Power Outage Evacuation Policy
University of Southern Maine

Purpose:

The University of Southern Maine is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all students, faculty, staff, and visitors. This Evacuation Policy provides clear procedures to guide building evacuation and re-entry in the event of a power outage or other emergency that may compromise safety systems. Through coordinated efforts among Public Safety and Facilities Management, we aim to minimize risk, facilitate orderly evacuations, and maintain a safe campus environment. This policy reflects the university's dedication to preparedness and our commitment to supporting individuals with specific needs, adhering to ADA guidelines, and protecting campus assets during emergency situations.

Scope:

This policy applies to all individuals within the University of Southern Maine buildings and facilities spaces.

Roles and Responsibilities[1]:

University of Southern Maine Public Safety Police Department (PD):

1. **Initial Response and Notification**
    a. Upon receiving a report of a power outage or related safety issue, PD will immediately notify Facilities Management and initiate the appropriate response protocols.
    b. PD officers will assess the situation, coordinating with on-site emergency response teams to determine if evacuation procedures should be enacted.

    1.1 Evacuation Coordination and Oversight
    a. PD will coordinate and manage the orderly evacuation of individuals from affected buildings, ensuring compliance with emergency egress procedures.
    b. PD officers will direct occupants to designated assembly areas and assist in controlling movement to prevent congestion and ensure safe evacuation.
    c. In collaboration with Fire and Facilities personnel, PD will conduct final checks, including stairwell and elevator sweeps, to ensure no individuals remain inside. Evacuated individuals will relocate to designated safe zones and staging areas designated for each building.
    d. Residential Life has a separate policy specifically tailored to residential buildings, which outlines detailed protocols for power outages. This policy includes

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[1] Where staffing levels can facilitate these roles and responsibilities.

proactive measures like emergency kits in each hall, communication with residents, and fire safety rounds, ensuring a safe and coordinated response during power interruptions. However, regardless of attendance at the scene, the fire department assumes control upon arrival.

1.2 Support for Individuals with Disabilities
   a. PD will assist individuals with disabilities or specific needs in alignment with ADA guidelines, ensuring they reach safe locations according to their emergency plans.
   b. PD officers will work with designated support personnel to provide any additional assistance required during evacuation.

1.3 Communication and Updates
   a. PD will provide regular updates to evacuees and campus authorities through the emergency notification system and direct communication as needed.
   b. PD will collaborate with Facilities Management and Public Safety to relay information about estimated power restoration times, additional safety instructions, and re-entry status.
   c. Where power impacts communication ability, mobile-based emergency notification systems (i.e., Blackboard), which operate in a cellular network, may be used to relay information as needed.

1.4 Securing Buildings and Re-Entry
   a. PD will assist in securing evacuated buildings to prevent unauthorized access during the closure period.
   b. Once Facilities Management and Public Safety declare the area safe, Public Safety will oversee re-entry procedures, ensuring that only authorized individuals are allowed to return and that safety systems are fully operational before re-admittance.
   c. 5. If the power is out for more than 2 hours and the Health Services buildings are impacted, procedures for vaccine recovery and relocation to Public Safety will occur.

1.5 Documentation and Follow-Up
   a. Following an incident, PD will document their actions and observations, contributing to any after-action review to improve future response protocols.
   b. PD will participate in post-incident evaluations to refine evacuation plans and improve coordination for future incidents.

2 Facilities Management (FM):

2.1 Initial Assessment and Notification

a. Upon notification of a power outage or other emergency, Facilities Management will assess the extent and anticipated duration of the outage, determining the **potential impact on safety** systems (e.g., emergency lighting, fire alarms).

b. FM will immediately communicate findings to the University Police Department (PD) and other relevant emergency personnel to inform the need for evacuation.

2.2 Safety System Checks

a. FM will inspect critical safety systems to confirm operational status, including emergency lighting, fire alarm functionality, and other essential safety infrastructure.

b. If any of these systems are compromised, FM will coordinate with PD to initiate an evacuation, as per policy guidelines.

2.3 Elevator and Hazardous Area Checks

a. FM personnel will conduct checks on all elevators to confirm they are cleared and operationally shut down, preventing potential entrapment during the outage.

b. In areas with sensitive or hazardous materials (e.g., laboratories, data centers), FM will work with designated department heads to secure equipment and ensure safe shutdown procedures where necessary.

2.4 Communication and Support During Evacuation

a. FM will work with PD to facilitate orderly building evacuations, providing support in high-traffic areas and ensuring that stairwells and exit routes are clear.

b. FM will provide regular updates to PD on the power restoration timeline and system status to inform evacuees and other campus stakeholders.

2.5 Power Restoration and System Restart

a. Once power is restored, FM will perform a thorough inspection of all building systems to ensure that they are fully operational and safe for re-occupancy.

b. FM will verify the functionality of critical safety systems before approving re-entry, including fire alarms, emergency lighting, and any other systems that may have been impacted by the outage.

2.6 Re-Entry Authorization

a. FM will coordinate with PD to authorize re-entry once all safety systems are confirmed operational, providing an all-clear notification to PD and other relevant emergency personnel.

b. FM will assist with controlled re-entry to maintain order and ensure only authorized individuals access the buildings until normal operations resume.

2.7 Documentation and Review

a. FM will document all actions taken during the incident, including inspection results, system status checks, and any repairs made, contributing to a comprehensive post-incident report.

b. FM will participate in after-action reviews to enhance preparedness and improve response protocols for future incidents.

Policy:

Initial Response:

- When an outage occurs, The Department of Public Safety should be notified immediately (207 780 5211) and will subsequently notify the Facilities Management on-call Administrator.
- If the Department of Public Safety Phone Tree is in operation, press '8' to speak directly with the Department of Public Safety Administrator on Call.
- If either campus loses power, reference should be made to the Power Outage Protocol (USM PD Number 21.1, "Power Outage Protocol").
- Upon notification of a power outage, the university emergency response teams, University Police, and Facilities will immediately assess the situation to determine if evacuation procedures should be adhered to. Occupant Safety is a priority, and buildings are to be evacuated through regular emergency egress procedures already in place.
- In a power outage situation - Emergency lighting will be activated to facilitate safe evacuation.

Building Evacuation:

- Occupied Buildings will be evacuated if the power outage is expected to last more than 60 minutes or if safety systems (e.g., fire alarms, emergency lighting) are compromised or as directed by the attending Fire, USM PD, or Facilities personnel.
- Patrons of the building are required to evacuate promptly at the request or upon direction of staff, USM PD, Facilities, or assisting safety personnel.
- Residents in onsite campus locations must follow fire safety procedures, evacuate immediately upon alarm, and gather in designated areas. Reentry is only allowed once clearance is given by attending safety personnel; However, extended evacuations may require temporary relocation. Full details are available in the Fire Safety protocols on Residence Halls Policies.

- All individuals must evacuate the building calmly and proceed to designated assembly areas.
- Elevators should not be used during the power outage. Use stairwells for evacuation.
- Elevator checks must be conducted in alignment with existing evacuation procedures. Fire, Police, and Facilities Management personnel are responsible for carrying out these final checks to ensure comprehensive safety.

Communication:
- The University will provide regular updates via the emergency notification system (Blackboard) and/or email to relevant server lists, including estimated time frames for power restoration and any additional instructions.
- Faculty and staff should ensure students receive these updates and understand evacuation procedures.

Duration of Building Closure:
- Buildings will remain closed until power is fully restored and all safety systems are operational.
- The minimum closure duration is 60 minutes. This may be extended based on the assessment of the emergency response team and power restoration timeline.

Re-entry:
- Re-entry will be conducted in coordination with on-scene Fire, Emergency Services, or Facilities Management personnel to ensure all safety measures are confirmed and adhered to before allowing occupants back into the building.
- No one may re-enter the building until an official all-clear is given and communicated directly (orally and or by email notification) by university authorities.
- Facilities management and/or the Department of Public Safety will conduct a thorough safety check before re-entry is allowed.
- Individuals with disabilities or specific needs, in accordance with ADA guidelines, should be assisted based on their designated emergency plan.

Please Note: Laboratories and areas with sensitive equipment will follow specific protocols to ensure the safety of experiments and materials.
Failure to adhere to this evacuation policy may result in disciplinary actions, including referral to Community Standards and/ or Human Resources. Compliance is essential to ensure the safety and well-being of all occupants and emergency responders.

Contact Information
Facilities Management: Phone (207)780 4160 - (Mon- Fri: 8am-430pm) ONLY
University Department of Public Safety: Phone (207) 780 5211 (24 hours)
or Email: usm.dispatch@maine.edu