



History of Campus Fire Safety

On January 19, 2000, three students were killed, and 62 students and firefighters were injured when a fire erupted at Seton Hall University. This fire, originally started as a prank, proved to be one of the deadliest college fires in recent history, as three couches in a third floor lounge approached 1500 degrees F in less than 5 minutes.

In this tragedy's aftermath, then NYS Governor George Pataki created a Task Force on Campus Fire Safety in February 2000. The result of this task force today is annual wall-to-wall fire inspections of all NYS colleges and universities, with the assistance of the NYS Office of Fire Prevention & Control (OFPC).

SUNY Polytechnic Institute is committed to fire safety as a priority in student residences and other campus facilities. As evidence of that commitment, our facilities are provided with fire detection and alarm systems, sprinkler systems, and related emergency equipment. However, no detection or suppression system can guarantee that a Seton Hall-like tragedy will not occur here, as most OFPC violations tend to be behavioral in nature. While there are a number of departments charged with administering SUNY Poly's fire safety programs, all students and employees must **DO THEIR PART** and abide by this Fire Safety Notice.

Best Practices & Recommendations



Surge Protectors

Instead of extension cords, use surge protectors, which will "trip" in the event of a power surge. But be sure to never "piggy-back" or "daisy-chain" such devices, one to another. And never overload the surge protector with too many devices requiring more electrical power than it is designed to handle.



Fire Extinguishers

These devices are located throughout campus. But extinguishers are not intended to enable "fire-fighting", especially by those not formally trained in their use. If you would like to be trained to use a fire extinguisher, please contact the Environmental Health & Safety office.



Gas/Charcoal Grills

Use gas/charcoal grills at least 10 feet from any building. Propane tanks may never be stored indoors. Bags of charcoal or lighter fluid should not be stored in any indoor location.

Faculty/Supervisor Fire Safety Roles

Wherever you teach/supervise students or other employees, **YOU** play a critical role in the success of our fire safety program.

- Always treat a fire alarm signal, even if it is a fire drill, as a potential emergency.
- Know the building evacuation "muster points" for all facilities you teach or supervise others in, and ensure you communicate those locations accordingly.

In The Event of a Fire

Follow the general evacuation procedures as soon as you hear the fire alarm. A building occupant is required by law to evacuate the building when the fire alarm sounds.

If there is a fire in your work area:

- First, activate the fire alarm by pulling the nearest pull station and (from a safe distance) call University Police at (x7111 / 315-792-7111 or use Emergency Phones) to provide details of the situation.
- If you have been trained in the use of a portable fire extinguisher and are able to safely extinguish the fire, you may do so. Be sure you have a safe exit from the area and leave if one extinguisher does not put out the fire.
- Evacuate the building as soon as the alarm sounds – follow Evacuation procedures.
- On your way out, warn others nearby.
- Move away from fire and smoke. Smoke is the greatest danger in a fire, so stay near the floor where the air is less toxic.
- Close doors and windows if time permits.
- Touch closed doors. Do not open them if they are hot.
- Use stairs only; do not use elevators.
- Move well away from the building and go to your designated Assembly Area (see "Unit Emergency Plan").
- Do not re-enter the building or work area until you have been instructed to do so by the emergency responders.

Environmental Health & Safety Office

Sean Clive

Director of Environmental Health & Safety (Utica)

315-792-7101 • clives@sunyit.edu

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Employee Fire Safety Information

Emergency Phone Numbers

University Police

x7111 • 315-792-7111

Environmental Health & Safety

x7101 • 315-792-7101

Facilities

x7456 • 315-792-7456

Note: This notice is not inclusive of all fire safety programs at SUNY Poly. Please see this website for additional information: sunypoly.edu/env-health-safety

Prohibited Items, Actions & Nevers...

No Light Duty Household Extension (or Zip) Cords

These devices are only suitable for non-commercial / household use, and are **not** permitted on campus at any time.



No Heavy Duty Extension Cords

These devices are only suitable for periodic use, like to run a vacuum or other mobile equipment. A heavy duty extension cord running a desk lamp is not periodic use, and will result in a fire safety violation.



No Multi-Plug Adapters

Again, these devices are only suitable for non-commercial or household use, and are not permitted on campus at any time.



No Daisy-Chained Outlet Strips

These devices are often acceptable for safely extending an electrical circuit. However, do not daisy-chain one outlet strip to another.



Other Banned Items

- Space Heaters
- Halogen Lamps, Lava Lamps, Heat Lamps
- Candles / Incense
- Natural Christmas Trees
- Air Conditioners – except those installed by Facilities



Storage Issues

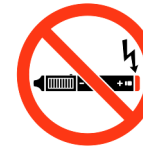
- The excessive storage of materials in an office such that it obstructs your timely exit from the space is prohibited.
- The storage of combustible materials on walls / shelving must observe an 18" clearance from ceilings in sprinkled spaces, or 24" in non-sprinkled spaces.
- You may not place anything that obstructs access / egress paths in your building's hallways, stairwells or even storage spaces.

Food Preparation & Storage - Kitchenettes

- Employees should utilize only designated kitchenettes for food storage, cooking, or preparation.
- Employees should not have personal refrigerators or food preparation equipment in their office.
- The only permissible food warming devices outside of kitchenettes include those with internal / self-contained coils.
- All devices should be UL approved.
- Microwave ovens, Toaster ovens, and other similar devices should never be plugged into power strips – even if the power strip is a proper surge protector.

Never tamper with or otherwise obstruct fire safety equipment installed in your building, such as:

- Smoke / heat detectors;
- Sprinkler heads / piping;
- Fire extinguishers;
- Fire / smoke doors;
- Fire alarm panels;
- Pull stations; or
- Exit / egress signage



Smoking / E-Cigarettes

SUNY Poly policy and the NYS Indoor Air Quality Act prohibit smoking in all buildings.

- As a further courtesy, smokers should stay at least 25' from all entrance ways to protect non-smokers from environmental tobacco smoke. Smoking areas have been designated for many buildings on campus.
- Indoor use of all other devices (including electronic) that produce smoke, clouds, vapor, or mist are prohibited from indoor locations because their use has caused many smoke detector activations on campus.

Individuals with Physical Disabilities

Pre-planning is the key to ensure that persons with physical disabilities are provided with the knowledge and assistance required to evacuate a building. A safe alternative for those who cannot evacuate or use stairs is to seek refuge in safe areas until emergency assistance is available. All individuals should develop their own plans for safe evacuation from any buildings that they frequent. (For detailed information, refer to the Emergency Evacuation of Persons with Disabilities brochure.)

Doors

Doors serve a purpose to limit fire or smoke spread. Therefore, all doors (office, hallway, corridor, classroom) that automatically close should remain closed unless held open by magnetic door holds. At no time should doors be held open by door chocks or other devices that will not automatically allow the door to close in case of fire alarm system activation.

Corrective Actions

All college facilities, including employee offices, are subject to regular inspection by the offices of Environmental Health & Safety, University Police, Facilities, and the NYS Office of Fire Prevention & Control. Depending on the nature and severity of any fire safety related-violations discovered during an inspection, corrective actions may be required of the responsible party(ies).

Every effort should be made by individual employees to ensure that their office / workspace does not create a fire hazard.

