

The purpose of this newsletter is to unite all the UNBC campus's (Prince George, Prince Rupert, Terrace, Gitwinksihlkw, Quesnel, Likely, Ft St John) and grow our UNBC Community's Safety Culture together by regularly communicating important Safety information. UNBC's mission is to Ignite, Inspire, and Lead change.

Welcome to the August edition of our Safety Newsletter where we are talking about Fire Safety Planning, Fire Safety Systems and Inspections.

Importance of Fire Safety

Fire safety planning, systems, and inspections are vital for protecting lives and property, ensuring compliance with regulations, maintaining the functionality of fire protection systems, preventing false alarms, supporting business continuity, saving costs, and providing peace of mind. All these measures contribute to a safer and more secure environment for everyone involved. Let us explore these strategies in more detail.

Protection of Lives and Property - The primary goal of fire safety measures is to protect lives and property. As we know, fires can cause significant harm, including loss of life, injuries, and extensive property damage. Effective fire safety planning and systems ensure that there are mechanisms in place to detect, control, and extinguish fires promptly, minimizing the risk to occupants and the building itself.

Compliance with Regulations - Fire safety inspections ensure compliance with local BC fire codes and regulations. These codes are designed to maintain a standard level of safety in buildings. Non-compliance can result in fines, legal issues, and an increased risk of fire hazards. These regular inspections help identify and rectify any violations, ensuring that the building meets all safety standards.

Functionality of Fire Protection Systems - Regular inspections and maintenance of fire protection systems, such as fire alarms, sprinklers, and extinguishers, ensure that they are in good working condition. These systems are critical in detecting and suppressing fires, and any malfunction can lead to catastrophic consequences. Inspections also help identify and fix issues before they become serious problems.

Prevention of False Alarms - Regular maintenance and thorough inspections help prevent false alarms, which can be both costly and disruptive. These alarms may trigger unnecessary evacuations, interrupt business operations, and result in fines. Ensuring that fire safety systems are properly maintained and fully operational significantly reduces the risk of such incidents. In the event of a building evacuation please reference: <https://www.unbc.ca/emergency-operations/fire-evacuation>

Business Continuity - Fire safety planning and systems are essential for business continuity. A fire can disrupt operations, leading to financial losses and long-term impacts on the business. By having robust fire safety measures in place, businesses can minimize downtime and recover more quickly from fire-related incidents.

Cost Savings - Regular inspections and maintenance can save costs associated with unmaintained, corroded, or damaged equipment. Preventing fires and ensuring systems are operational can avoid large expenses related to fire damage and non-compliance fines.

Peace of Mind - Knowing that the UNBC buildings are equipped with effective fire safety systems and that these systems are regularly inspected and maintained provide peace of mind to occupants, owners, and managers. It reassures everyone that their safety is a priority and that measures are in place to protect them in case of a fire.



Roles & Responsibilities

Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment & Control

Accident Investigation & Reporting

Occupational Health & Safety Fundamentals

Ergonomics for injury prevention & accommodation

Worksite Inspections

Policies & Procedures

Hazardous Materials & Occupational Hygiene

Emergency Preparedness & Response

Legitimation: Acts & Regulations

Fire Safety Planning, Systems & Inspections

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Fun Fact!

At the main campus, the Childcare Centre conducts monthly fire safety drills with the little ones and its staff. The Laboratory buildings #4 and #8 hold quarterly fire drills, and every September, a campus-wide fire safety drill is carried out across all buildings for the faculty, staff and the new students.

Fire Safety Framework

UNBC maintains a robust fire safety framework designed to protect students, staff, faculty, and visitors. This framework is guided by a formal Fire Safety Policy and supported by operational departments and training programs. This Fire Safety Policy is structured to raise awareness of fire safety responsibilities across the university community. Ensure compliance with the Fire Services Act of British Columbia and the B.C. Fire Code, as adopted by the City of Prince George and promote a culture of prevention, preparedness, and response.

<https://www.unbc.ca/sites/default/files/sections/policy/fire-safety.pdf>

Core Components of the Policy - Regulatory Compliance - UNBC is legally obligated to meet provincial fire safety standards, ensuring that all buildings and operations align with current codes and regulations.

Emergency Response Planning - The university maintains detailed Fire Safety Plans for each building, which include Evacuation procedures, Emergency contact protocols, clearly posted signage and wall plaques.

Fire Prevention and Training - UNBC emphasizes proactive safety through regular fire drills (at least once annually), Training for Building Fire Safety Chiefs and Deputy Chiefs, Ongoing education for supervisors and instructors to manage evacuations effectively.

Departmental Roles and Responsibilities:

Facilities Department: Oversees the design, installation, and maintenance of fire alarm systems, extinguishers, hydrants, and hose cabinets.

Security Department: Monitors fire alarms 24/7 and coordinates with emergency services.

Enterprise Risk, Strategy and Transformation Department: Develops fire safety programs, coordinates drills, and ensures policy implementation.

KUDOS

We would like to thank **Aaron Olson** for being the guardian regarding UNBC's fire Safety systems since UNBC's inception.

A thank you goes to **Shannon Bader** who completes all the Fire Extinguisher and Emergency Shower checks to ensure they are all working correctly.

Lastly, a thank you goes to the **maintenance assistance team** for being the floor wardens during the labs and annual campus fire drills.

Deepening Our Understanding: Fire Safety at UNBC

At UNBC, fire safety is not just about compliance—it's about cultivating a culture of awareness, preparedness, and proactive risk management.

Our approach is grounded in both practical systems and educational initiatives that empower our community to act confidently and responsibly in the face of fire-related risks.

Positive Observations

Promoting a Safety Conscious Culture for our UNBC Community

Keeping the work areas and hallways clear of cardboard tools and supplies. The person strapped the cardboard down onto his toolbox, thus, eliminating potential housekeeping mess, potential tripping hazards and keeping all his tools together. What a way to keep your work items, tools and waste contained. Well done!



Something new:

Let's play a game.

Somewhere on the main campus there are a pair of locking pliers that have been embedded into the asphalt for who knows how many years.

Be the first to snap a photo of the pliers and its surrounding area, and email it to safety@unbc.ca to win a prize!



If you see any positive safety initiatives, please photograph them, and send the pictures to safety@unbc.ca

App Store



Google Play



Working together for safety

We would like to thank everyone for participating in our growing Safety Community at UNBC!