



Necessary Life-Safety Practices

Here at CWU, it is vital to stay compliant with basic life-safety practices as faculty, staff, and even as students. The below noted items are potential hazards that can be avoided by simple actions.

In order to ensure our building occupants' safety, it is crucial to maintain compliance in all campus buildings including residence halls, academic buildings, and all other auxiliary buildings.

Recurring Building Inspections:

Our county's Kittitas Valley Fire and Rescue (KVFR) perform walk-through inspections of our campus' buildings on a regular basis. During these inspections, they identify concerning practices that are included in their reports. These issues range from propping open fire doors in common areas or hallways, to storing equipment and products in front of electrical panels or in the way of building exits, as well as several others.

Identified Concerning Practices:

We are addressing the below issues by providing training/education to all people at our university. By ensuring we are following these basic life-safety practices we can save lives or preserve our campus' property.

Propping Fire Doors Open: In the event of a fire in a building, there are control systems in place that will automatically close certain doors which are "fire rated" within a building. Fire rated doors act as both a smoke and fire barrier between different portions of buildings, such as stairways or hallways. Although the doors close in a fire event, they will always remain unlocked to allow building occupants to exit.

Their primary function is to hold back and isolate smoke and fire for up to several hours while the Fire Department clears the area and ensures that a fire has been extinguished thoroughly.

If someone props open a fire door, this violates fire codes and puts our campus at risk. A common reason that a fire door may be propped open: moving material from place to place within a building.

In order to be compliant, use the buddy system when moving materials through fire doors rather than propping them.

Risk/Hazard: No one will take the time to remove the door stop, smoke and fire could cause serious harm to occupants and/or building(s).

Facilities Management Department

Storage of Equipment and Materials: Specific spaces need to remain clear when storing equipment and materials.

A common hazard noted is the storage of bicycles inside in walkways/exit paths. When bikes are stored inside of buildings and obstruct exits, this directly effects occupants' safety.

There are many custodial closets and storage spaces throughout campus that contain electrical equipment as well as fire sprinkler system equipment. Most of these locations are marked saying not to store anything in front of them and their notices need to not be disregarded, as a fire can happen at any time.

Another issue reported on KVFR inspection reports is the storage of items too close to the ceiling/sprinkler heads. When storing/stacking materials in a room containing sprinkler heads, ensure to leave adequate space (18 inches minimum) for the sprinklers to operate and extinguish properly, and do not hang any items from them.

Risk/Hazard: In the event of a fire, building occupants will not be able to exit the building as quickly as possible with obstructions in the way. The Fire Department will also not have quick and clear access into buildings as well as building electrical panels if they are obstructed. These delays can increase the spread of fire and increase the amount of property loss in our buildings. Storing items too close to sprinklers will impact their ability to reduce the spread of fire.

In Summary:

Please remind others of these necessary life-safety practices in order to assist in the protection of our CWU building occupants and reduce our risk of fires. Contact Shelan Kuckuck with any concerns or questions you may have.

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