



Fire Emergency and Building Evacuation Procedures

USG Procedure | Approved April 2009, Amended June 2021

I. Purpose and Applicability

This procedure applies to all faculty, staff and administrators.

II. Definitions

- A. *Fire Emergency*: a building fire evacuation alarm is sounding, an uncontrolled fire or imminent fire hazard occurs, there is the presence of smoke, the odor of burning or gas, or there is an uncontrolled release of combustible/toxic gas or a flammable liquid spill.
- B. *Building Marshal*: A USG staff member that wears a yellow-green reflective vest and can assist evacuees during an emergency.

III. Procedure Statement

Upon discovery that a fire emergency exists at USG, all occupants must:

A. Sound the Alarm

Alarms must be sounded when fire, smoke or the smell of gas is detected, or during any situation that creates a potentially hazardous environment inside a building. Alarms are sounded by the manual activation of a fire alarm pull-station. Fire alarm pull-stations are located near each stairwell exit and are strategically located throughout each building.

The fire alarm systems at USG are audible loud horns and visible strobe lights. If the fire alarm system does not activate when you use the pull-station, leave the building, but activate any additional fire alarms that you see, shout warnings and knock on doors as you pass.

Note: False activation of a fire alarm is a violation of criminal law that may result in arrest and prosecution.

B. Evacuate the Building

1. Exit University buildings whenever a fire alarm is activated or a fire emergency exists. Failure to evacuate from a building when alarms sound is a violation of University policy, and local and state regulations. As you evacuate:
 - Follow all directions given to you by USG Security personnel and Building Marshals.
 - Shut off all machinery and equipment in your area, if safe to do so. If possible, close doors behind you as you leave.
 - Find the nearest exit that isn't blocked by smoke or flame and leave the building. If all exits are blocked, go to a room furthest from the hazard and call 911.

- If there is smoke in the room or corridor, keep low to the floor where the air is fresher and cleaner. If cloth is available, hold it to your mouth and nose to filter out the smoke
- Do not restrict or impede the evacuation.
- **NEVER** attempt to use elevators during fire emergencies
- Note any individuals who may be disabled or need assistance. Make sure they are aware of the alarms and assist them in evacuation if this doesn't place you in personal danger.
- If you are aware of any person that is unable to evacuate from the building, contact a responding fire fighter immediately as you exit the building. Advise them of the person's location and description.
- Stay to the right in stairwells and use handrails.
- Before opening any door, feel the door with the back of your hand. If the door is hot, do not open it.
- Never attempt to combat a fire and never re-enter a building to rescue trapped or injured persons. The only personnel authorized to perform these tasks are emergency response professionals.
- If you cannot leave your room due to smoke and/or fire, open windows from top to bottom, if possible, to let the heat out and fresh air in. Hang a piece of clothing out the window to attract the attention of emergency personnel. Call 911 to report your location.

2. After evacuating the building, reassemble in designated assembly areas (see attached diagrams) and follow the instructions of USG security officers, Building Marshals and/or emergency responders (fire fighters and police).

C. Call 911

Once you are clear of the building and in no personal danger

1. Call 911 immediately
2. Notify the USG Security Desk at 301-738-6065 (x6065 from any campus phone).
3. Provide the following information:
 - Your location including name of campus and street address
 - Your telephone number (full number, not extension)
 - Nature of the emergency (fire, gas leak, chemical spill, etc.)
 - Exact location of the emergency (building, floor and room number, if known)
 - Information on injuries or persons unable to leave
 - Possible cause of emergency
 - Extent of hazard (explosions vs. contained fire, etc.), and
 - Any other specific information that might assist emergency responders
4. Do not hang up until released by the dispatcher and stay where you are until emergency personnel arrive.

IV. Reassembly After Building is Evacuated

A. Primary, Outdoor Assembly Areas

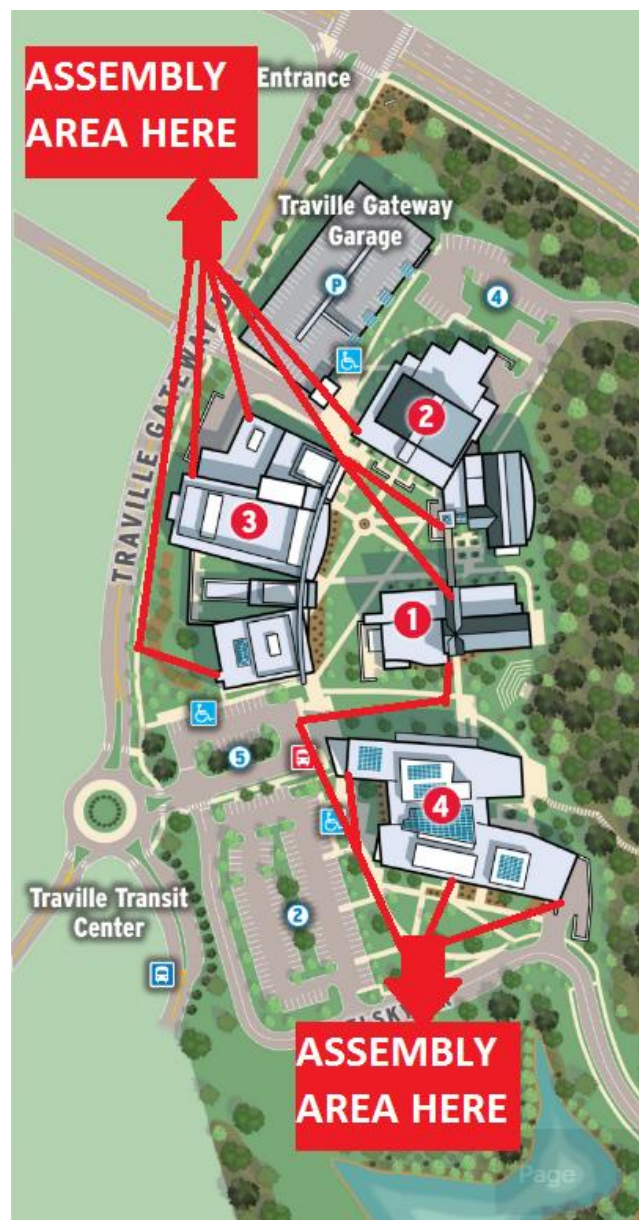
Each building has a designated outside assembly area(s) for its occupants to reassemble after they evacuate that building. These assembly areas are shown, below, and on the attached diagrams. USG Security Guards and Building Marshals, identified by reflective yellow-green vests, will assist in directing evacuees to these areas. If a fire occurs during inclement weather or causes an evacuation to last longer than 30 minutes, evacuees will be directed to indoor assembly areas in nearby buildings.

Building I: Proceed across the Courtyard or around Building III to the Assembly Area

Building II: Proceed on either side of the Traville Gateway Garage to the Assembly Area

Building III: Proceed across Traville Gateway Road to the Assembly Area

Building IV (BSE): Proceed to the grass field by the pond.



V. Secondary, Indoor Shelter Areas

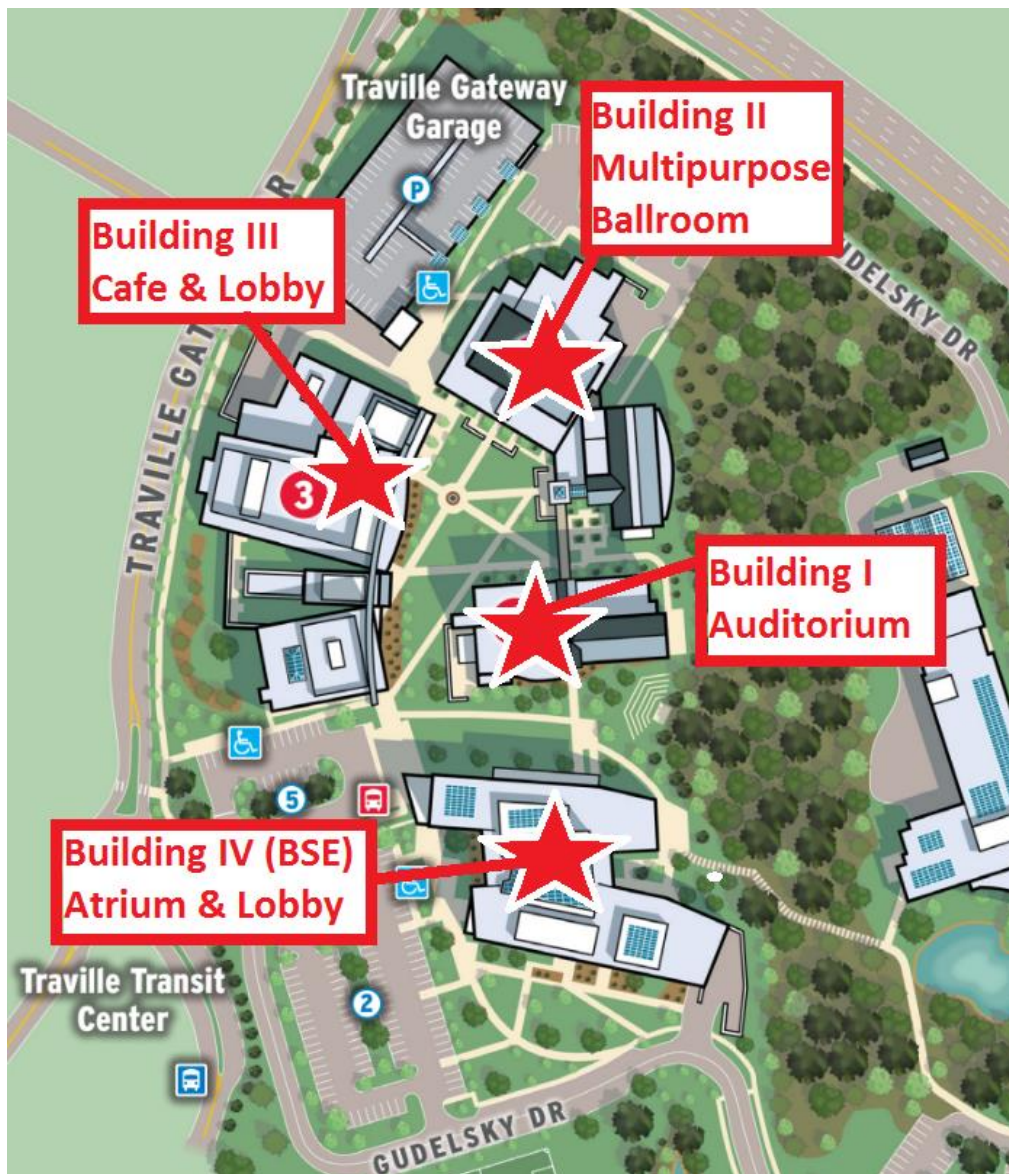
During inclement weather or during an evacuation lasting more than 30 minutes, USG Security and/or Building Marshals, identified by reflective yellow-green vests, will be on-hand to assist evacuees with finding their protected, indoor reassembly areas.

Building I: Multipurpose Ballroom of Building II or the Café area of Building III

Building II: Café area of Building III or the Auditorium of Building I

Building III: Multipurpose Room of Building II or the Auditorium of Building I

Building IV (BSE): The Auditorium of Building I, the Multipurpose Ballroom of Building II or the Café area of Building III



VI. Building Marshal Responsibilities

- A. Various staff members at USG have been designated as Building Marshals. During an emergency they can be identified by their yellow-green reflective vests. Building Marshals can provide valuable assistance to evacuees and to emergency workers during a fire or other emergency. Building Marshals will not attempt to fight fires, but will assist with:
1. Activating fire alarms
 2. If possible, and safe, they will check their immediate areas and floors and direct individuals to the nearest exits as they evacuate the building
 3. Directing evacuees to their appropriate reassembly areas
 4. Providing any needed assistance (information, keys, etc.) to emergency workers
 5. Providing perimeter security of the building to prevent unauthorized re-entry
 6. Notifying evacuees of Secondary Assembly Areas during inclement weather or evacuations lasting longer than 30 minutes

VII. Building Re-Entry

- A. When a building alarm has sounded and the building has been evacuated, the building may not be re-entered until permission has been given by the fire department or other emergency responders. USG Security and/or Building Marshals, identified by reflective yellow-green vests, will communicate this fact to evacuated building occupants. Occupants may re-enter the building after this permission has been granted.

VIII. Evacuation for Individuals with Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities that might prevent them from evacuating during an emergency are encouraged to register with USG. Registration provides information like office or class schedules that can assist emergency personnel during an emergency. Registration is voluntary and confidential. Forms may be obtained from the security desk in Building III.

A. Visually and/or Hearing Impaired Persons

If it becomes necessary to evacuate your area, please do not forget to assist individuals who may have limited mobility and/or have visual or hearing impairments. Remember that without your assistance they may be unaware of the emergency.

1. In the event of an emergency most visually impaired persons will be familiar with their area. Tell them the nature of the emergency and offer to help guide them to safety. Do not leave them alone.
2. Persons with hearing impairments may not be cognizant of emergency alarms. You may need to notify them using a written note or gestures.

B. Mobility Impaired Persons

For non-ambulatory individuals above the fire floor, *if exiting is not practical and the person is not in direct and immediate danger*, they should be placed in a room preferably with an outside window and/or telephone or taken to a safe area such as an open stairwell. They should not be immediately evacuated. The reasons for this are:

- To eliminate the potential for subjecting the individual to injury or death and obstructing stairs to others exiting the building.
- The normal lay person does not have the training in how to move a disabled person up and downstairs.

- The absolute **first** priority of emergency personnel is the evacuation of disabled persons.
- Persons who are aware of where a disabled person is located must evacuate the building and provide this information to emergency workers.

Each individual is responsible for deciding whether or not they can safely evacuate. They should never be forced to evacuate.

IX. If Unable to Evacuate

- A. If you are trapped by fire or unable to evacuate due to disability you should move as far back from the source of the fire as possible, if possible, closing all doors between you and the fire. Attempt to notify emergency responders of your location by:
 - B. Having evacuating persons advise fire fighters of your location,
 - C. Using a cell phone or any building phone to call 9-1-1 and advise them of your location inside the building, or
 - D. Signaling out any available window by waving clothing or other flag.

X. Use of Fire Extinguishers

University members should never fight large fires or re-enter buildings to rescue trapped or injured persons. Firefighting and rescue efforts should normally be performed by the Montgomery County Fire Department, however, the campus does have fire extinguishers located in each building, housed in cabinets or hung on walls. Fire extinguishers are to be used only by personnel who have been trained in their use. Not all fire extinguishers work in the same manner and not all contain the same fire dousing agents. If you lack training in the use of fire extinguishers or have any doubt in the efficacy of the extinguishers, do not attempt to extinguish the fire; evacuate the building. The USG campus has fire extinguishers in each building, housed in cabinets or hung on the wall. Fire extinguishers are to be used only by personnel who have been trained in their use. If you lack training in the use of fire extinguishers or have any doubt in the efficacy of the extinguishers, do not attempt to extinguish the fire; evacuate the building.

XI. Police and Fire Investigations

- A. Fire scenes, regardless of fire origin, are fully under police and fire department control and direction until the scenes are released by investigating authorities.
 1. People must move out of the immediate incident areas but should remain nearby and available to speak with investigating personnel.
 2. Other than responding police, fire, or Emergency Medical Services personnel, persons are not to touch or move anything, conduct searches, move or disturb anything in the incident areas.
 3. Police and Fire personnel routinely and lawfully deny access to incident scenes to all individuals not directly involved in police or fire investigations.

XII. Turning off or Disabling Fire Warning/Protection Systems

- A. No person may shut off or tamper with any fire protection or alarm system during a fire emergency without the permission of the fire department officer in charge.
1. Facilities staff may reset or repair a fire alarm after an emergency incident only as authorized by the fire department officer in charge. Following a fire incident, Facilities staff must inspect each system immediately and place the system in serviceable condition.
 2. Fire and police personnel may reset a USG alarm system provided there is no damage to the system when it is within their technical capabilities to do so.
 3. Should any fire warning or protection system need to be disabled for repairs or improvements, the fire department must be notified by the USG Facilities Manager. The Facilities Manager will also notify the fire department when the system is restored.

XIII. Information Release

All information regarding a campus fire will be released through USG Administration with assistance from the Montgomery County Fire Department. No other University agency or employee may release official statements regarding the cause, origin or nature of a fire emergency at USG.