



## **Board Policy 6819 Fire Safety and Prevention Plan**

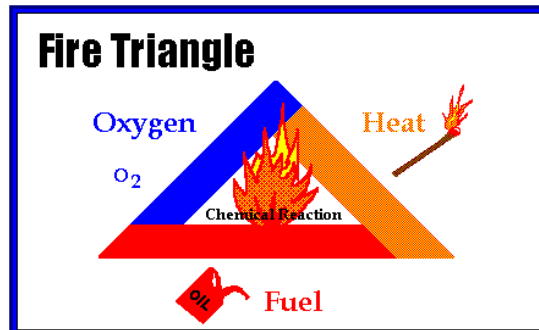
The West Hills Community College District is committed to the safety of faculty, staff, students and visitors.

The Fire Safety and Prevention Plan is designed to increase fire safety awareness for all occupants of a building and to minimize the occurrence of situations that may be life threatening.

Board approval date: 5/17/11



# ***FIRE SAFETY and PREVENTION PLAN***



## **FIRE SAFETY and PREVENTION PLAN**

The West Hills Community College District (“District”) is committed to the safety of faculty, staff, students, and visitors. The District’s Fire Safety and Prevention Plan is to meet requirements pursuant to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), 29 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) 1910, National Fire Code Section 2.8, and also to serve as a supplement to the West Hills Community College District’s Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP). The standards mandate that the District develop and implement a fire safety and prevention plan to increase fire safety awareness for all occupants of a building and to minimize the occurrence of situations that may be life threatening.

This plan applies to District employees at all owned and leased facilities throughout the District. A District employee is any faculty, staff, or student employee who receives compensation from the District for his/her employment. District employees are required to read and understand the contents of the West Hills Community College District Fire Safety and Prevention Plan and to take appropriate action in the event of a fire emergency at any District facility.

### Life Safety Features in Buildings

Every District building is provided with exits sufficient to permit the prompt escape of occupants in case of a fire or other emergency. Exits are marked by visible, illuminated exit signs. Exit doors and signs are to be kept clear of obstructions and the minimum required width of 44 inches of access to exit doors is to be maintained at all times. The required exit access may be more than 44 inches depending on the occupant load and the configuration of the space. Enclosed stairways provide safe passage to the outside in the event of an emergency. Keep stair doors closed to prevent the spread of fire and smoke and keep stairwells clear of storage.

All District buildings are equipped with fire alarm systems that can be activated by pull stations, smoke detectors, and or sprinklers. Keep these devices free of obstructions. When activated, the alarm sounds throughout the building to initiate evacuation of building occupants. Sprinklers should have 18 inches of space beneath the deflector in order to function properly.

### Fire Prevention Measures

Electricity is found in almost every corner of the district buildings and is a common ignition source in fires. Make sure that the electrical equipment and appliances in your area are U.L. listed and are used according to the manufacturer’s recommendations. The use of makeshift electrical equipment is not permitted except in experimental laboratories when its use is crucial to research or work being conducted, and the lab personnel are qualified. All circuits should have over current protection. Whenever a damaged appliance or power cord is found, it should be placed out of service immediately. Do not overload circuits, motors, fuses or outlets. It is critical that care be taken in the use of extension cords and power splitters. Whenever possible the maintenance and operations department should be consulted before placement of power strips is permitted in any district facility.

Space heaters must be approved by the maintenance and operations department prior to placement in any district facility to ensure that placement is in a well ventilated and fire resistant area.

Flammable liquids create a severe fire and explosion hazard. Flammables should be kept in approved, sealed containers. These containers should be stored in flammable liquids storage cabinets or approved chemical storage cabinets or storage rooms. Cabinets used for flammable storage should be manufactured for that purpose and labeled as such on the front of the door. Only the amount of flammable needed for the day should be removed from storage. Eliminate sources of ignition when using flammables, including static electricity, friction, and heat from an oven.

Open flames, whether in a laboratory, kitchen, or shop area, should always be attended. Keep open flames away from combustible and flammable materials. Be sure to obtain the appropriate permit or have the appropriate level of response requirements on hand whenever working with open flames outside of designated labs or shop areas, especially with welding equipment. Use of candles or open flame incense burners is prohibited throughout district facilities.

Good housekeeping is always an important safety measure. Discard combustible waste as soon as possible. Arson is a common cause of fires. Accumulations of paper products and upholstered furnishings are attractive targets of malicious fire setting. These types of fires constitute the third leading cause of all fires.

### Response Level

OSHA provides three options for the response level to incipient stage fires. (Incipient stage fire: A fire in the initial or beginning stage that can be controlled by using a portable fire extinguisher and that does not require using protective equipment).

- Option A      Requires all employees to evacuate the workplace when a fire alarm sounds.
- Option B      Provides portable fire extinguishers and designates certain employees to use them to fight incipient stage fires.
- Option C      Provides portable fire extinguishers and permits all employees to fight incipient stage fires.

The District has elected to exercise OSHA Option B, whereby district personnel (on a voluntary basis) are designated to fight incipient stage fires.

Designated personnel are employees of the district who have participated in portable, hands-on fire extinguisher training.

By electing to exercise OSHA Option B, the District has provided a copy of the District's Fire Safety and Prevention Plan to each employee and has instructed all employees not designated that they must take no action to fight an incipient stage fire and must evacuate a building immediately when a fire alarm sounds.

All District employees must be notified of the elements of the District's Emergency Response Plan and all employees are required to fulfill those elements.

All District employees are expected to read and understand the information presented in the District's Emergency Response Plan, particularly their responsibilities regarding identifying building exits and knowing when to activate a fire alarm, and what action to take following

activation of an alarm (i.e. identify for responding emergency response personnel the location of the alarm station activated and the location of the fire/smoke).

### Employee Responsibilities

- A. Fighting incipient stage fires in District buildings – If a District employee is not a designated employee who has received the required training in using portable fire extinguishers, he/she is responsible for activating the nearest fire alarm and immediately exiting the building in the event of a suspected or observed fire. Under no circumstances should the employee attempt to extinguish the fire.
- B. Emergency procedures and escape route assignment – District employees are responsible for determining the location of the closest exit from the work area that leads to the outside of the building. This is the primary emergency exit. District employees also are responsible for determining the location of a secondary exit from the work area, in the event that the primary exit is not accessible. All outer doors will be marked as an exit.
- C. Procedures to be followed by employees who remain in a building to conduct critical plant operations – Employees who are required and permitted by the responding fire department to remain in a building to conduct critical plant operations should perform their duties only if they are not in the smoke/fire area. Employees should never risk injury when performing work related duties.
- D. Procedures to account for all employees after an emergency evacuation has been completed – Administrators, managers, supervisors, or employees in lead positions are required to develop a procedure to account, to the maximum degree possible, for all employees, students, and visitors after an emergency evacuation has been completed. The procedure should include and list the primary and secondary evacuation areas outside the building to which employees, students, and visitors should report during an emergency evacuation.
- E. Rescue and medical duties – Rescue and medical treatment for injured employees, students, staff and visitors will be provided by the responding fire department. If available or on site, any allied health instructor or athletic trainer may assist responding fire department personnel as needed or requested.
- F. Preferred means for reporting fires – The preferred means for reporting a fire is by using the fire alarm system in a building. As quickly as possible after activating a fire alarm, employees are responsible for meeting responding police officers and/or fire department personnel and identifying the location of the alarm activated and the location of smoke and/or fire. Employees are also responsible for notifying either the maintenance and operations department or the administration office in order to activate the Incident Command System (ICS) Team if necessary.
- G. Safe and orderly evacuation of building occupants – The following procedures represent acceptable guidelines for ensuring the safe and orderly evacuation of building occupants.
  - 1. Building occupants are not to use elevators.
  - 2. Building occupants are to use the primary emergency exit whenever accessible. When the primary emergency exit is not accessible, building occupants are to use the

secondary emergency exit. Occupants evacuating the building should go immediately to the designated primary evacuation meeting point away from the building. Management, supervisors, or employees in lead positions should account, to the maximum degree possible, for employees, students, and visitors.

3. Building occupants are to assist individuals with disabilities (non-wheelchair) in exiting the building.
  4. Building occupants who use wheelchairs and are on floors above ground level are to go to the closest enclosed stairwell. A district employee should remain with the building occupants who use wheelchairs until a rescue is completed or the emergency is terminated.
  5. The responding fire department personnel or public safety officers are to be informed as soon as possible of the number and location of building occupants who use wheelchairs.
  6. Building occupants are not to reenter the affected building(s) until permitted to do so by local fire department personnel or by the responding law enforcement officers.
- H. Residence Halls – In addition to the above instructions, all residence hall employees are to follow those instructions outlined in the Emergency Response Plan, Appendix C, Residence Hall-Housing Staff Emergency Procedures.
- I. District Child Development Centers – In addition to the above instructions, all child development center employees are to follow those instructions outlined in the Emergency Response Plan, Appendix D, West Hills College Child Care Emergency Procedures.

#### Building Fire Alarm System

- A. All district owned or leased facilities of general occupancy are equipped with fire alarm systems. The campus systems feed into outside monitoring companies (West Hills College Coalinga, Valley Security Alarm Company; West Hills College Lemoore, Simplex Grinnell Company) who are responsible for notifying the fire department which has jurisdiction for the campus. At all other District locations, the fire department having jurisdiction is notified either directly or indirectly of the activated alarm.
- B. Using a building fire alarm system is normally restricted to situations where smoke and/or fire has been observed. In situations where an odor (i.e. chemical, electrical, natural gas, etc.) is detected, employees are to observe the following procedures:
  1. During normal work hours District employees will notify the campus maintenance and operations department (West Hills College Coalinga, ext. 2254; West Hills College Lemoore, ext. 3250) or an administrator on duty of a detected odor. The maintenance and operations personnel are responsible for conducting a search of the building and for making the determination whether or not to notify the fire department and to activate the fire alarm. If any questions arise as to the seriousness of the situation, the Director of Maintenance and Operations or his/her designee is not to hesitate in ordering an immediate evacuation of the building.

If there should be any concern about an explosive mixture from chemical or natural gas concentrations in the air, the fire alarm is not to be activated.

2. Outside normal work hours, employees are responsible for notifying the designated fire department or by calling 911 and immediately evacuating the building(s).
- C. Upon hearing a building fire alarm, all occupants must evacuate the building immediately. Faculty members and instructors are required to cease instruction and assist students in exiting the building. The only exception for remaining in the building applies to designated personnel (as defined in Response Level, paragraph 3) who are required to operate or shut down critical systems. Should smoke and/or fire be in the area of a critical system, designated personnel shall immediately evacuate the building and report to their respective administrator or supervisor.
  - D. The individual(s) activating the fire alarm is/are responsible after evacuating the building for meeting the responding fire department personnel and/or maintenance department staff to identify the location of the smoke and/or fire.
  - E. District personnel are to notify the maintenance and operations department of any known areas within a building where the fire alarm appears not to be working or cannot be heard over ambient noise. Any system that is not operating properly is to be repaired immediately.
  - F. National and local fire codes require that all manually operated pull stations be unobstructed, conspicuous, and readily accessible.
  - G. The District is responsible for ensuring that all fire alarm systems and the emergency announcement systems are operational at all times. National and local fire codes require annual testing of all institutional fire alarm systems including a written report of results and findings.

#### Training Requirements

- A. All District employees shall be provided a copy of the District's Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP) and the Emergency Response Plan, along with this plan document.
- B. All District employees shall be required to complete the SafeColleges Fire Prevention Training course class through the district's web based safety training program.
- C. Any District employee may complete the SafeColleges Fire Extinguishers Training course. Only those employees who have completed both the Fire Extinguisher Training course along with a hands-on fire extinguisher use class can be considered designated employee authorized to use a fire extinguisher to fight an incipient stage fire.