



# University of New Haven

## Fire Protection Impairment Policy

Developed: February 2012

Revised: March 2015

Program Approval

A blue ink signature, appearing to read "D. G. Smith", is written over a horizontal line.

Associate Vice President of Public Safety & Administrative Services

Date: 3/6/15

A blue ink signature, appearing to read "J. Curran", is written over a horizontal line.

Associate Vice President for Facilities

Date: 3/6/15

## Fire Protection Impairment Policy and Procedures

### 1.0 Policy Statement

The University of New Haven has developed a Fire Protection Impairment Plan in accordance with the National Fire Protection Associations (NFPA) codes. Specific codes referenced during the development of this policy are NFPA 25 for the impairment of sprinkler systems and NFPA 72 for the impairment of the fire protection system.

#### 1.1 Purpose

The University has a duty to its employees and students to provide a safe environment and workplace. Either through scheduled shutdowns or emergency situations, there are times that the University's fire protection systems must be shut down. Because these shutdowns can potentially affect the safety of University of New Haven employees, students and property, the University of New Haven is dedicated to performing this work in a safe manner. This document is intended to provide safety instructions to personnel who shutdown fire safety and protection systems at the University including all work completed by contractors.

#### 1.2 Scope

This program covers all University employees, contractors and associated subcontractors working on all fire protection systems in University owned, leased or subsidiary facilities.

#### 1.3 Review

The Associate Vice President of Public Safety will review and update this policy whenever necessary or at least annually.

All the elements of this policy are considered University of New Haven policy and may be enforced as such. Failure on the part of the employees to follow the policies and safety requirements of this Plan may result in disciplinary action. If a contractor is found to be in non-compliance with the University of New Haven's Fire Protection Impairment Policy, current and future work may be jeopardized.

### 2.0 Definitions

*Authorized Person* - a person who by the nature of their job, implicit training and skills requirements, has been authorized to initiate an impairment and work on a fire protection system.

*Impairment* - any condition in a fire protection system which degrades or is likely to degrade its intended performance below the minimum operability requirements of the system.

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**Impaired Equipment** – Impaired equipment shall include, but shall not be limited to sprinkler systems, standpipe systems, fire hose systems, underground fire service mains, fire pumps, water storage tanks, water spray fixed systems, foam-water systems, fire service control valves, smoke detectors and any component of the fire protection system.

**Emergency Impairment** - An emergency impairment occurs when an unforeseen incident reduces the effectiveness of the system(s). Emergency impairments include but are not limited to system leakage, interruption of water supply, frozen or ruptured piping and equipment failure.

**Planned Impairment** - This occurs when foreseen actions result in the effectiveness of a fire protection system being reduced, such as shutting down a sprinkler system to add more sprinklers.

### 3.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The following individuals have these responsibilities with regard to this respiratory protection program.

#### 3.1 Associate Vice President of Facilities

- Serves as the program administrator and has overall responsibility for facility department staff and contractor compliance with the Fire System Impairment Policy.

#### 3.2 Associate Vice President of Public Safety

- Support and assist the Director of Facilities on the full implementation of this safety program.
- Assure that the appropriate notification of fire safety system impairment is being communicated to the campus' affiliated emergency response (West Haven ERS at 203-937-3678; Lyme Fire Department; Orange Fire Department) and if needed the University's insurance provider.
- Update the program as necessary to protect employee and student safety.
- Ensure compliance with applicable fire impairment codes.
- Conduct an annual evaluation of the program.

#### 3.2 Director of Facilities

- Authorize all University impairments of the fire systems and serve as the Impairment Coordinator.
- Where impairment of a fire protection system takes place, the Director of Facilities shall post appropriate notification signage at all entrances to affected buildings. The Director of Facilities is also responsible for assuring that signage is removed from University buildings when impairment is complete.



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- Assure that a log of system outages is maintained.
- Verify that the University Police department has notified the campus' affiliated emergency response (West Haven ERS at 203-937-3678; Lyme Fire Department; Orange Fire Department) of fire system impairment.
- Verify that the University Police Department has notified the Office of the Vice President of Finance & Administration of fire system impairment.
- Maintain oversight of the University's fire alarm contract and work with contractor to assure all University policy and procedures are being followed.
- Assure all maintenance mechanics and contractors are adhering to the Fire System Impairment Policy.
- Assure that a fire watch is available for all work where a fire protection system is out of service for more than 4 hours in a 24-hour period.

### **3.3 University of New Haven Police Department**

- Notify the Facility Department/Impairment Coordinator of all fire system impairments.
- Notify the campus' affiliated emergency response (West Haven ERS at 203-937-3678; Lyme Fire Department; Orange Fire Department) of all fire system impairments.
- Notify the Office of the Vice President of Finance & Administration of all fire system impairments.

### **3.4 Office of the Vice President of Finance & Administration**

- Upon receiving notification of impairment by the Impairment Coordinator the Office of the Vice President of Finance & Administration will notify the University insurance company (if required).

### **3.5 Contractors**

- Adhere to all University policies and procedures.

## **4.0 Impairment Process**

Impairment of a fire safety system can occur because of accidental damage, a planned building renovation or alteration, new construction and/or sprinkler or standpipe system routine or emergency maintenance.

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In the instance of planned impairment, at least 24 hours notice shall be given to the University of New Haven Police Department and Impairment Coordinator for coordination of system shutdown.

The Impairment Coordinator shall verify the following procedures have been implemented before authorization is given to shut down a fire protection system:

- The extent and expected duration of the impairment have been determined;
- The areas or buildings involved have been inspected and the increased risks determined;
- Where a required fire protection system is out of service for more than a four hours in a 24-hour period, the Impairment Coordinator shall arrange for one of the following:
  - Evacuation of the building or portion of the building affected by the system out of service.
  - An approved fire watch.
  - Establishment of a temporary water supply.
  - Establishment and implementation of an approved program to eliminate potential ignition sources that limit the amount of fuel available to the fire.
- Verify the University Police department has notified the fire department;
- Verify the University Police department has notified the Office of the Vice President of Finance & Administration, the alarm company, building owner/manager and other authorities having jurisdiction have been notified of the shutdown.
- All necessary tools and materials have been assembled on the impairment site.

To assure that unauthorized persons and/or outside contractors do not cause impairment to a fire protection system, the following impairment process will occur prior to any outage:

1. Authorized person notifies the University of New Haven Police and Impairment Coordinator of need to disable system, explaining the extent and duration of outage. The University of New Haven Police and Impairment Coordinator will give approval based upon a risk analysis of the outage and precautions put in place.
2. Authorized person initiates an impairment tag and documents impairment tracking number, given by University of New Haven Police, on the tag. See Appendix A for sample impairment tag.

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3. The impairment tag number is then given to University of New Haven Police who in turn enters it onto their tracking log. This information is also tracked in independent logs by the Impairment Coordinator. See Appendix B for log tracking form.
4. The tag is affixed to the valve or system for the duration of the outage. A single and separate tag will be used for each valve or system that is taken out of service.
5. The University of New Haven Police will notify local fire department(s) of outage.
6. The University of New Haven Police will notify the Office of the Vice President of Finance & Administration of the outage; and
7. If the scope or work schedule of impairment must be changed, immediately contact University of New Haven Police and Impairment Coordinator who will review changes.

### 4.1 Completion of System Impairment

1. As soon as work is complete, open valve or restart system and conduct any required tests or inspections to confirm that impaired system has been restored to service.
2. Notify University of New Haven Police and Impairment Coordinator that work is complete and system has been restored and tested. They will then remove and file tags, as well as reactivate any fire alarm zones disabled.
3. University of New Haven Police will close out log and notify local fire department and University insurance company that impairment is complete.

### 4.2 Emergency Impairment

In the event the fire protection system must be taken offline for emergency reasons, the University of New Haven Police Department shall notify the University Facilities Department or vice versa of the situation and coordinate an immediate response which may include notifying third party contractors and/or the start of a fire watch.

Emergency impairments shall follow all steps outlined in section 4.0 and 4.1 of this policy.



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### 5.0 Building Notification of Impairment

In all University buildings where impairment of a fire protection system takes place, the Impairment Coordinator shall post signage at all building entrances stating "WARNING: The fire system is temporarily out of service. If smoke or fire is noted, immediately call UNH Police at 203.932.7070."

If the building where impairment is to take place is equipped with an announcement system, an announcement shall be made overhead of the impairment after signage has been hung. This announcement shall be made every two hours until the work is complete.

Once work has been completed, all signage shall be removed from entrance doors by the Impairment Coordinator. In buildings with an announcement system, an announcement shall be made making building occupants aware that the impairment is complete.

### 6.0 Fire Watch

Fire Watch may be required at the discretion of the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). It shall be the responsibility of the Impairment Coordinator to assure that a fire watch is scheduled for all work that impairs a fire protection system for more than 4 hours in a 24-hour period.

#### 6.1 Procedures for a Fire Watch

A Fire watch shall:

- Have the only duty of patrolling the impaired area;
- Have fire-extinguishing equipment readily available and be trained in its use;
- Be familiar with the procedures for reporting fire;
- Try to extinguish fire only in its incipient stage;
- Activate the fire alarm when necessary; and,
- Assure that no hot work and/or other tasks that create sparks or an open flame take place in the area of impairment.



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### 7.0 Construction

All construction activities involving the impairment of a fire protection system require the approval of the University Project Management team as well as the Impairment Coordinator. Wherever applicable, the contractor shall follow the University Fire Protection Impairment Policy and Procedures as noted above.

In a majority of instances, smoke detectors are the primary concern of false alarms in construction activities due to dust generation. In lieu of disabling the detector and/or fire safety system, the detector shall be bagged and taped off at the start of work each day. The tape and bag shall be removed at the end of each work shift. At no time shall smoke detectors be bagged in an unoccupied space.

All other construction related fire safety system impairments must follow the above policy and procedure.