UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
PROCEDURES  

SECTION: FIELD OPERATIONS - FIRE MARSHAL’S OFFICE  

SUBJECT: Safety Warden Program  

I. PURPOSE  

The safety of all members of the campus community is a primary concern of the University of Houston. The university demonstrates this concern through compliance and enforcement of federal, state, local, and University of Houston System rules and regulations to which the university is subject. The purpose of this procedure is to further promote safety by ensuring adequate readiness of all University of Houston employees, students, and visitors to promptly, safely, and calmly evacuate a facility in the event of an evacuation alarm signal.  

II. SCOPE  

The scope of this procedure is to establish uniform methods for assuring that periodic evacuation drills are conducted in all facilities housing University employees, students, or visitors in accordance with the requirements of the University Fire Prevention Code and the National Fire Protection Life Safety Code 101.  

The procedure shall apply to all faculty, students, staff, and to all facilities. The policy shall also apply to all visitors, vendors, and contractors/subcontractors while on University of Houston property.  

III. DEFINITIONS  

A. Facility Safety Coordinator: Person responsible for preparedness planning for a designated facility. The Facility Safety Warden will act as evacuation planning coordinator for that facility and will be the facility’s primary contact with the Fire Marshall. The Facility Safety Warden will also coordinate the implementation of the facility’s safety inspection program. The Facility Safety Warden will coordinate the development of Area Specific and Shelter-In-Place Evacuation Procedures with Safety Wardens.  

B. Fire Marshall: The Department of Public Safety (DPS) Field Operations representative assigned the responsibility for the development, implementation, and coordination of campus-wide evacuation procedures and drills. The Fire Marshall shall represent the University of Houston to the City of Houston Fire Department.
C. Safety Warden: Individual with Area Specific Evacuation Procedures responsibilities for an area within a facility. A Safety Warden will represent a specific area of the facility and act a liaison between that area and the facility as a whole. Safety Wardens will work with the Facility Fire and Safety Warden in the development of Area Specific and Shelter-In-Place Evacuation Procedures.

D. Shelter-In-Place: Some types of incidents may make going outdoors dangerous. Leaving the area might take too long or put people in harm’s way. In such a case it may be safer for people to stay indoors than to go outside.

“Sheltering in place” is when people make a shelter out of the place they are in. It is a way for people to make the building as safe as possible to protect themselves until help arrives. An example of an incident that may require sheltering in place could be the derailment and explosion of a hazardous chemical rail car.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. General

1. For a given facility, the Facility Safety Coordinator will work with area specific Safety Wardens to arrive at a logical and workable facility inspection program and evacuation scheme for the building. DPS will participate in this process by providing expert assistance as needed. DPS will also establish and maintain a database of building Safety Wardens and Facility Safety Coordinators.

2. Facility Safety Coordinators and Safety Wardens will be appointed by the UH President’s Cabinet members or their designees.

3. General Emergency Evacuation Procedures will be developed and distributed by DPS. The purpose of these general procedures will be to inform and instruct individuals regarding personal actions expected of them during an evacuation alarm.

5. Area Specific and Shelter-In-Place Evacuation Procedures will be developed through the Facility Safety Coordinator and by Safety Wardens from those departments occupying the areas affected (e.g. the building). DPS will assist in this process by providing expertise on fire and other hazards of concern.

6. Announced as well as unannounced drills will be conducted in contiguous areas on a periodic basis by Facility Safety Coordinators. DPS will assist with the coordination of drills between the contiguous drill areas, City of Houston Fire Department, UH Police Department, and the Fire Alarm Shop, as requested.
B. Departments and Administrative Units:

1. Each administrative unit in each specific site is responsible for ensuring prompt, orderly, and safe evacuation of their assigned space when an evacuation alarm is sounded. This must be accomplished in accordance with the General Emergency Evacuation Procedures developed by DPS.

2. Area Specific and Shelter-In Place Evacuation Procedures must be developed and posted by Departments or Administrative Units. The development of such Area Specific and Shelter-In Place procedures will be the responsibility of that departmental or administrative unit’s Safety Warden, in conjunction with, and at the direction of, the building’s Facility Safety Coordinator and DPS.

4. Individual administrative units within buildings are responsible for following their Area Specific and Shelter-In Place evacuation procedures when an evacuation drill is conducted.

5. Safety Wardens may have special responsibilities assigned by the Facility and Safety Coordinator of the building for the conduct of drills (e.g. door monitor). If so assigned, the Safety Wardens will perform their duties during a drill in the same manner expected for an emergency evacuation.

C. Employees, Students, Visitors:

1. All employees, students, and visitors are required to evacuate an area when the evacuation alarm sounds. All persons in a facility at such time as an evacuation alarm sound are to cooperate fully in the conduct of an emergency evacuation. Specifically, instructions given by a Safety Warden in a facility to evacuate the building, or instructions prohibiting facility re-entry, must be followed immediately and completely.

2. Persons not exiting a facility in the course of an evacuation alarm and for whom no official evacuation duties exist, will be subject to disciplinary or other action deemed appropriate by University authorities.

3. Individuals are responsible for understanding their Area Specific Evacuation Procedures and the University’s General Emergency Evacuation Procedures.

V. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsible Party: Fire Marshal

Review: Every two years on or before June 1
VI. APPROVALS

__________________________________________
Chief of Police                                      Date

VII. REFERENCE

MAPP 06.02.02 Fire Prevention Code

VIII. ATTACHMENT: Guidelines for Establishing Evacuation Procedures
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING EVACUATION PROCEDURES

1. Every administrative unit in each specific site shall select a Safety Warden. It is recommended that the position of Safety Warden be assigned to an individual who has knowledge of the physical layout of the area served, is familiar with the staff, and who will take their responsibilities seriously. An alternate should also be selected for the times when the selected individual is absent.

2. Each Administrative unit shall supply the Fire Marshal with the names of the individual they have appointed to the position of Safety Warden. Bob Bowden, Department of Public Safety Field Operations, is the Fire Marshall for the campus. The extension for DPS Fire Marshal’s Office is 3-1635.

3. The Facility Safety Coordinator shall arrange a meeting of all the Safety Wardens in a specific facility to discuss responsibilities.

4. The Fire Marshall will assist the Facility Safety Coordinator(s) in providing training, developing Area Specific and Shelter–In-Place Evacuation Procedures, and in conducting evacuation drills.

5. The Fire Marshal will assist Facility Safety Coordinator’s in developing procedures to utilize the emergency command center public address system in buildings so equipped.

6. The Facility Safety Coordinator shall assist Safety Wardens in the development of Area Specific and Shelter-In Place Evacuation Procedures. They shall conduct regularly scheduled meetings of the Safety Wardens in their facility.

7. The Safety Warden(s) shall work with the Facility Safety Coordinator for their facility in the development of Area Specific and Shelter-In-Place Evacuation Procedures and in establishing an Emergency Command Center.

8. Safety Warden(s) shall post the Area Specific Evacuation and Shelter-In Place Procedures in conspicuous areas throughout their assigned areas along with floor plans showing the primary and secondary exits. Fire extinguisher and fire hose cabinet locations should be shown on the floor plan.

9. Safety Wardens shall provide and/or coordinate training concerning emergency evacuations and general fire safety.

10. Safety Wardens shall assign one person and a back-up to every handicapped person in their area to assist with their evacuation.
11. Safety Wardens shall identify a location outside of the facility where individuals from their specific area may congregate upon exiting. This information shall be included in the Area Specific Evacuation Procedures.

12. When an alarm sounds, Safety Wardens shall initiate the evacuation procedures and visually inspect the area assigned for occupants and provide assistance as required.

13. If a fire occurs in their area the Safety Warden shall assist other trained personnel if they are attempting to extinguish the fire after the area has been evacuated. Personal safety should not be compromised.

14. The Safety Warden shall check at the designated assembly area to determine if all area occupants have been evacuated.

15. All pertinent information shall be reported to the Facility Safety Coordinator at the Emergency Command Center.