Departments are responsible for identifying the hazards in their assigned areas and taking action to eliminate or control these hazards and prevent fires.

Housekeeping

Accumulation of combustible materials

Properly dispose of combustible materials (such as cardboard boxes, magazine/journals and paper products) no longer in use. Combustible material must never be stored any closer than 36 inches from a heating appliance or electrical light.

Storage

Store materials in such a way that will not obstruct fire sprinkler heads. Make sure items are 18 inches away from the ceiling if the room or area is protected by a fire sprinkler system and 24 inches from the ceiling if there is no fire sprinkler system. Exceptions are allowed for attached wall shelving unless located directly under a sprinkler head. If wall shelving is located directly under sprinkler head you must maintain the 18 inch clearance.

Storing furniture, equipment, or other materials under stairwells is prohibited, regardless if the stairwell is open or enclosed, or if the area is protected by fire sprinklers.

Storing furniture, equipment, or other materials in maintenance rooms is prohibited.

Decorations, signs and other items cannot be hung on or near the sprinkler head.

Fire Safety Equipment

Obstructing Portable Fire Extinguishers or Fire Blankets

Do not obstruct access to portable fire extinguishers or fire blankets. They must be clearly visible with notification signs displayed.

Blocking Fire Doors

Ensure the fire doors are unobstructed and operate freely. Never block fire doors in the open position with wedges or stoppers. These doors are to remain closed to reduce fire and smoke spread through the rest of the building.

Blocking Fire Egress Routes or Emergency Exits

Egress routes such as a hallway, stairway, corridor, or other path used to exit a facility during a fire must remain unobstructed at all times. Emergency exits are never to be blocked for any reason to ensure occupants can quickly and safely exit the facility.

Reporting

All employees are responsible for immediately reporting any unsafe condition. Reports can be made using the [Unsafe Condition Report](#) or by calling EHSRM at 325-942-2180.

Flammable and Combustible Liquids

Storage and handling of flammable and combustible liquids shall not exceed the allowable quantities listed in NFPA 30 and NFPA 45 and are strictly prohibited in residential facilities.

All flammable and combustible liquids shall be stored in a U.L. or F.M. approved flammable storage cabinet. Contact EHSRM for more information at 325-942-2180.

Open Flames and Burning Permits

Open burning is defined as any open/exposed flame, whether indoors or outdoors, that could cause a fire. Examples are candles, incense, bonfires, campfires, leaf burning, artwork involving flames, and pyrotechnics of any kind.

Candles and other open flames are strictly prohibited in residential facilities.

Open burning on any university property must be approved in writing by the EHSRM office. All pyrotechnic displays must meet the requirements of the San Angelo Fire Marshal's office, NFPA, and be approved by the EHSRM office.

Fire Inspections

EHSRM will conduct periodic fire safety inspections and notify departments when they are in violation of fire or life safety codes.

Fire inspections of university facilities are conducted by the Texas State Fire Marshal's Office in compliance with applicable NFPA codes and the International Fire Code. The Texas State Fire Marshal's Office is the designated Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) for all fire and life safety matters on Angelo State University property.

Fire and Life Safety Training

The EHSRM office facilitates fire and life safety training for all students, faculty, and staff. Topics include; fire safety awareness, fire extinguisher use, AED orientation, and CPR/AED certification. The office also develops fire safety brochures and hosts fire and life safety information on the EHSRM website.

Fire Reporting

Facility occupants should contact University Police at 325-942-2071 anytime there is smoke or an odor indicating the possibility of a fire. A [Fire Alarm Report](#) should be submitted anytime a fire alarm has been activated in a facility. Department supervisors are responsible for ensuring a report is submitted within 72 hours of the incident.