

Ensuring the safety of students, faculty and staff during an emergency is critical. Building evacuation drills are one way to prepare for an emergency and help create a safe campus environment. Evacuation drills are a regulatory requirement in both the Occupational Health and Safety Code and the Alberta Fire Code, but also provide many other benefits, including:

- The opportunity for emergency response staff and personnel to exercise their roles, responsibilities and evacuation protocols.
- The reinforcement of evacuation procedures and information including building exits and assembly points.
- The information collected following the drills allows the Emergency Management department to identify areas of improvement in order to increase the University's emergency readiness.

Annual Evacuation Drill Week (September 10 – 20, 2018)

This year's annual evacuation drills were conducted at all University of Calgary campuses over a period of nine days in September. The drills were facilitated by the Emergency Management team with assistance from observer volunteers from across campus including Risk, Human Resources, Finance, Information Technology, Residence Services, University Relations, Kinesiology, Facilities-LifeSafety and Emergency Wardens.

Evacuations occurred at 53 regularly occupied buildings on the University campuses. Residence buildings will be drilled again early next term. The Child Care Centers are drilled monthly. The residence drills conducted in January 2019 were a marked improvement from the September 2018 drills, no buildings required a second drill.

Evacuation surveys, redeveloped in 2016, focus on Building Code Compliance, Community Procedures and Warden Procedures. This year, a total of 310 Evacuation Reports were completed which is slightly increased from the previous year. In an effort to improve sustainability and efficiency Emergency Management developed a new paperless reporting process for all evacuation drills and alarms. This year all after action reports were completed using the new Warden SharePoint Site. Not only did this improve sustainability it increased the speed in which the data was analyzed and immediate concerns addressed.

Warden Procedures

In addition to the online after action reports, Emergency Management developed and deployed a SharePoint site where Wardens maintain their status and contact details on a semiannual basis. This new site has confirmed that the University has 750 active wardens. As a result of updating contact details Emergency Management was able to communicate to all active wardens in preparation for the annual evacuation drills and ensure that they had the most up to date information about procedures as well as equipment. Overall, wardens performed very well this year including an increase in the use of the "Danger Do No Enter Signs". These signs were initially rolled out in 2016 and this year the signs were observed in 63% of all evacuations. When there were signs posted on all exterior doors and links, re-entry during the alarm was significantly reduced. Emergency Wardens continue to report when there are individuals with mobility impairments and their "buddy" taking refuge in the stairwells; as well as senior Wardens were able to assign assembly captains

and the “all clear” was heard at the assembly points when the buildings were safe to re-enter. Wardens continue to report overwhelmingly that they understand their role and responsibilities.

Community Procedures

Evacuation drills allow for the community to practice the procedures

- Take coat, keys and identification if immediately available
- Evacuate building through the nearest safe exit: use stairs – DO NOT USE ELEVATORS
- Close all doors along your exit route
- Obey all instructions and emergency announcements for specific evacuation instructions
- Move outside, away from the building and proceed to the Assembly Point
- Do not re-enter the building until you have received the “ALL CLEAR” at the assembly point

There continue to be pockets of individuals who do not evacuate and are dealt with on a case by case basis by the Director of Emergency Management.

Code Compliance

This year there was a notable improvement in basic housekeeping. During evacuation drills there were less incidents of equipment obstructing egress as well as clear paths were reported to the hose cabinets and fire extinguishers.

It is vital that the University community knows and understands the evacuation plan. Evacuation drills continue to provide critical intelligence for Emergency Management to mitigate risks, identify weaknesses and make the necessary adjustments to support a safe campus.

In an effort to make continual improvements Emergency Management will be seeking the approval that the 2019 Evacuation Drills occur once again starting in the second week of classes, following a similar pattern to previous years.