

Employee Safety Handbook

Office of Research Safety and
Office of Risk Management



NORTHWESTERN
UNIVERSITY

Emergency (police, fire, and ambulance) 911

Areas not on the Northwestern telephone network

Evanston Campus 847-491-3456

Chicago Campus 312-503-3456

Facilities Management www.northwestern.edu/facilities-management

Evanston Campus 1-5201

Chicago Campus 3-8000

Administrative Services • Design and Construction • Operations • Planning

Office of Research Safety www.northwestern.edu/research-safety

Evanston Campus 1-5581

Chicago Campus 3-8300

Biological Safety • Chemical Safety • Hazard Communication • Laboratory Safety • Radiation Safety • Emergency Response/Spill Clean-Up

Office of Risk Management www.northwestern.edu/risk

Athletic Insurance 1-5582

Automobile Accidents 1-4334

Driver Training 1-5610

Emergency-Response Plans 1-3253

Ergonomics 1-3253

Facility Inspections 1-3253

Fire Protection 1-3253

Property-Loss Claims 1-4334

Safety Training 1-3253

Student Hospitalization 1-5582

Visiting Scholars Insurance 1-5610

Workers' Compensation 1-5582

University Police (nonemergency) www.northwestern.edu/up

Evanston Campus 456

Chicago Campus 456

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides a quick reference to important safety information. For more detailed safety information concerning your workplace, consult your supervisor and/or the appropriate University department listed on the inside front cover of this handbook.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Northwestern University's ability to address emergencies depends on the cooperation and participation of all members of the community. Three key components of the University's efforts to better prepare for an emergency have been reviewed and updated since September 11, 2001. The first of these components is the **Emergency Response Plan**, which identifies key decision makers and their roles during a campus emergency. The plan also describes procedures that will be utilized during specifically identified severities of emergency.

The second component is the **Building Emergency Plan**. Each building on both campuses has a designated building manager who is responsible for developing an emergency plan and making sure that all employees working in the building have a complete understanding of the evacuation process. The building manager is also responsible for coordinating an evacuation drill with the Office of Risk Management.

The final component is this document. The Emergency Response Plan calls upon all employees to be familiar with the *Employee Safety Handbook*.

Before an emergency occurs

- KNOW the established emergency procedures for your building and work area
- KNOW the hazards of any materials or equipment in your building and work area *and* the precautions to take to avoid or minimize associated risk
- KNOW two means of egress from your area
- KNOW the locations of fire alarm pull stations
- KNOW the locations of portable fire extinguishers and how to use them
- KNOW the location of the nearest first aid kit

Emergency Evacuation Plan

Each department is required to develop an individual emergency evacuation plan. This plan is supplemental to this handbook and provides building-specific information. The evacuation plan must contain the following information:

- emergency telephone numbers
- evacuation personnel duties
- designated meeting point
- building information such as whether the building has an automatic sprinkler system, smoke detection, and/or manual alarm pull stations

For every building on campus there is a designated building manager who serves as the key communication contact during an emergency.

In high-hazard buildings, where several departments coexist, there are safety committees to ensure that all departments work together during an emergency evacuation.

Fire

If you discover a fire, an explosion, or smoke in a building, activate the fire alarm system immediately at the nearest fire alarm pull station to evacuate the building (see “Evacuation Procedures” below).

After sounding the fire alarm, call 911 from a safe location. Provide the building name, address, floor, room number, and any known special hazards at the location. Do not assume that someone else has called.

If the fire is in an unoccupied room, try to close the door to retard the spread of smoke and heat; **do not** take any unnecessary risks in doing this.

Only if the fire is small and you have received University training in fire extinguisher operation should you attempt to extinguish the fire; **do not** take any unnecessary risks in doing this.

When University Police and/or fire fighters arrive, direct them to the fire.

Evacuation Procedures

- When a fire alarm sounds, evacuation is required.
- Walk, do not run, to the nearest stairway exit and proceed to ground level. Close doors as you leave. Shut down equipment while evacuating.

- Do not use elevators during a fire emergency.
- If the fire alarm stops, continue the evacuation and warn others who may attempt to enter the building.
- Leave the building and move away from it, keeping walks and drives open for arriving firefighters. Proceed to your prearranged rally area as defined in your Building Emergency Plan.
- Everyone must follow the orders of the fire and police departments.

Evacuation of Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities must study and remember the features of each building they are in, including stairways, exits, phone locations, and elevator procedures. At certain times, assistance from others may be needed. Prior to an emergency situation persons with disabilities should develop an escort system in their daily environment.

Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers can be found throughout a building in hallways, laboratories, mechanical rooms, and other areas, either in cabinets or mounted on wall brackets. Make sure you know the location and type of the nearest fire extinguisher. Report missing, discharged, or damaged fire extinguishers to Facilities Management as soon as possible. If you use a fire extinguisher, do not return it to its cabinet or bracket. Report the use of the extinguisher immediately to the Office of Risk Management and call Facilities Management to have it replaced.

Only individuals trained by the University in using fire extinguishers should use them. Information and training on fire extinguishers are available from the Office of Risk Management.

Fire Doors and Stairways

Fire doors are specially constructed doors and frames that will withstand fire for a specific length of time. They are found at stairways, in corridors, and at openings in fire walls to prevent the spread of smoke, heat, and fire. If fire doors are to be effective, they must always be kept closed. Some fire doors are held open by magnetic devices that release the doors to close

when the fire alarm is activated. These doors can be left open, provided they are not obstructed.

Stairways are a place of refuge and a means of egress during a fire, and stairway doors must not be propped open. An open door can cause the stairwell to act as a flue and spread a fire more quickly. Fire regulations require stairway doors to automatically close and latch. If a door does not close completely and latch, promptly report it to Facilities Management.

In some buildings the stairway doors are locked from the stairway side. Once inside the stairways, exit may be possible only at the street level. This is more common in the Chicago campus buildings. Be sure to check your egress routes!

Clothing Fires

If your clothing is on fire, do not run. If a safety shower is immediately nearby, get under the shower and let the water flow over the burned area until medical help arrives. Otherwise, the universal instruction is **stop, drop, and roll**. Immediately drop to the floor and roll repeatedly to extinguish the flames, holding your hands over your face to protect it from flames.

Hazardous Material Release

If you discover a hazardous biological, chemical, or radioactive release or spill, immediately evacuate the area. If the spill creates a risk of or causes fire, explosion, or injury, call 911. All hazardous material releases should be reported to University Police by calling 456 and asking them to contact the Office of Research Safety.

Power Outage

In the event of a power outage most University buildings have generators or batteries that will provide power for the fire alarm system and emergency lighting. However, it may be difficult to see well enough to maneuver. Consider keeping a flashlight where it can be easily found in the dark or using a plug-in battery-operated emergency light.

Elevators

Each elevator is equipped with an emergency telephone, which is directly connected to University Police. If you are trapped in an elevator, use the emergency telephone. You do not need to dial; it will ring automatically at University Police. To help locate you and restart the elevator, some elevator cabs have been numbered; the number is located on the panel above the telephone. If you become trapped in an elevator, notify University Police and tell them the number of your elevator cab or describe your location as clearly as possible.

If an elevator does not seem to be operating properly, call Facilities Management during business hours. For emergency problems and after business hours, call University Police, and they will page the engineer on duty.

Tornadoes and Severe Thunderstorms

A **tornado watch** is when conditions are favorable for tornadoes. You may continue normal activities, but supervisors should assign someone to monitor the situation and notify others in the building if storm conditions deteriorate.

A **tornado warning** is when a tornado is occurring in the area. *Seek shelter immediately!* If you are inside a building, go to an interior hallway or other enclosed area on a lower floor and away from windows. Avoid auditoriums, gymnasiums, or other large rooms where roof collapse may be more likely. Seek shelter if you are outside or in a vehicle.

A **severe thunderstorm watch** is when conditions are favorable for severe thunderstorms. You may continue normal activities, but supervisors should assign someone to monitor the situation.

A **severe thunderstorm warning** is when severe thunderstorms are occurring in the area. Be prepared to move to a place of shelter if threatening weather approaches. Stay indoors away from windows until the storm passes. If large hail begins to fall, seek shelter.

Earthquake

In the event of an earthquake there is little time to react. When you first feel shaking, immediately take cover under something sturdy — your desk, for example. If you cannot reach cover, brace yourself in an interior doorway

or crouch in an interior corner away from windows, shelves, or cabinets. Do not try to get outside. If you are outside at the time of the earthquake, move away from the sides of buildings, overhead wires, or other hazards. If you are driving, pull over to the side of the road and stop. Avoid overpasses and power lines. Stay inside the vehicle until the shaking is over. Be prepared for aftershocks.

Bomb Threat

Take any bomb threat seriously, and report it immediately to University Police. University Police will determine what corrective action to take.

If you receive a written bomb threat, do not handle it any more than necessary. Place it in an envelope to preserve possible fingerprints. If you receive a telephoned threat, note the exact time of the call and attempt to write down the exact words of the caller. Ask the caller to repeat information. Get as much information as possible by asking when the bomb is set to explode, what kind of bomb it is, where it is located, and what it looks like. If possible, signal another person and write a note explaining the call is a bomb threat. The other person can then alert University Police. Give all of the information you obtain to University Police when you talk with them.

Theft and Missing Property

Theft or missing property should be reported immediately to University Police. An officer will take a report of the loss and of the circumstances surrounding the loss.

Suspicious Persons

If you see suspicious persons in your building or on your property, report them to University Police immediately. You should provide a complete description of the person, what he or she was doing, his or her last known location, and his or her direction of travel (if known). University Police will respond and require identification from the suspicious person. If circumstances warrant, University Police will remove unauthorized persons from the premises, issue them trespass warnings, or arrest them.

SECURITY

All employees should heed the following steps to ensure their personal safety.

While working

- Keep all valuables locked away and/or lock your office door when you leave your office, even if you are away for only a short period.
- Ask unescorted visitors entering your office to identify themselves and whom they are meeting.
- Request identification from persons who wish to repair or remove property.
- Call University Police if a person entering your office area appears to be suspicious, won't identify him- or herself, or asks for a person who does not work in your area.
- Secure computers and other valuable equipment. Facilities Management can provide lockdown devices for most computers. Keep records of all serial numbers on equipment. Consider engraving "Northwestern University" and the name of your department on all equipment.

While working after hours

- Lock all doors to the outside.
- Keep your office door closed and locked.
- Never prop open a door for someone who will be joining you or allow strangers to enter with you.
- Never leave your purse or wallet unattended.
- Remove valuable items from your desktop and close and lock file drawers, windows, and doors when leaving your office for the day.

When walking at night

- Walk with someone you know, use the shuttle service, or call the Student Escort Service (1-7000 from any campus phone).
- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings.
- Plan the safest route to your destination, and use the same route every time.
- Walk briskly and confidently in the center of the sidewalk.

- Avoid dark areas and shortcuts.
- If you think you are being followed, head quickly for a lighted area, a group of people, or, if you are on campus, an emergency phone.
- Consider carrying chemical spray or a personal alarm.
- Be careful when walking to or from public transportation, and do not ride the train, el, or bus alone late at night.
- Have your car or house keys in hand as you approach your vehicle or home.
- Do not hitchhike.

Laboratory Security

Laboratory security is related to but different from laboratory safety. Security refers to measures used to control access to the laboratory in order to prevent theft of materials or equipment from the lab. Take specific actions to prevent unauthorized entry to your lab. Secure highly hazardous materials such as infectious agents, toxins, radioactive materials, acutely toxic chemicals, carcinogens, teratogens, explosive or reactive chemicals, and compressed gases against theft. Diversion of even small quantities of hazardous materials can have serious consequences when they are used for criminal or terrorist purposes. Bioterrorism regulations require compliance with stringent risk-based security requirements. One easy way to increase security is to make sure that your laboratory door is locked whenever the lab is left unattended, even for a few minutes.

Security Suggestions

- Assess your laboratory for hazardous materials and security risks.
- Develop and implement security procedures for your laboratory group.
- Train your laboratory group on these security procedures and assign responsibilities.
- Control access to areas where hazardous materials are used and stored.
- Close and lock laboratory doors when no one is present.
- Do not leave hazardous materials unattended or unsecured at any time.
- Lock freezers, refrigerators, storage cabinets, and other equipment where hazardous materials are stored when they are not in use.
- Know who is in your laboratory area.

- Limit laboratory access to those individuals who need to be in the lab.
- Restrict off-hours access to individuals authorized by the principal investigator.
- Escort guests to and from the laboratory. Approach people you do not recognize and ask if you can help direct them.
- Know what hazardous materials are being ordered and shipped to your laboratory.
- Get rid of unneeded hazardous materials.
- Take periodic inventory of all highly hazardous chemicals, biological agents/toxins, radioactive materials, and controlled substances.
- Report any missing inventory or suspected unauthorized access immediately to the Office of Research Safety and University Police.

Safety Inspections

Periodic and annual inspections are made by the Office of Risk Management, the Office of Research Safety, and the Evanston or Chicago Fire Departments for compliance with safety regulations. Keep your space orderly.

MEDICAL TREATMENT PROCEDURES

Whenever you encounter a person who is ill or injured, follow these steps:

- Keep the victim as comfortable as possible.
- Do not move the victim any more than is necessary for his or her safety.
- Never administer liquids to an unconscious victim.
- Do not remove objects that may be embedded in the victim's skin.

Life-Threatening Injuries and Illnesses

Life-threatening conditions include severe chest pains, gunshot wounds, severe burns, hemorrhaging, severe head injuries, and open (compound) fractures, among others.

In the event of a life-threatening medical situation, call 911. Fire department paramedics will respond for treatment and transportation to a hospital emergency room.

Other Injuries and Illnesses

In you encounter an injured or ill person, help that person seek medical attention and notify your supervisor of the incident.

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Employees who are exposed to human blood, body fluids, and other potentially infectious human materials in the course of their work — including employees who draw blood, work with human tissues, or provide first aid — are covered by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Bloodborne Pathogens Standard. Bloodborne pathogens include HIV, Hepatitis B virus, and Hepatitis C virus. Exposure can occur via a percutaneous injury, such as a needle stick or cut with a sharp object, or by contact of mucous membranes or nonintact skin with blood, tissue, or body fluids that are contaminated with visible blood.

The Northwestern University Exposure Control Plan and the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard are available for review by all employees.

Observing universal precautions is the single best strategy to reduce the risk of exposure to bloodborne pathogens. This involves treating all human blood and potentially infectious human material as if it were known to be infectious. Initial and annual training of all employees who have occupational exposure is required. This training must be job specific and should include information about personal protective equipment such as gloves and safety glasses, the use of safety devices on needles and intravenous equipment, specialized waste disposal, and how to obtain the hepatitis B vaccination. Vaccination is available at no cost to the employee.

If exposure should occur, the following steps should be taken:

- Thoroughly wash and/or irrigate the exposure site.
- Employees on the Evanston campus should seek prompt evaluation from Occupational Medicine Evanston/Glenbrook Association (OMEGA) at 847-657-1700; after normal working hours, they should seek attention at the Evanston Northwestern Healthcare emergency room and identify themselves as OMEGA patients.

Employees on the Chicago campus should call the Northwestern Memorial Hospital Employee Health HOT-LINE pager at 6-8282.

Employees who are off campus can call 312-926-8282.

- If the exposed individual is an employee, the claims manager in the Office of Risk Management should be notified at 1-5582.
- Report all exposures immediately to the employee's supervisor and to the Office of Research Safety for review through an incident report form.

CHEMICAL SAFETY

Knowing and understanding the hazards of the chemicals you use is one of the first steps in ensuring a safe workplace. The term **chemical** applies not only to laboratory chemicals, but also includes all industrial chemicals (e.g., paints, oils, welding rods) and office products (e.g., toners).

Every chemical poses an inherent hazard that must be respected. When the hazards of the chemical are defined, listed, and understood, proper safety measures may be instituted to protect your health and safety.

A chemical is considered to be hazardous if it poses either a health or physical hazard or both on exposure. Health hazards are illnesses or health problems that may develop in the event of overexposure to the hazardous chemical. These may range from acute health effects such as headaches, dizziness, and skin irritation to chronic health effects such as cancer and organ damage. Physical hazards may result from the improper handling of the chemical or product. Examples of physical hazards include fires, explosions, and sudden releases of pressure. Therefore, a hazardous chemical is any substance or mixture of substances having properties capable of producing adverse effects on your health and safety.

The University's Hazard Communication Program is designed to alert you to the hazards of the chemicals in the nonlaboratory workplace by providing you with access to information on the health and physical hazards of chemicals, safe handling precautions, and emergency and first aid procedures. The program is based on the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard.

The Hazard Communication Program provides you with the right to know

- what chemical substances are present in your workplace
- what health hazards may be caused by overexposure to the chemicals in your workplace

- what physical hazards may result from improper handling
- what precautions or safety measures must be instituted to protect your health and safety

The Hazard Communication Program consists of the following elements:

Hazard Evaluation

Manufacturers, importers, or distributors of chemicals are required to assess the health and physical hazards of their chemical products. Information concerning a chemical's hazards must be supplied on the product label and material safety data sheet (MSDS).

Labeling

The manufacturer, importer, or distributor must label all containers of hazardous materials. The label must provide the following information:

- the identity of the hazardous chemical(s)
- hazard warnings in words, pictures, or symbols
- the name and address of the manufacturer, importer, or distributor

The hazardous material container's label must not be removed or defaced. If the hazardous material is transferred from its original container to another, the new container must be labeled with the identity of the hazardous chemical(s), hazard warnings, and the name and address of the manufacturer, importer, or distributor.

If you transfer the hazardous chemical from a labeled container to a portable container intended for your use that same day, the container does not need to be labeled as previously described. If, however, you leave some of the hazardous chemical in the portable container at the end of the day, you either have to label the container or return its contents to the original labeled container.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)

Chemical manufacturers, importers, and distributors must include an MSDS with each first order or shipment of a hazardous chemical. The MSDS provides detailed information on the chemical's properties, its

health and physical hazards, how to store and handle it safely, and what to do in the event of a spill or other accident. Your workplace must maintain an MSDS for each hazardous chemical handled or stored in the workplace. The MSDS must be readily available to you in your workplace at all times.

Training

Anyone who works with hazardous chemicals must receive hazard communication training. General training is provided by the Office of Research Safety and covers the provisions of the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard, methods to recognize hazards, hazard evaluation, interpreting labels and MSDSs, common measures to prevent and control chemical exposure, the use and function of personal protective equipment, and general emergency and spill clean-up procedures.

Specific information and training about the hazardous chemicals in your workplace will be provided by your department. Each department is responsible for informing and training its employees on the following:

- the location and availability of the University's Hazard Communication Program, MSDSs, and hazardous chemical inventory list
- potential health and safety risks of hazardous chemicals you may be exposed to in the course of your work
- required personal protective equipment for protection against chemical exposure
- requirements for the proper handling of hazardous material
- emergency and spill-response procedures

Your department is also responsible for providing specific training on the hazards of nonroutine tasks. This may require a special training class to discuss the hazards and risks.

Written Program

The Office of Research Safety has developed the University's Hazard Communication Program, which documents how the University complies with the federal OSHA Hazard Communication Standard. Your department must have this program accessible for your review during business hours.

Contractor Requirements

Departments must inform contractors about the hazardous chemicals used or stored in their workplace to which the contractor's employees may be exposed. Departments must provide the contractors with access to MSDSs and information concerning precautionary measures that should be followed while work is being completed. Similarly, the contractor is expected to inform and provide departments with a chemical inventory and MSDSs for the materials that will be used and stored at their University job site.

CIVILITY, MUTUAL RESPECT, AND VIOLENCE

As members of the Northwestern community, faculty, staff, and students are expected to deal with each other with respect and consideration. Each community member is expected to treat other members with civility, recognizing that disagreement and informed debate are valued in an academic community. Demeaning, intimidating, threatening, or violent behaviors that affect the ability to learn, work, or live in the University environment depart from the standard for civility and respect. These behaviors have no place in an academic community.

Violence and Safety

Violence is behavior that causes harm to a person or damage to property or causes fear for one's safety or the safety of others. Examples include physical contact that is harmful and expression of intent to cause physical harm. Such behavior is unacceptable at Northwestern.

Weapons of any kind are prohibited on campus except for those carried by sworn police officers.

Anyone who is involved in or witnesses behavior on campus that poses imminent danger should immediately contact the University Police. In situations that do not involve imminent danger or for advice on the appropriate course of action, notify a supervisor, department head, or staff member in the Division of Student Affairs. Alternatively, you may report the incident to the Office of the Provost, the Department of Human Resources, or the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. Guidance for identifying potentially threatening or violent behavior and for the best ways to deal with incidents can be found at www.northwestern.edu/hr/policies.

Persons who have obtained restraining or personal protection orders are encouraged to provide a copy of the order to University Police for enforcement on campus.

Noncompliant behavior will lead to removal from the campus. Anyone who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action, which may include separation of the offending party from the University, consistent with established disciplinary procedures. Visitors, vendors, and family members are expected to comply with the provisions of this policy.

SAFETY RESOURCES

University Police

University Police has the primary responsibility for crime prevention, law enforcement, parking control, emergency response, policing of special events, and various community services on both the Evanston and Chicago campuses. University Police officers are on duty 24 hours every day, year-round.

Office of Risk Management

The Office of Risk Management is committed to protecting the University's physical, human, and financial assets through the procurement of insurance products, the prevention of injuries and accidents, and the advising of senior management on how best to provide future protection against key risks given the University's strategic plans.

The Office of Risk Management oversees the University's various insurance coverages, including automobile, general and professional liability, property, workers' compensation, student hospitalization, visiting scholars' health, and special events. The office also specializes in employee safety, emergency preparedness, and business-continuity planning. Staffing and management of the University's insurance captive, Rubicon Insurance Company, is also provided by the Office of Risk Management.

Office of Research Safety

The Office of Research Safety develops, implements, and coordinates the radiation, chemical, and biological safety programs for all research laboratories and all other areas of the University where hazardous chemicals, human blood, or other potentially infectious human materials are used. In addition to providing health and safety services, the Office of Research Safety is responsible for assuring University compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.

Facilities Management

Facilities Management is a service organization committed to providing and maintaining a superior physical environment in which to further the pursuit of academic excellence in teaching and research. Facilities Management staff is responsible for the planning, construction, and renovation of University facilities and for the day-to-day operations and maintenance of buildings, grounds, and utility systems. Maintenance of buildings infrastructure includes — but is not limited to — fire extinguishers, fire hoses, fire alarms, and fire-suppression systems and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. Facilities Management personnel respond to emergencies, assisting as required with building services, equipment, and evacuation.

It is the policy of Northwestern University not to discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, or veteran status in matters of admission, employment, housing, or services or in the educational programs or activities it operates, in accordance with civil rights legislation and University commitment.

Any alleged violations of this policy or questions regarding the law with respect to nondiscrimination should be directed to Director of Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Labor Relations, 720 University Place, Evanston, Illinois 60208-1147, phone 847-491-7458; Office of the Provost, Rebecca Crown Center, Evanston, Illinois 60208-1101.

Northwestern University reserves the right to change without notice any statement in this publication concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, tuition, fees, curricula, and courses.

