Policy Statement

It is the policy of the University of Colorado Denver that ALL PERSONS SHALL BE ALLOWED TO EVACUATE THE BUILDING WHEN A FIRE ALARM SOUNDS.

While actual fires on the campus are rare, all fire alarms on the campus should be considered real. (All fire drills will be scheduled in advance.) Fires have the inherent hazards of heat, smoke, and toxic gases. In addition, fires can quickly spread, limiting visibility and making escape difficult. Alarm systems are designed to provide early warning, which may be critical in an emergency.

Applicable Campus:

All UC Denver Campuses

Purpose

To establish a policy for safe fire alarm response procedures on campus property.

Scope

The policy covers all campus departments and staff.

Procedures

No one shall be prevented from evacuating the building during an alarm, and persons who evacuate during an alarm condition shall not be disciplined nor subjected to any harassment.

Generally, we encourage all persons to evacuate, via the nearest safe exit. Do not attempt to use elevators during fire alarms. Note that most elevators recall automatically during a fire alarm in the building, and they will only be available after the system is reset. Classes should be interrupted and students are to evacuate during the alarm. Persons should not attempt to reenter the building until the alarm condition is cleared.

Exceptions to complete evacuations are buildings that have been pre-designated as “limited defend-in-place.” High-rise buildings will alarm on the floor where the alarm was triggered, the floor above, the floor below, and the ground floor. Occupants in areas where the alarm is sounding may choose to evacuate or, if there are no indications of fire or other hazards, they may wait until they are given further information (i.e. directed to evacuate or notified that the conditions have been found safe).
Note that buildings with fire/smoke detection and automatic fire sprinkler suppression are considered to be much safer for delayed evacuation than buildings without such fire systems. In all instances, if there is any indication of fire, smoke, or other potentially hazardous conditions, evacuation is the preferred option.

Fire alarms and light-strobes shall not be disabled or altered in any manner. In special cases, such as critical testing sessions, arrangements may be made in advance to delay evacuation until instructed to do so. (See policy on delayed evacuation.) The Fire and Life Safety Officer must approve any alternative procedures prior to implementation.

If you notice any indication that a fire or other emergency is actually in progress, take appropriate action. If you witness a fire, follow the A-RACE actions:

Alert others in the area
Rescue anyone in need, if it is possible to do so without endangering yourself
Activate the fire alarm system, using a fire pull station
Close doors as you exit the fire area
Evacuate to a safe area. (Use the stairs. Do not use the elevators!)

USE OF FIRE EXTINGUISHERS: Fighting fires is always a difficult decision. Extinguishers are intended to be used immediately, before the fire becomes larger. EVEN SMALL FIRES ARE DANGEROUS! Fight small fires with the proper extinguisher ONLY IF YOU ARE TRAINED TO DO SO, AND YOU HAVE AN ESCAPE PATH.

For advice or assistance with fire prevention efforts, contact the Fire and Life Safety Officer at 303-724-0293.

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Approved by:

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References:
• 2006 ed. International Fire Code
• Campus Authority having Jurisdiction Policy