



1. Purpose: This document outlines the responsibilities of the Fire Safety section within the department of Safety and Risk Management. Fire Safety develops practices to reduce the risk of fire in VCU buildings.
2. Scope / Applicability: This document serves to communicate Fire Safety responsibilities to VCU customers and partners.
3. Procedures:
 - a. VCU Fire Safety Responsibilities. Fire Safety is responsible for developing and maintaining practices in support of reducing fire risks. Fire Safety works collaboratively with various departments and individuals to implement these practices and enforce as necessary.
 - Serve as Virginia Commonwealth University's primary point of contact with local, state, and federal officials with regard to the Fire Safety Plan and fire safety operations at Virginia Commonwealth University.
 - Coordinate or conduct inspections and testing of buildings, fire detection systems, and fire suppression systems.
 - Assist employees with interpretation of applicable federal, state, and local codes and regulations related to fire safety.
 - Conduct inspections and annual certifications of all portable fire extinguishers.
 - Conduct inspections of commercial cooking hood systems.
 - Ensure that the proper inspection and testing contracts are in place for all fire alarm and suppression equipment, not inspected, tested, or certified by VCU Fire Safety.
 - Provide specific information and guidance on fire prevention and safety to assist in the development of Emergency Action Plans.
 - Provide floor plans, maps, and information to facilitate safe building evacuations in the event of a fire as required by section 404 of the Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC).
 - Conduct routine fire drills in accordance with the SFPC and maintain associated records.
 - Conduct routine fire extinguisher training.
 - Coordinate with fire departments upon request or as necessary to familiarize fire department personnel with the layout and features of university buildings and campuses.
 - Conduct or coordinate upon request fire alarm and suppression takedown procedures to facilitate hot work, systems repairs, or inspections.
 - Manage the VCU hot work permit program.
 - Investigate fire alarm system activations.



- Conduct a fire watch whenever fire alarm or suppression systems are impaired due to SRM activities.
- Coordinate the purchase, installation, and maintenance of Knox Boxes®.
- Participate in the review of construction/renovation design plans to ensure conformance with applicable fire safety standards and regulations.
- Participate in building inspections, acceptance testing, and systems testing coordinated by Facilities Management.
- Coordinate with VCU Police on security assessments to ensure compliance with applicable codes.
- Support VCU Health as specified in the Operations and Services Agreement (OSA).

b. Fire Alarm Activation and Emergency Response

1) During normal business hours

- a) Respond to all fire alarm system activations.
- b) Ascertain the cause of the activation and gather relevant information.
- c) Coordinate with responding police and fire department units and provide available information.
- d) Provide access to and operate the Fire Alarm Control Panel (FACP).
- e) Upon direction from the fire department, silence the fire alarm and reset the FACP.
- f) Coordinate with Facilities to ensure that fire alarm systems are returned to normal, or other safety measures are put in place to provide an equivalent level of safety.

2) Outside of normal business hours

- a) Designated Fire Safety personnel are available on an on-call basis.
- b) On-call personnel are available to consult with Facilities over the phone about questions regarding emergencies involving fire safety systems.
- c) On-call personnel will respond to the location only in the event of:
 - An actual fire which caused damage to VCU property.
 - Activation of a suppression or detection system in an occupied residence hall which Facilities is unable to reset.
 - Activation of a fire alarm system in an occupied building which Facilities is unable to silence.

Note: Incidents involving fire safety systems which occur after hours, but do not meet the criteria for response by on-call personnel, will be investigated on the next normal business day.

4. References: Environmental Health and Safety and Risk Management policy: located in the VCU [Policy Library](#).