**Fire Safety Program UPPS No. 04.05.03  
Issue No. 1  
Effective Date: 01/04/2022  
Next Review: 05/01/2026 (E4Y)**

**Sr. Review: Director, Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

*Texas State University is committed to* providing a safe environment for its students and employees.

**01.      BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

01.01 Texas State University’s fire safety program is designed to prevent or reduce property loss and injury from fire and explosions arising from storage, handling, and use of flammable and combustible substances, materials, and devices. The procedures incorporated into this policy are essential in promoting fire and life safety and enhancing Texas State compliance with applicable local, state, and national fire and life safety standards.

01.02 Costs of fire safety systems and repairs are, generally, funded by the area in which an activity or program is located. State funds are utilized for educational and general (E&G) facilities (such as academic buildings). Non-state funds are utilized for non-E&G facilities (such as residence halls).

01.03 Non-compliance with fire safety codes and standards can result in sanctions against the university as well as pose serious risks to students, employees, visitors, and Texas State property. Disciplinary action may be taken against Texas State students and employees who do not comply with this policy and associated regulations. In some cases, criminal and financial penalties may also be charged for non-compliance.

01.04 The Texas State’s fire safety program will comply with [National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1 (Uniform Fire Code)](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=1), [NFPA 70 (National Electrical Code)](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=70), [NFPA 101 (Life Safety Code)](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=101), and the [International Building Code](https://www.iccsafe.org/products-and-services/i-codes/2018-i-codes/ibc/) (IBC) and its associated mechanical and plumbing codes.

**02.      DEFINITIONS**

02.01 Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) – NFPA title for the organization, office, or individual responsible for approving equipment, materials, an installation, or fire safety procedures in accordance with NFPA rules and regulations (refer to [NFPA 101-3.2.2](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=101) for more information).

02.02 Building Official (BO) – the officer or other designated authority charged with the administration and enforcement of the IBC.

02.03 Egress – a continuous and unobstructed way of travel from any point in a building or structure to a public way consisting of three separate and distinct parts: the exit access, the exit, and the exit discharge. 

02.04 Exit Corridor – a pedestrian pathway that allows direct access to the outside of a building, to a building entrance, and subsequent pathways to the outside of the building.

02.05 Flammable and Combustible Materials – a general classification given to gaseous, liquid, or solid materials that are capable of being ignited in the presence of air or oxygen when exposed to a heat source and burn rapidly. Examples of common flammable materials are: natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas, naphthas, gasolines, oils, organic powders, films, paper and paper materials, powdered solids such as powdered metals, sawdust, plastics such as polystyrene, polyethylene, synthetic and natural rubbers, aerosols, paints, lacquers, floor cleaning agents, and all other flammable organic material that have not been specifically treated to be flame retardant.

02.06 International Building Code (IBC) – establishes the minimum requirements to safeguard the public health, safety, and general welfare through structural strength, means of egress facilities, stability, sanitation, adequate light and ventilation, energy conservation, and safety to life and property from fire and other hazards attributed to the building environment.

02.07 National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) – an international, professional nonprofit organization with the mission of reducing the worldwide burden of fire and other hazards on the quality of life by developing and advocating scientifically based consensus codes and standards, research, training, and education. NFPA serves as the world's leading advocate of fire prevention and is an authoritative source on public safety.

02.08 Nationally-Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL) – an organization which is recognized by Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) as one which tests for safety, lists or labels, or accepts equipment or materials. Examples of NRTL’s are: Underwriters Laboratory (UL), MET Laboratory, Electrical Testing Labs (ETL), and Canadian Safety Agency (CSA) (refer to [OSHA 1910.7](https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.7) for more information).

02.09 Open Flame – any fire regardless of size or origin. This includes candles, incense burners, and fireworks capable of igniting flammable or combustible materials in the area of the flame, spark, burner, or explosive.

02.10 State Fire Marshal (SFM) – any official member of the state fire marshal's office.

02.11 Violation – a condition or hazard identified as an infringement of applicable state, local, and national fire and life safety standards.

**03.     RESPONSIBILITIES**

03.01 Responsibilities associated with this university policy and procedure statement (UPPS) are listed below. In their absence or on an ongoing basis, each position listed may delegate some of the duties. However, delegation does not relieve the positions of their responsibility for the activities listed.

03.02 The director of Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management, or designee, has primary responsibility for administration of and compliance with the Texas State’s fire safety program. Duties of Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management include:

a.   inspecting Texas State buildings and property on a regular schedule for fire safety hazards, risks, or in response to a notice of a possible violation. In carrying out this duty, the director of Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management, or designee, shall have the authority to enter any Texas State building, structure, room, office or laboratory;

b.   recommending preventive and corrective action and working with Texas State departments to assure appropriate action is taken;

c.   establishing and coordinating fire safety training programs to comply with regulatory requirements or upon request of department heads and account managers;

d.   serving as the official Texas State contact with state and local fire marshals and other state agencies regarding fire safety;

e.   preparing mandated reports and compiling and disseminating data related to the fire safety program;

f.    communicating local, state, and national fire safety requirements to Texas State officials;

g.   maintaining records related to the fire safety program in accordance with the record retention schedule of Texas State and the State of Texas;

h.   conducting emergency and relocation drills and other associated duties as outlined in UPPS No. 04.05.04, Fire Alarms, Fire Drills, and Facilities Evacuation.

i. responsible for annual inspections and commission of fire detection and suppression systems and fire reporting devices;

j.    serving as an advisor to Texas State departments on fire safety issues;

k.   serving as the AHJ for fire safety codes and standards;

l.   serving as *ex-officio* member of the Occupational Safety and Health Committee;

m. investigating all fires occurring on Texas State property;

n.  working closely with the City of San Marcos Fire Department and other emergency response agencies to assure they are informed about the campus and are prepared in case of an emergency; and

o.   approving waivers of Texas State fire safety policies and procedures.

03.03 The associate vice president for Facilities, or designee, has primary responsibility for the installation, renovation, modification, and maintenance of Texas State physical property. Duties of the associate vice president for Facilities include:

a.   designing and implementing applicable provisions of the building and electrical codes and standards to new and existing buildings to the extent practicable;

b.   maintaining and monitoring fire detection and suppression systems and fire reporting devices;

c.   assigning and scheduling personnel and materials necessary to eliminate or reduce fire hazards associated with Texas State buildings, building systems, and other Texas State property; and

d.   serving as the “Designated Building Official” for building and electrical codes.

03.04 Department heads and account managers, or designees, have the following responsibilities:

a.  ensuring departmental procedures comply with policy;

b.   identifying specific fire hazards and deficiencies within their department and purchasing appropriate equipment (such as UL-approved extension cords);

c.   ensuring compliance from departmental employees who disregard policy;

d.   communicating identified hazards and deficiencies to Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management and Facilities;

e.   correcting procedural violations as soon as practical upon receipt of a violation notice;

f.    consulting with the director of Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management for fire safety concerns;

g.   arranging for payment of costs and fees associated with eliminating fire hazards due to department’s negligence; and

h.   training of departmental staff by ensuring employee participation in new employee or new faculty orientation and ensuring employees are aware of the following:

1)   fire exit and building evacuation procedures in accordance with UPPS No. 04.05.04, Fire Alarms, Fire Drills, and Facilities Evacuation; and

2)   fire prevention policies and procedures outlined in this UPPS with emphasis on Section 04.

03.05 Texas State employees and students have the following responsibilities:

a.   complying with Texas State fire safety and related policies and procedures;

b.   reporting deficiencies of fire prevention, suppression, or evacuation features in Texas State buildings to the appropriate Texas State department for repair; and

c.   familiarizing themselves with fire extinguishers and fire alarm pull station locations in the vicinity of the area occupied.

03.06 Housing and Residential Life will disseminate fire prevention policies and procedures to student residents.

03.07 Faculty members will inform students of fire safety and evacuation procedures, as required by law.

03.08 The Occupational Safety and Health Committee will review fire safety issues and recommend changes to Texas State’s fire safety program.

03.09 Vice presidents, deans, directors, and chairs are responsible for their own employees’ awareness of fire safety policies and procedures.

**04.      FIRE PREVENTION PROCEDURES**

04.01 Fire prevention is an important component of the Texas State’s fire safety program. Fire prevention offers the greatest protection against injury or property loss and involves taking action to minimize or eliminate fire hazards. All Texas State employees and students should be aware of potential fire safety hazards and report them to Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management for corrective action (refer to [NFPA 1, Chapter 20.2](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=101) for more information).

04.02 The following fire prevention procedures apply to all Texas State property (other than the President’s House).

a.   Open flames, smoldering burners, and ignition devices are prohibited in Texas State buildings. This includes candles, fireworks, bonfires, and fireplaces.

b.   Exceptions for the use of open flames, burners and ignition devices include authorized exceptions listed in Section 04.02 b. 1); these do not require approval prior to use. All other exceptions require written approval from the Director of Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management. Requests for such exceptions must be submitted at least 10 working days prior to the proposed use.

1)   Authorized exceptions for open flame operations include:

(a) commercial cooking in designated food preparation areas complying with [NFPA 96, Standard for Ventilation Control and Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=96);

(b) open flame burners used in Texas State approved laboratories complying with [NFPA 45, Standard on Fire Protection for Laboratories using Chemicals](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=45); and

(c) any hot work which has an approved hot work permit.

2)   Other Exceptions – any situation not listed in Section 04.02 b. 1) that proposes a need to use open flames, smoldering burners, or other ignition sources must have written approval from the director of Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management, or designee. This includes the use of an open flame in a theatrical or stage performance. Justification for the exception must be explained in writing and submitted to the director of Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management, or designee, at least 10 working days prior to the proposed use.

c. Fireworks – firework displays on Texas State property must be sponsored by a Texas State department or officially registered student organization. Written requests to discharge fireworks require the licensed vendor to submit a proposal to the director of Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management, or designee, and the City of San Marcos Fire Marshal. The written proposal must be submitted at least 30 days prior to the proposed event.

d.   Smoking – in accordance with [UPPS No. 04.05.02](http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-04-05-02.html), Tobacco and Smoking Policy, smoking is prohibited on Texas State property.

e.   Electrical connections must conform to the following requirements:

1)   Electrical equipment must be NRTL listed and shall be plugged into electrical wall outlets. The use of extension cords to provide permanent electrical connections is prohibited.

2)  Only use extension cords when necessary and only on a temporary basis. Use only NRTL approved three-wire extension cords with three prongs. The use of light-duty, flat two-wire extension cords is prohibited.

3)  Only use power strips that are NRTL approved. Power strips must not exceed six outlets on the strip and cannot be plugged into each other in a series.

f.    Flammable and combustible liquids must be stored in specially designed flammable materials storage cabinets and fire-resistant containers within campus buildings. Large quantities of flammable materials (more than authorized under [NFPA 45 - Standard on Fire Protection for Laboratories Using Chemicals](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=45)) must be stored outside of buildings or in special hazardous storage areas in compliance with NFPA codes detailed below (refer to [NFPA 45 - Table 7.2.3.2](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=45) for specifications of the amounts that constitute “large quantities”).

1)   [NFPA 30, Flammable and Combustible Liquids Code](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=30);

2)   [NFPA 45, Fire Protection for Laboratories Using Chemicals](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=45);

3)   [NFPA 54, National Fuel Gas Code](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=54); and

4)   [NFPA 58, Liquid Petroleum Gas Code](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=58).

g.   Mechanical rooms and stairwells cannot be used for storage at any time.

h.   The use of devices such as doorstops, wedges, or restraints to hold a fire door open is prohibited.

i.    In rooms with sprinkler heads, storage and furnishings must be at least 18 inches below the sprinkler head to ensure the sprinklers are effective during a fire. No material shall be attached to a sprinkler head.

j. Refueling operations – fuel transfer containers used to refuel lawn mowers or other small engines must be properly grounded during the refueling operation. To protect against static electricity, the fuel nozzle must be placed against the filler tube and a grounding cable to provide a path for an electrical current, if present.

k.   Corridors and stairways leading to exits must always have at least 48 inches clear width of unobstructed clutter-free space. All corridor doors in the path of egress must be operable without the use of keys, special tools, or knowledge.

l.    Exit doors must be equipped with a latch with a releasing device having an obvious method of operation to allow easy egress during a fire. Installation of deadbolt locks or additional locking devices is prohibited.

m.  Barbeque grills, hibachi-type grills, camping stoves, and other cooking devices are prohibited in Texas State buildings, in door openings, on balconies, within 40 feet of Texas State buildings, or directly under a tree, shrub or other flammable material. Permanent outdoor grills constructed prior to October 2003 are exempt from this requirement. Any grills constructed or repaired after that date must be brought into compliance.

n.   Holiday decorations must be flame retardant. Live Christmas trees are prohibited in Texas State buildings and artificial trees must be flame retardant. All holiday lights must be NRTL approved.

o.   Portable electric heaters are not allowed but may be used if special circumstances are approved by the associate vice president of Facilities, or designee. The heater must receive a dated safety label from Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Management before use. If approved, all portable heaters must be kept at least three feet away from any flammable item and must be NRTL approved. Portable heaters must always be turned off when no one is in the room.

p.   Modifications to Texas State building structures or systems require authorization of the facilities department. Costs of reversing and correcting unauthorized building and system modifications may be charged to the person or department which caused the modifications.

q.   Halogen bulbs (such as those used in torchiere lamps) are prohibited. Use of halogen bulbs may be allowed as part of an architect or engineer-designed construction project and as portable lighting for facilities operations if approved by the director of Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management, or designee, and only if installed in accordance with [NFPA 70, National Electric Code](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=70).

r.    Cooking devices, such as popcorn poppers, microwave ovens, and coffee pots used on Texas State property must be NRTL approved. All electrical appliances and devices must be used in accordance with the manufacturers’ instructions and intended use. Cooking in individual residence hall rooms (other than staff residences) is not allowed. Microwaves are not allowed in student residence hall rooms, except for university-purchased microwaves. Microwaves provided by Texas State in kitchens, kitchenettes, and lounges are allowed.

**05.      FIRE SAFETY SYSTEMS**

05.01 Facilities Management must maintain and ensure installed fire alarms, sprinklers, fire pumps, and smoke detectors are always operational. Account managers must be familiar with the fire systems within their areas.

05.02 Any non-operational fire safety systems found or observed must be reported to Facilities Management and Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management for immediate corrective action. Tampering with the fire safety system is a criminal offense and will be handled as such by the University Police Department.

**06.      WAIVERS**

06.01 The director of Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management, or designee, is responsible for granting waivers to Texas State fire safety policies and procedures (see Section 03.03 n). Waivers may be granted on a case-by-case basis or as a blanket approval which applies to a specific type of event, function, or use.

**07.      REFERENCES**

07.01 References to other fire safety Texas State policies, and state and federal regulations are as follows:

a. [NFPA](https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=70);

b. [UPPS No. 04.05.02](http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-04-05-02.html), Tobacco and Smoking Policy;

c. UPPS No. 04.05.04, Fire Alarms, Fire Drills and Facilities Evacuation;

d. [Texas Department of Insurance](http://tdi.texas.gov); and

e. [Texas State Fire Marshal](https://tdi.texas.gov/fire/index.html).

**08. REVIEWERS OF THIS UPPS**

08.01 Reviewers of this UPPS include the following:

Position                                                         Date

Director, Environmental Health, Safety, May 1 E4Y

Risk and Emergency Management

Associate Vice President for                      May 1 E4Y

Facilities

**09. CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

This UPPS has been approved by the following individuals in their official capacities and represents Texas State policy and procedure from the date of this document until superseded.   
  
Director of Environmental, Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management; senior reviewer of this UPPS

Vice President for Finance and Support Services

President