



**WESTERN UNIVERSITY**  
**THE OFFICE OF**  
**FIRE SAFETY & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

Graphics Building  
Room 123  
London, Ontario, N6G 1G9



**DATE: August 2020**

**SUBJECT: Fire Alarm Building Evacuation - Covid-19 Guidance**

**PURPOSE:**

The following guidance is to provide direction related to incorporating recently introduced COVID-19 safety measures and existing building evacuation procedures.

**OBJECTIVE:**

To provide leadership and direction to building occupants through our Building Emergency Coordinators, Building Emergency Team, Residence Staff and Fire Wardens; that is crucial during this time to ensure a safe and efficient building evacuation and to help prevent Covid-19 transmission.

**NEW COVID RELATED INSTRUCTIONS:**

While during an active fire alarm or other emergency, the priority is to execute a safe and efficient building evacuation, we also highly encourage the following safety measures:

- Physical distancing. Although not required during a building evacuation when possible, stay two metres apart.
- When all occupants have exited the building and have gathered in the Assembly Area, if applicable please provide leadership and direction by demonstrating and inviting everyone to maintain physical distancing.
- Wear a non-medical mask/face covering.
- Wash/sanitize hands upon re-entering the building and avoid touching your face.

**EXISTING RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**Building Emergency Team (BET)/Fire Wardens**

Building Emergency Teams (BET) are present in most buildings on campus. It is the function of the BET to assist and coordinate a prompt and organized evacuation of all building occupants in the event of an emergency.

If members are in their designated area, they are to begin a sweep of the area and encourage everyone to exit and meet at the designated rally point. If members are not in their area, or

they cannot get to their area, they are not to go back to do a sweep. Instead, members are to leave via the nearest exit and report this information to an official outside.

In the event of an emergency evacuation:

- Don your Building Emergency Team vest.
- Take your keys, coat, and any important information with you.
- Search your floor if you can do so safely.
- Encourage all occupants to close windows and doors to their area, and evacuate the building.
- As you leave the building, inform other occupants that they should be evacuating.
- If you know of persons who did not evacuate, notify the Building Emergency Coordinator or emergency personnel where these individuals are located upon exiting the building.
- If you see signs of smoke and/or fire, or any other emergency situation, react accordingly and report this information to your Building Emergency Coordinator and/or emergency personnel.
- It is safe to re-enter the building once the alarm has been silenced.
- If you feel confident in the operation of a fire extinguisher, and you feel it is safe to do so, first ensure the building fire alarm is activated, and then try to extinguish the fire. If you do not feel comfortable using a fire extinguisher, evacuate the fire area and ensure the building fire alarm is activated.

### **Building Emergency Coordinator (BEC)/Building Manager(s)**

The Building Emergency Coordinator (BEC) coordinates the Building Emergency Team (BET). The BEC has the task of recruiting and maintaining a group of people who will act as members of their Building Emergency Team.

In the event of an emergency evacuation:

- Proceed to a designated meeting place to await the arrival of the responding Emergency Services.
- Liaise with other BET members in order to determine any pertinent information about the emergency. Such as: areas of the building which have been searched, locations of people in the building, cause of the alarm, cause of the fire, signs of smoke or fire, or any other information which they deem important for responding Emergency Personnel.
- Relay any important information to the incoming agencies and act as a liaison.
- Inform other team members; upon the instructions from the Incident Commander be it Police, Fire or Other, that the building can be re-occupied.

*\*Often communication between team members can be difficult so all team members can assume it is safe to re-enter the building once the alarm signals have been silenced.*

- In the case that it is not possible to re-occupy the building, relay to other team members that they will be required to move to the pre-determined temporary shelter building.

### **Supervisors (Front Desk Staff/Building Managers/Residence Life Staff)**

- Ensure access to exits and exit doors, inside and outside, are clear of any obstructions at all times.
- Ensure that stairways, landings, hallways, passageways, and exits, inside and outside, are kept clear of any obstructions at all times
- Keep access roadways, fire routes and fire department connections clear and accessible for fire department use.
- Participate in fire drills.
- Have a working knowledge of fire alarm procedures and the building fire and life safety systems.
- Ensure the building fire and life safety systems are in operating condition.
- Maintain fire protection equipment visibility and access
- Arrange for an alternate person to be responsible for your duties in the event of your absence

For additional information regarding building evacuation, please contact the Western University Fire Safety Department at 519-661-3300 or [firesafety@uwo.ca](mailto:firesafety@uwo.ca)