

### THINK

Think about ways you can reduce and address fire risk by taking responsibility for your workspace. Individual work environments differ; however, understanding common workplace fire hazards such as those listed below, reduce the risk of causing a fire.

#### Common Workplace Fire Hazards

- **Waste and combustible materials:** Fire danger increases when waste builds up. Built-up waste such as paper, cardboard, wood, rags and other oil soaked materials fuel the flames a fire needs to grow once an ignition source is present causing the fire to rapidly burn.
- **Flammable liquids and Vapors:** Improperly handling, storing, or disposing flammable liquids are a leading cause of workplace fires.
- **Dust:** Excess dust or powder in the air from materials such as wood, plastic and metal inside enclosed spaces without proper ventilation may ignite an explosion. Keep equipment and machinery clean to prevent causing a fire from burning materials.
- **Objects overheating:** Overheating objects provide a heat source that may cause a fire. Keep combustible materials such as paper away from heat sources, and when possible, unplug any equipment not in use and do not leave electrical equipment running overnight unless absolutely necessary.
- **Faulty equipment:** Electrical equipment is a leading cause of workplace fires. Regularly service equipment, notice the signs of faulty equipment such as damaged cabling and plugs, and replace faulty equipment.
- **Overloading sockets:** Overloaded sockets often cause electrical fires. Do not plug too many appliances into a single socket, or use faulty extension cords.
- **Human negligence:** Human error may cause a fire, for example, when an individual improperly uses equipment, spills drinks on electrical equipment, or leaves appliances such as toaster ovens unattended while cooking.
- **Fire Safety Equipment:** Report missing or damaged fire safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, burnt out emergency exit lights, open fire doors/stairwell entrances or blocked stairways to the Environmental Health and Safety Office via e-mail to [safety@unthsc.edu](mailto:safety@unthsc.edu) when you observe these types of hazards.

### PREPARE

Preparing helps protect both life and property. Before an emergency occurs:

- Familiarize yourself with building [emergency exits and know](#) the pathway to at least two exits from every room/area workspace;
- Know where the fire/evacuation alarms are located and how to use them;
- Report changes to your supervisor that may affect your ability to safely evacuate; and
- Know where and how to get to a designated [Emergency Assembly Area](#).

### ACT

Treat every alarm as though it is a real emergency, even if the initial source is unknown.

#### Fire and Smoke Emergencies

If you detect smoke and/or fire:

- Activate the manual fire alarm.
- Initiate evacuation procedures for any occupants of the affected building(s).
- Call the UNTHSC PD Emergency Line at 817-735-2600, 2600 from a campus phone or call 911.
  - Provide your name, telephone number, location and describe the situation.

### If the Fire Alarm Warning Sounds

- Quickly initiate evacuation procedures in a calm and orderly manner.
- Test doors for heat before opening them by placing the back of your hand against the door so you do not burn your palm and fingers. Do not open a hot door.
- If you occupy an enclosed office, close the door as you leave.
- Assist others if you can do so safely.
- Proceed to the ground level and outdoors.
- Report to the safest nearby [Emergency Assembly Area](#) (if possible), or at least 100 yards away from the building.
- Notify response personnel if you determine someone from your area did not evacuate.

### What to Do if Trapped

Stay calm and take steps to protect yourself. Specifically, during fire events:

- Go directly to the nearest fire- and smoke-free stairwell, recognizing that in some circumstances the only available exit route may contain smoke or fire.
- Crawl low, under the smoke, to breathe cleaner air. Test doors for heat before opening them by placing the back of your hand against the door so you do not burn your palm and fingers. Do not open a hot door. Find another exit route. Keep "fire doors" closed to slow the spread of smoke and fire.
- Stuff wet clothing, towels, or newspapers around the cracks in doors to prevent smoke from entering your room.
- Do not open or break windows unless absolutely necessary. Doing so could draw heat or smoke towards you.

### What NOT to do

- **DO NOT** stop to investigate if the alarm is real or false. Always evacuate.
- **DO NOT** go to or attempt to move vehicles from parking; this hinders emergency vehicle access.
- **DO NOT** assemble near building exits, driveways, or roadways.
- **DO NOT** use the elevator to evacuate the building.
- **DO NOT** return to your workspace to retrieve personal belongings or shut down computers.
- **DO NOT** attempt to extinguish small fires with fire extinguishers unless trained to do so.
- **DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING FOR ANY REASON**, until authorities direct you to do so.
- **DO NOT** open windows or leave doors open to assist with ventilation. Firefighters will ventilate the building if necessary.