

Fire Safety

Students residing in The Mount Aloysius College residence halls are provided with comprehensive training and information that will enable them to prevent, escape, report or handle any fire emergency within the residence halls.

Student Training

Students receive the majority of their training from their Residence Assistants at the start of each semester. This training is received at mandatory floor meetings, scheduled during the first week of each semester.

Students are provided with information regarding their floor, their building as well as fire safety, the MAC policies and procedures. Students are shown the location of pull stations, fire safety equipment (fire extinguishers and smoke alarms) and evacuation routes from the building.

The same information is provided to new students who move in during the semester.

Immediately upon moving into a hall, every student should become familiar with fire exit routes and locations of fire extinguishers. When a fire alarm sounds, all persons must immediately evacuate the building, exiting by the most direct safe route. Occupants must evacuate to points sufficient to ensure their personal safety. All residents must report to their designated evacuation points identified by their Resident Assistant. All occupants must evacuate in a timely manner.

Students are trained in the following fire evacuation procedures:

Before the Fire

- Know the location of all pull stations on your floor.
- Know the location of all fire extinguishers on your floor.
- Know alternate exits, in the event that one is blocked.

On Discovering a Fire

- Find nearest pull station, and activate the alarm.
- Shut all doors and windows in the vicinity of the fire.
- If the fire is small, use fire extinguishers to put it out.
- Exit by nearest safe stairway. Do not use the elevators. Do not run.

On Hearing the Alarm

- If there is smoke in the room, keep low to the floor.
- Try to exit the room. Feel the doorknob. If it is hot, do not open the door.
- If the doorknob is not hot, brace yourself against the door and crack it open. If there is heat or heavy smoke, close the door and stay in your room.
- Don't panic.
- Seal up the cracks under the door with wet sheets, or towels. If there is smoke in the room, crack the windows at the bottom and at the top, if possible to allow for ventilation.
- Hang a sheet or towel from the window to announce that you are in your room. Call the Safety & Security Department at (814) 886-6327. Be sure to give your room number and your location in the room.
- If you can exit the room, put on shoes (and if necessary a coat). If smoke is evident, get a wet towel to cover your face.
- Close all doors as you exit.
- If while exiting the building you are blocked by fire, go to the safest fire free area, or stairwell. If a phone is available call Safety & Security at (814) 886-6327, or find a window and signal that you are still in the building.

Evacuation drills

In order to test the fire alarm system and observe student and staff behavior, the Safety & Security Department conducts fire evacuation drills. These drills are not publicized in advance. Students are held accountable for their behavior during these drills. Student behavioral issues are reported to Student Affairs.

Fire evacuation drills are scheduled twice per year, once per semester. Drills are typically scheduled within a few weeks of the beginning of the semester.

Fire alarm and facilities deficiencies are reported to the Physical Plant Office.

Fire Safety Programming

Each year, Residence Assistants schedule activities, such as fire extinguisher training and informational sessions.

Staff Responsibilities and Procedures

All Residence Life Staff are trained annually in fire safety protocols and procedures by the Safety & Security Department.

Residence Directors are responsible for the following:

- Coordinating orientation and training in fire safety for resident assistants,
- Ensuring the evacuation plans are in place in each residential building,
- Reporting promptly to the Safety & Security Department any defective exit lights, alarm boxes, fire extinguishers and inoperable fire doors,
- Reporting promptly to the Safety & Security Department any other conditions that may create a fire hazard or unsafe condition which might interfere with the evacuation of occupants.

The Office of Student Judicial Affairs within the Student Affairs Division is responsible for handling the disciplinary action for students who do not comply with or violate fire safety regulations.

Resident Assistants:

Fire safety training is included in the comprehensive Resident Assistance Training Program, which occurs in the month of August. This training includes general information, such as proper notification procedures, what to do in the event of a fire, how to use a fire extinguisher and other information. RA training also includes a building specific training segment, prepared by the Director of Safety & Security that provides RAs with detailed information about that hall.

Residence Assistants are responsible for the following:

- Informing their students of the policies and procedures regarding fire safety,
- Observing that their students comply with all fire safety regulations and documenting any resident who violates or does not comply with those safety regulations,
- Reporting any damaged, missing or stolen equipment to their director for repair or replacement,
- Conducting Health and Safety inspections to ensure that students are complying with all health and fire safety regulations as documented in the Residence contract and/or the student handbook.

Emergency Notification Procedures

In the event of a fire, the following notification procedures should be followed:

- 1) Resident or RA pulls fire alarm, notifies Safety & Security,
- 2) The fire department is notified by the alarm company
- 3) RA on Duty notifies on-call professional staff,
- 4) Professional staff member contacts administration

When a fire is reported, the resident or staff member who reports the fire should first pull the internal fire alarm. All internal alarm systems are connected via dedicated telephone lines to an alarm monitoring company. When an alarm is sounded the monitoring company notifies Cambria Count 9-1-1 to dispatch the Cresson Volunteer Fire Department, and notifies Mount Aloysius Safety & Security. The Safety & Security Officer responds and contacts the alarm monitoring company if it is a false alarm to have the fire department cancelled. The Officer contacts Cambria 9-1-1 if the alarm is not false and provides updated information for the responding fire units. Safety & Security has control over the emergency situation until the Cresson Volunteer Fire Department arrives and takes direct control over the situation. The RA on Duty should notify the on-call professional staff member for response. The Professional staff member is responsible for notifying Administration. The Safety & Security Officer is responsible for notifying the Director of Safety & Security.

Additional Evacuation Procedures for Residents with Disabilities

In all emergencies, after an evacuation has been ordered, the following applies:

- Check on people with special needs during an evacuation. A "buddy system," where people with disabilities arrange for volunteers (RAs/neighbors/classmates) to alert them and assist them in an emergency, is a good method.
- Always ASK someone with a disability how you can help BEFORE attempting any rescue technique or giving assistance. Ask how he or she can best be assisted or moved, and whether there are any special considerations or items that need to come with the person.
- Evacuate or assist people with disabilities to get to the nearest stairwell if possible.
- DO NOT use elevators, unless directed to do so by security, police or fire personnel. If the evacuation has been ordered due to a fire, elevators could fail during a fire. Security, police or fire personnel will know if the elevators can be used.
- If the situation is life threatening, call Safety and Security at 814-886-6327 or 9-1-1.
- Attempt a rescue evacuation ONLY if you have had rescue training or the person is in immediate danger and cannot wait for professional assistance.

AIDING PERSONS WITH SPECIFIC DISABILITIES IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Blindness or Visual Impairment

- Give verbal instructions to advise about safest route or direction using compass directions, estimated distances, and directional landmarks.
- DO NOT grasp a visually impaired person's arm. Ask if he or she would like to hold onto your arm as you exit, especially if there is debris or a crowd.
- Give other verbal instructions or information (i.e., move to the stairwell, elevators cannot be used, etc.).

Deafness or Hearing Loss

- Get the attention of a person with a hearing disability by touch and eye contact. Clearly state the problem. Gestures and pointing are helpful, but be prepared to write a brief statement if the person does not seem to understand.
- Offer visual instructions to advise of safest route or direction by pointing toward stairwell exits or evacuation maps.

Mobility Impairment

- It may be necessary to help clear the exit route of debris (if possible) so that the person with a disability can exit to a safer area.
- If people with mobility impairments cannot exit, they should move to a safer area such as the nearest stairwell. If that is not possible, they should move to an office or other room with the door shut which is a good distance from the hazard.
- Notify security, police or fire personnel immediately about any people remaining in the building and their locations.
- Security, police or fire personnel will decide whether people are safe where they are, and will evacuate them as necessary. They may determine that it is safe to override the general rule against using elevators.
- If people are in immediate danger and cannot be moved to a safer area to wait for assistance, it may be necessary to evacuate them using an evacuation chair or a carry technique.