

## Wednesday Aug 21, 2024 – Safety Tips



### **Safety Tips: Know your evacuation plan/Know what to do during a fire drill**

The NMSU Fire Department wants you to be safe in public buildings on campus and elsewhere. It is important to know your way out in case of an emergency or during a fire drill. Here are some tips to know before you enter public buildings, including restaurants and theaters.

#### **Know your evacuation plan**

- As you enter, take a moment to look around and familiarize yourself with the environment.
- Locate exits immediately and assess which ones are closer or farther away.
- You may not always be able to use the main exits because people may over crowd them due to panic, so locating alternative exits is also important.
- Make sure that the exits you recognize have clear pathways and they are not obstructed by furniture, boxes or other objects. If you identify an unclear path blocking an exit, you should report this violation immediately.
- Make sure you know what is outside the exit doors, ex: a parking lot, or open area so you can reach transportation and evacuate.
- Always have a communication plan for your group.
- Pick a meeting place so your group can gather at this location and take accountability for each person.
- Once you're safe, contact 911.

#### **What to do during a fire drill**

New Mexico State University's Fire Department conducts fire drills throughout the year at unannounced times. These drills are very important to help our students, faculty, staff and visitors learn what to do and how to behave in an emergency. The fire department is thoughtful when planning these drills, but please know that at times you may be inconvenienced. Fires seldom occur at convenient times. Here are some steps to follow:

1. Stop whatever you are doing and calmly proceed to the nearest exit.

2. Do not run or panic. Panic may cause injuries.
3. Do not gather personal belongings or keepsakes. Take your keys, cell phone and get out!
4. Meet outside in a pre-designated location and try to account for everyone. If anyone is missing or thought to be inside, let firefighters know when they arrive.
5. Close the door(s) on the way out. This will prevent the spread of smoke and fire.
6. If for some reason you cannot exit, call 911 and provide the dispatcher with the type of emergency and your physical location.
7. Do not re-enter a building even if the alarm is no longer active. Emergency personnel may silence the alarm while they investigate. Only re-enter after the building is declared safe by the fire department.

**False alarms:** Don't be complacent and assume an alarm is false. Universities have seen students, faculty or staff lose their lives because they didn't evacuate when they had the chance. While many fire alarms may turn out to be false, no one can be sure of a false alarm until after the fire department responds.

**Malicious alarms:** Some less mature individuals find it amusing to activate fire alarms. Malicious false alarms cause the following:

1. Complacency among people who are annoyed and stop appropriately responding to alarms.
2. Emergency responders are taken away from, or delayed in responding to other emergency situations where they are needed.
3. People may sustain injuries while evacuating; other people succumb to medical conditions such as seizures when an alarm is triggered
4. Everyone is inconvenienced until the firefighters have determined the building is safe to occupy again.
- 5.

The NMSU Fire Department wants you to be safe in public places. Know your surroundings.

NMSU's Emergency Planning Committee encourages departments to update their [Emergency Action Plan](#). Learn more about NMSU [fire prevention and safety](#).