

# Building Emergency Plan

The intent of the Building Emergency Plan is to provide safety guidelines for building occupants. While the types of emergencies differ and situations vary, each person should act to ensure his/her safety. These guidelines serve as public education for potential emergencies, assisting in reducing potential risk and consequences and preventing the consequences of these hazards. Plan maintenance for this document is contained within the *Plan Maintenance and Implementation* document managed by the Office of Emergency Management.

## Overview

During an emergency, your safety is our priority. The following information is provided to enhance your general readiness for any potential emergencies. UAPD and public safety officials direct emergency response and report to administration on the Emergency Management Policy Group (EMPG). The EMPG is tasked with managing the impact of a university emergency and making policy recommendations to the president.

Strategic Communications disseminates emergency messages to the university community in a variety of ways. Campus-wide messages may include some or all of the following:

- UA Alerts (email, text, and/or phone)
- UA Safety App
- PA Systems
- Digital Signage
- Desktop Alerts
- VoIP Phones
- Social Media
- Websites
- 92.5 FM

Building representatives are liaisons between your building and The Office of Emergency Management. Safety resources for building representatives can be found at <https://ready.ua.edu/buildingrepsafetyinfo/>.

For additional planning purposes, the university has several websites that provide emergency information. Please review these websites periodically for new information, modifications, or updates. They can be found at the following web addresses:

Emergency Management (OEM) <https://ready.ua.edu/>  
Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) <http://ehs.ua.edu/>  
UAPD Safer Living Guide <https://police.ua.edu/safer-living-guide-2-2/>

**Remember:** Individuals should act in a safe manner: first regarding one's personal safety and secondly, considering the safety of others. Only resume activities in your building once directed to do so by university officials.

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## Hazard, Threat, or Incident Specific Procedures

### Natural Hazards

#### 1. Tornadoes

**Warning:** Tornado watches and warnings are disseminated from the National Weather Service (NWS). Watches and warnings will be redistributed throughout the university via numerous and redundant means to alert people on campus of the impending severe weather. Strategic Communications and/or UAPD communicates the tornado watch to the university community. Designated tornado shelters and BARAs are opened across campus.

**Actions:** When a tornado warning is issued that includes the university:

- Seek shelter immediately.
- Classes, activities, and normal business operations will be immediately suspended at the time the warning is issued and will remain suspended until the warning is cleared.
- All building occupants should move to a tornado shelter or the best available refuge areas (BARA), usually located at the lowest-level interior rooms away from windows and exterior doors. Specific shelters and BARA information may be obtained inside the UA Safety app or at the following website:  
<https://ready.ua.edu/shelters/>.
- Occupants should not leave the building until the tornado warning has expired/cancelled.

**Resuming Activities:** Activities will not resume until the National Weather Service cancels the warning or the warning expires. The university will communicate this information. Classes in session when the tornado warning is issued can resume immediately after the warning expired/cancelled at the discretion of the instructor. Classes that have not yet begun will resume 30 minutes after the tornado warning expired/cancelled, if at least half of the class period remains.

#### 2. Severe Storms

The University of Alabama seeks to promote the safety of our students, faculty, and staff during severe weather events. In general, classes will remain in session until the National Weather Service issues safety *warnings* for the campus. While the university campus might not be experiencing severe weather, individuals should consider weather conditions when driving to or from campus and follow the National Weather Service's guidance regarding severe weather in their respective location. It is also recommended that individuals have at least two ways to receive severe weather messages. Additional information concerning UA severe weather guidelines can be found at <https://ready.ua.edu/severe-weather-guidelines/>. Severe storms include thunderstorms, winter storms/freezes, and hurricanes/tropical storms. If severe weather is imminent, seek shelter immediately and follow guidance from university officials.

### 3. Earthquakes

Earthquakes can happen without warning and result in injuries and damage. If an earthquake happens, protect yourself right away.

#### **Actions:**

- **Drop** – Drop wherever you are onto your hands and knees. If you are using a wheelchair or walker with a seat, lock your wheels and remain seated until the shaking stops.
- **Cover** – Cover your head and neck with your arms. If a sturdy table or desk is nearby, crawl under it for shelter. If no shelter is nearby, crawl next to an interior wall (away from windows).
- **Hold On** – If you are under a table or desk, hold on with one hand and be ready to move with it if it moves.

### 4. Floods

Flooding may occur outside of your building and affect your normal operations. If flooding becomes a risk to life safety or affects access to and from the building, contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911 immediately. Remain in a safe location. Never attempt to drive through flooded areas. Follow guidance from university officials.

## **Technological Hazards**

### 1. Explosions

Explosions may occur from a variety of causes such as a construction accident, lab accident, gas leak, or intentional acts.

#### **Actions:**

- Evacuate the building immediately through the closest exit.
- Contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911.
- Once outside the building, relay pertinent information to TFR, EHS, or UAPD personnel when they arrive.
- Everyone should remain outside of the building at a safe distance.

### 2. Structural Collapse

Facilities inspects buildings and has a maintenance plan to address any potential structural issues. If you suspect a structural issue, contact Facilities Customer Service Center immediately at 205-348-6001.

If a structural collapse occurs, evacuate the building immediately through the nearest exit. Contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911 as soon as possible. Once outside the

building, occupants should relay pertinent information to UAPD personnel when they arrive. Occupants should remain outside of the building at a safe distance.

### 3. **Fire**

When a fire alarm activates, it will continue to sound in the building until the Tuscaloosa Fire Rescue (TFR), EHS, or the University of Alabama Police Department (UAPD) turn the alarm off. Even though the alarm is turned off, it is not safe to re-enter the building until TFR personnel give the “all clear.” Once the “all clear” is given, a representative from EHS, UAPD, or TFR will notify the occupants that they may reenter the building.

**Actions:** When the alarm sounds:

- Evacuate the building immediately through the closest exit.
- In the event of a fire, if the fire alarm is not sounding, go to the nearest exit and activate the pull station and exit the building.
- Call UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911 if fire or smoke is observed.
- Once outside the building, occupants should relay pertinent information to TFR, EHS, or UAPD personnel when they arrive.
- Everyone should remain outside of the building at a safe distance.

**Special Assistance:** If an occupant is unable to evacuate or needs assistance reaching the lower level of the building, he/she should contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911 and provide his/her location within the building. If someone is aware of an occupant needing assistance to evacuate the building, he/she should provide this information to TFR, EHS, or UAPD immediately upon their arrival or by calling 911.

**Remember:**

- Do not attempt to save university or personal property. Unless the fire is very small, do not attempt to extinguish it.
- Walk; don't run to the nearest exit. Do not use the elevators. Check the doorknob before opening a door to determine whether it is hot.
- IF IT IS HOT, DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR. To escape, take another safe route if available.
- Do not turn off lights. Close the door as you exit, but leave it unlocked. Close stairwell doors as you exit.

### 4. **Transportation Accidents**

If a transportation accident occurs near your building and impacts accessibility to the building, remain in a safe location and contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911.

### 5. **Hazardous Materials Incident**

Lab personnel are trained to handle small releases of solids, liquids, or gases in their areas. UA Chemical Hygiene and Laboratory Chemical Hygiene Plans dictate safety procedures required for a lab area during a release or an evacuation.

Contact EHS and/or UAPD for any chemical release. After the initial notification, consider internal notification procedures.

**Actions:**

- When there is a release, contact EHS at 205-348-5905.
- After normal business hours, contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911.
- Evacuate the area and restrict access until EHS or UAPD arrive.
- Contact the lab supervisor/principal investigator and the department chair.
- Meet EHS or UAPD personnel at the release location or at the nearest outside entrance.
- **If a release is potentially toxic or harmful and an area or building must be evacuated, activate the fire alarm system.**
- **Notify UAPD if the building is being evacuated and provide additional information for emergency responders.**
- Follow departmental and/or college plans.

**Resuming Activities:** EHS will advise when area is restored and safe to occupy. EHS will relay information to the Department Chair and others as appropriate.

## 6. Utility Failures

### a. **Power Outage**

Power outages have the potential to impact life safety measures within a building. Should a power outage occur, follow emergency lighting to evacuate safely. If possible, assist others if they are unable to evacuate on their own.

**Actions:**

- Notify the Facilities Customer Service Center at 205-348-6001.
- Contact UAPD for after-hours notification at 205-348-5454 or 911.
- In most cases, occupants will be unable to use the elevators and must use the stairwells to evacuate the building.
- If someone is trapped in an elevator, contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911.

### b. **Loss of Communication**

Limited communication outages may occur on campus such as phone and/or internet service. If possible, contact the Office of Information Technology (OIT) with details regarding the communication problem. The IT Service Desk can be reached via:

- Phone: 205-348-5555
- Email: [itsd@ua.edu](mailto:itsd@ua.edu)
- Address: 125 Gordon Palmer Hall

**c. Loss of Water/Sewer**

A loss of water or sewer utilities may have the potential to impact life safety measures within a building. Do not attempt to use these utilities during the outage.

**Actions:**

- Ensure that Facilities is aware.
- If there are any life safety issues, contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911.
- Follow guidance from university officials.

**7. Building Flooding**

Building flooding could impact normal building operations. Ensure there are no life safety issues related to the building flooding. If life safety is a concern, consider evacuating the area. Report building flooding to the Customer Service Center at 205-348-6001 or UAPD after hours at 205-348-5454 or 911. Follow the guidance of university officials.

**Human-Caused Hazards**

**1. Public Health Emergencies**

If you become aware of a person suffering from an emergency illness (stroke, fainting, heart attack, seizure, etc.) immediately contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911 and provide first aid. Provide as much detail as possible to the dispatcher.

- Location of the ill/injured person (building, room number, etc.).
- Type of injury or problem.
- The individual’s current condition.
- The sequence of events leading to the emergency (if known).
- Medical history of the victim (if known).
- The phone number from which you are calling.

**a. Infectious Disease**

To help prevent or stop the spread of infectious disease, practice good hygiene. If you have reason to believe that an infectious disease outbreak is occurring in your building, contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911. If you are impacted, seek immediate medical treatment.

## **b. Foodborne Illness**

To help prevent or stop the spread of foodborne illness, practice good hygiene and safe food handling. If you have reason to believe that foodborne illness outbreak is occurring in your building, contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911. If you are impacted, seek immediate medical treatment.

## **2. Illegal Activities**

To help prevent these types of incidents, remember to “See Something, Say Something.” If you see suspicious activity, report it to UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911.

### **a. Active Shooter**

Your response may need to vary with each situation. Individuals must evaluate the specific situation and make the best decision(s) regarding their own safety. Be familiar with the following guidelines in case an active shooter incident occurs. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security provides the following **suggestions on how to respond** to an active shooter situation.

#### **Actions:**

**Run** – If there is an accessible escape path, evacuate the premises.

- Have an escape route and plan in mind.
- Help others escape, if possible.
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
- Leave your belongings.
- Prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be.
- Keep your hands visible.
- Follow the instructions of police officers.
- Do not attempt to move wounded people.
- Call UAPD 205-348-5454 or 911 when you are safe. When you call UAPD, remain calm and provide your location. Provide a complete description of the suspect(s) including any observed weapons and suspect’s last known location. Provide the location of any injured victims. Stay on the phone with the UAPD communications operator until the operator advises that you are no longer needed.

**Hide** – If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you. Your hiding place should be out of the active shooter’s view, provide protection if shots are fired in your direction (ex: an office with a closed and locked door), not trap you or restrict your options for movement. To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place:

- Lock the door.
- Block the door with heavy furniture.
- Silence your cell phone, including vibrate mode.

- Turn off any source of noise (i.e., radios, televisions).
- Hide behind large items (i.e., cabinets, desks).
- Remain quiet.

**Fight** – As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter.

- Act aggressively as possible against him/her.
- Throw items and improvising weapons.
- Yell.
- Commit to your actions.

Follow all directions from law enforcement officers. The **primary focus** of UAPD will be to locate and confront the threat. Once the threat has been contained, other resources will assist you.

#### **b. Cyber Attacks**

To prevent a cyber attack, practice safe online habits. The Office of Information Technology (OIT) provides many services to keep UA students and employees safe online. Resources can be found here: <https://oit.ua.edu/service/security/>. If you become aware or suspicious of a cyber attack on your computer, contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 and OIT at 205-348-5555 immediately. Follow guidance from university officials.

#### **c. Bomb Threat**

Try to obtain as much information from the person making the bomb threat as possible. Contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911. Follow guidance from university officials.

#### **d. Building Sabotage**

Any suspicion of building sabotage should be reported to UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911. If the building sabotage has created unsafe working conditions, please safely evacuate. Facilities will repair any damages after the investigation. Follow guidance from university officials.

#### **e. Civil Unrest**

If public expressions become unlawful or endanger people or property, contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911. Remain in a safe location or evacuate if necessary. Follow guidance from university officials.

#### **f. Criminal Threats or Actions**

If you become aware of a criminal threat or illegal activity, contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 or 911. Follow guidance from university officials.

### **Special Consideration: Vulnerable Populations**

Vulnerable populations may need assistance evacuating a building during an emergency. Areas of Refuge/Rescue Assistance are locations within some buildings that vulnerable populations may utilize for assistance. Building occupants should quickly provide emergency responders with information concerning these individuals (location, mobility issues, number, etc.).

Remember that elevators should not be used in certain emergencies. **If your building has an Area(s) of Refuge/Rescue Assistance, identify the location and attach it to this plan.** (Code requirements establish the criteria for the designation. Buildings containing an Area(s) of Refuge/Rescue Assistance have signage marking the locations.)

## **Definitions**

**Area of Refuge/Rescue Assistance** — An area, with direct access to an exit, where people who are unable to use stairs may remain temporarily in safety to await further instructions or assistance during emergency evacuation. These areas are marked with signage.

**Best Available Refuge Area (BARA)** — Term used to identify areas within buildings to likely offer the greatest safety for building occupants during a tornado. This term should not be confused with tornado safe room that is specifically built to FEMA 361 or ICC 500 standards.

**Building Emergency Plan (BEP)** — A building specific emergency operations plan that identifies unique building hazards and response procedures. It is a tertiary level plan that permits building specific preparation and response procedures.

**EHS** — UA Office of Environmental Health and Safety

**Emergency Management Policy Group (EMPG)** — Senior university administrators tasked with making policy decisions regarding campus emergencies.

**Incident Command** — A management system designed to enable effective and efficient domestic incident management by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure. UAPD serves as incident command for campus emergencies.

**TFR** — Tuscaloosa Fire Rescue

**UAPD** — University of Alabama Police Department