NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY

Environmental Health and Safety Department

Fire Safety

2025 ANNUAL FIRE SAFETY REPORT

THE CLERY ACT

The *Clery Act* promotes campus safety by ensuring that students, employees, parents and the broader community are well informed about important public safety, fire safety and crime prevention matters. Institutions that receive Title IV funds must disclose accurate and complete crime and fire safety statistics for incidents that are reported to Campus Security Authorities (CSA's) and/or local law enforcement as having occurred on or near the campus. Schools must also disclose campus safety policies and procedures that specifically address topics such as sexual assault prevention, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, and emergency response and evacuation. The *Clery Act* also promotes transparency and ongoing communication about campus crimes and other threats to health and safety and empowers members to take a more active role in their own safety and security.

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1.0 POLICIES FOR PREPARING THE ANNUAL FIRE SAFETY REPORT

The Environmental Health and Safety Director is responsible for preparing the *Annual Fire Safety Report*. Fire safety related data is maintained and managed by the Environmental Health and Safety Department. Data is maintained in real time and available for the university to view, upon request.

The fire safety annual report will follow the standards identified by the Clery Act. Upon completion, the fire safety annual report will be made available for public review.

1.1 Resources

The following agencies, departments or organizations provided information to complete the annual fire safety report:

1. NMHU Environmental Health & Safety Department
2. NMHU Police Department
3. New Mexico State Fire Marshal
4. NMHU Dean of Students
5. NMHU Housing Director
6. NMHU Facilities Management Department
7. NMHU Office of University Relations
8. NMHU Student Handbook
9. NMHU Housing Handbook
10. Clery Act Handbook
11. NM State Statutes
12. Clery Center

1.2 Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Department Jurisdiction Statements

New Mexico Highlands Environmental Health and Safety Department has the authority to provide for safety and health programs, to include fire code implementation and OSHA safety related standards as granted by the New Mexico Highlands Board of Regents through NM State Statute 29-5-2, NMSA 1978.

2.0 FIRE PREVENTION PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

New Mexico Highlands University maintains a Fire Prevention Program to include the following categories:

1. *Scope*
   The scope of authority for fire prevention, fire suppression systems, and fire safety training has been granted by NMHU to the Environmental Health and Safety Director (University Safety Officer). The program is designed to provide a safe and healthy environment for students, faculty, staff and visitors.

2. *Program Compliance*
   The Fire Prevention Program utilizes the National Fire Protection Association and/or IFC standards related to specific fire suppression systems located on campus. In addition, the New Mexico State Fire Marshal's Office has primary jurisdiction for compliance related to life safety codes.

3. *Responsibilities*
   The University Safety Officer (NMHU Environmental Health & Safety Director) has the overall responsibility to maintain fire suppression systems on campus.

4. *Fire Safety Guidelines and Procedures*
   NMHU utilizes the services of the NM State Fire Marshal as the regulatory authority for fire suppression system inspections and maintenance. Furthermore, the program adheres to the National Fire Protection Association specific codes for fire suppression systems as well as hazardous material identification standards.

2.1 Fire Suppression Systems

The EHS Department is responsible for the maintenance, inspection, and functionality of all fire suppression systems located on the main campus and at the Rio Rancho Center. This includes ensuring NFPA and IFC codes are adhered to and maintained in a manner acceptable to the NM State Fire Marshal. The Department is responsible for the management of the fire suppression systems to include overseeing the required monthly inspections for each facility to ensure functionality of the systems.

2.2 Overview of Fire Suppression Systems

The information below depicts the fire suppression systems maintained by the EHS Department.

- *Facilities/Buildings*: NMHU maintains 51 facilities/buildings located on the main campus and at the Rio Rancho Center. Not all facilities meet occupancy guidelines; however, they may maintain fire suppression systems.
- *Fire Extinguishers*: Over 600 fire extinguishers are located on campus, Rio Rancho and in NMHU vehicles.
- *Fire Sprinkler Systems:* Twenty-two (22) facilities maintain a fire sprinkler system (either wet and/or dry).
- *Fire Alarm Systems*: 33 fire alarm systems are currently maintained by the EHS Department.

- *Smoke, Photo or Heat Detectors:* Over 1,600 smoke detectors are located throughout the main campus. Smoke, photo and/or heat detectors must be maintained in a functional manner that is acceptable to the NM State Fire Marshal.
- *Fire Pump:* NMHU maintains a fire pump for fire protection at Viles & Crimmin Residential Hall and the Student Union Center. The fire pump is intended to provide consistent water flow to the structures in the event of a fire.
- *Post Indictor Valves/Standpipe Systems:* Located at most facilities with fire sprinkler systems.
- *Emergency/Exit Lights:* Over 2,000 emergency and/or exit lights are located throughout campus. The EHS Department physically and visual inspects each system on a monthly basis.

2.3 Student Housing Fire Safety Systems

- **Viles & Crimmons Residential Hall**
  Fire suppression system is a wet/dry system with the dry system in the attic. The fire alarm control panel is "Gamewell" with a "Gateway" "Focalpoint" program that reports to NMHU Police Dispatch.

- **Greg Residential Housing**
  This facility does not maintain fire sprinklers. The fire alarm control panel is a "Gamewell" with a "Gateway" "Focalpoint" program that reports to NMHU Police Dispatch.

- **Arrott Residential Housing**
  This facility does not maintain fire sprinklers. The fire alarm control panel is a "Gamewell" with a "Gateway" "Focalpoint" program that reports to NMHU Police Dispatch.

- **Conner Residential Hall**
  Fire suppression system is a wet sprinkler system. The fire alarm control panel is a "Gamewell" with "Gateway" "Focalpoint" program that reports to NMHU Police Dispatch.

- **Archuleta Residential Hall**
  Fire suppression system is a wet sprinkler system. The fire alarm control panel is a "Gamewell" with "Gateway" "Focalpoint" program that reports to NMHU Police Dispatch. Note: This residential hall has been closed and has no occupancy; however, fire systems are maintained according to IFC and/or NFPA fire codes.

- **Kennedy Residential Halls** *North, West and East Halls*
  Fire suppression is a wet and dry sprinkler system. The fire alarm control panel is "Firelite". No reporting system to NMHU Campus Police Dispatch. *Note, current plans are to install a new fire alarm system with reporting and monitoring capabilities.*

- **South Kennedy Hall**
  No fire suppression sprinkler system in place. Fire panel is a "FAST" with no reporting system to NMHU Campus Police Dispatch. *Note, current plans are to install a new fire alarm system with reporting and monitoring capabilities.*

2.4 Fire Drills/Evacuation Protocols

The EHS Office conducts evacuation protocol training and fire drills for all facilities on campus. A fire drill is intended to provide practical evacuation training for occupants to utilize during certain emergency incidents.

- Residential Halls must have one (1) fire drill per semester.
- All other occupancies: One (1) fire drill per calendar year.

2.5 Monthly Inspections

The EHS Department is responsible for conducting monthly walk-through and visual inspections of the items identified below. All fire suppression systems are inventoried and labeled to identify location and use. The items below are inspected on a monthly basis by EHS.

- Emergency Lights
- Emergency Light Bars
- Fire Alarm Control Panels
- Sprinkler Risers
- Standpipe Systems
- Fire Exit Doors/Panic Hardware
- SDS Forms
- Evacuation Maps
- Fire Pump (Weekly)
- Exit Lights
- Fire Extinguishers
- Fire Department Elevator Keys
- Post Indicator Values
- Fire Hydrants
- Occupancy Signs
- Notification Signs
- Exit Routes

2.6 Required Tests/Inspections

Specific inspections are conducted by qualified and certified contractors as it relates to fire suppression systems. The information below depicts the testing/inspections required by NFPA and the NM State Fire Marshal.

Testing/Inspection	Occurrence
• Sprinkler Inspection	Quarterly/Annual/5 Year
• Swimming Pool-Electrical Safety	Annual
• Fire Pump Inspection	Annual
• Maintenance of Fire Pump Diesel Engine	Annual
• Fire Alarm Inspection	Annual
• Backflow Preventer Inspection	Quarterly/Annual
• Fire Extinguisher Inspections	Annual
• Standpipe Static Inspection	Annual
• Post Indictor Valve	Quarterly/Annual
• Elevator Hydraulic Testing	Annual
• Chemical Hood Cleaning	Quarterly
• Cooking Hood Fire Suppression System Inspections	Quarterly/Annual
• Cooking Hood Degreasing –Cleaning	Quarterly

2.7 Training

The Environmental Health and Safety Office provides the following training, related to fire safety, for students, faculty and staff.

- Evacuation Protocol
- Fire Drills
- Fire Extinguisher Use
- Basic Fire Safety
- Hazard Identification
- Laboratory Safety

3.0 RESIDENT HALL FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURES

If an occupant identifies fire and/or smoke, they should immediately evacuate the area and initiate the following procedure(s):

- Locate and activate the nearest emergency pull station.
- Call 911 and advise dispatcher of emergency situation.
- Notify others nearby, this includes staff and/or residents who are designated to notify each room by knocking on the doors and calling out "FIRE, FIRE, FIRE!" This is to ensure that sleeping persons are awakened. This is done only when safety and time permit. These persons are not expected to enter a smoke-filled corridor or housing unit to attempt evacuation.
- A designated individual or number of individuals should ensure an accounting of all known residents. Such duties would fall upon Resident Directors/Assistants, Apartment Managers, Housing maintenance/custodial staff, or in the case of married student housing, an adult member of the family.
- Due to the rapid spread of fire and smoke related to this type of occupancy, a selective evacuation is not permitted. The entire dormitory or connected family housing group must be evacuated regardless of the size of fire.
- All evacuees should assemble in their designated assembly point and wait to re-enter once it has been deemed safe by the University Safety Officer, Las Vegas Fire Department and/or NMHU Campus Police.

Anyone calling to report a fire must inform the dispatcher of the building name and/or street address, if known. Additional information should include:

- Location of emergency within or near the facility
- The extent of the emergency (one room, a vehicle, the first floor, etc.)
- Whether or not the building is being, or has been evacuated.
- If there are any known persons who cannot evacuate on their own for whatever reason
- If the fire is spreading, contained or if it has been extinguished
- If the fire alarms are sounding and/or if the sprinkler system has activated.
- Any other notable information that would help emergency responders, such as
- Color of smoke
- What started the fire, if known
- Any known injuries
- Any suspicious people or objects in the area of the emergency, or

- Any other information which you feel would be helpful
- An individual who is knowledgeable of the situation should be designated to stand outside and advise the first emergency responder of the location and current situation regarding the emergency.
- When the building has been evacuated, do not allow anyone to re-enter until directed by the responding emergency personnel. The only agencies authorized to allow re-entry is the Las Vegas Fire Department, University Safety Officer or Campus Police.

4.0 RESIDENT HALL FIRE AND SAFETY CONCERNS

- ***Appliances***
  Avoid overloading outlets with too many cords and do not use extension cords at all. THEY ARE NOT PERMITTED. The only appliances permitted in the residence halls are one microwave oven per room and one 2.5-cubic-foot refrigerator per room. The wiring system is NOT intended for items that place a heavy load on the system. It is also recommended that surge protectors be used within the residence halls for all of your appliances, computers, stereos etc. Additionally, residents are NOT ALLOWED to use hot plates, smokeless grills, or appliances with exposed heating elements. If these items are found in your room, they will be CONFISCATED.

- ***Combustible Materials***
  Combustible materials such as propane, gasoline, kerosene and items containing combustible materials (i.e., lanterns) are not permitted in residence halls and/or apartments.

- ***Fire Alarms***
  Legitimate fire alarms save lives. When activated, the alarm sounds in the entire building and EVERYONE must evacuate immediately. After activating an alarm, go to the nearest safe telephone (outside the building) and dial 911 to report the fire and 454-3278 to notify Campus Police. Individuals falsely activating an alarm will face disciplinary action, possible criminal prosecution and may be fined. False alarms may leave the local fire department shorthanded in the event of a real fire.

- ***Fire Drills***
  Every residence hall is required to conduct a fire drill once a semester for the safety of staff and residents. All residents are required to exit the building within 60 seconds. Hall staff is required to time the drill in each building. Failure to evacuate will result in disciplinary action.

- ***Fire Safety Equipment***
  Damaging or tampering with fire alarm equipment is prohibited. FIRE EXTINGUISHERS are strategically located throughout each residence hall and campus apartments. Carefully follow the instructions on the extinguisher and use them ONLY in the event of a fire. EXIT SIGNS are considered fire equipment and are placed to guide residents to exit routes in emergency situations. SMOKE DETECTORS also are sensitive pieces of fire equipment. Actions that result in the activation of a smoke detector, tampering with fire alarm apparatus and equipment (including removing batteries from smoke detectors) or false alarms may result in criminal penalties, as well as disciplinary action.

- ***Incense and Open Flame and Lava Lamps***
  Because of the risk of burning incense or an open flame left unattended, the use of such is prohibited in residence halls. Candles or lanterns may not be used even in the event of a power outage. Residents are encouraged to have flashlights or similar devices to provide emergency lighting.

- ***Smoking***
  Smoking, including e-cigarettes, is not permitted in any residence hall or campus apartment. Any resident be found in violation of the no smoking procedure is subject to a $300 fine and their housing contract subject to cancellation. All residents who do smoke, agree to do so outside and at least 25 feet from an entrance.

5.0 COMMON IGNITION SOURCES AND FIRE PREVENTION

Fire prevention starts with identifying fire hazards. All members of the university community - faculty, staff, students and visitors - have a personal obligation to be aware of fire hazards and to reduce or eliminate the risk of a fire on campus. All members of the university, including visitors, should use common sense and good judgement when using devices that produce heat. This includes cooking, candles, heat-producing appliance such as coffee machines, and other activities.

5.1 Sources of Ignition

- Small Appliances
- Portable Heaters
- Smoking
- Matches
- Candles
- Flammable Liquid
- Combustible Solids/Liquids
- Electrical Hazards
- Cooking Activities
- Laboratory Equipment
- Lava Lamps
- Welding
- Fireworks
- Intentional
- Art Foundry Activities
- Power tools

5.2 Banned Sources of Ignition

- Smoking: smoking is not permitted in any campus building or at any athletic event.
- Fireworks – any use and/or storage in any facility, lab, office, residential hall, etc.
- Lava Lamps
- Candles
- Incense
- Overloading of Circuit Protectors
- Open Flame
- Intentional

5.3 How to Avoid Ignitions

- Never leave sources of ignition, such as a hot stove or portable heater, unattended.
- Turn off and unplug appliances when they are not in use.
- Do not use electrical devices with frayed or damaged cords or exposed wiring.
- Use only devices that are UL listed.
- Avoid using extension cords (permanent) and do not overload circuits.
- Do not continue using a device if it consistently trips the circuit breaker.
- If a device emits an unusual odor, turn it off and unplug it immediately. Do not use the device until it is repaired.
- Follow all directions included with your electrical devices.

5.4 Administrative Controls

The following administrative controls shall be used to control known ignition sources at NMHU.

- Smoking is not permitted in or at university facilities.
- Lighted candles are not permitted at NMHU buildings/facilities.
- All cutting torch operations should be supervised and conducted in accordance with university standards and/or procedures.
- Cooking appliances shall be periodically inspected and maintained in proper working condition.
- All potential ignition supporting activities at the Art Foundry shall be supervised by a qualified professor.
- The University Safety Officer shall be contacted for approval of any anticipated use of open flames and such activities shall be conducted under his/her direction and in compliance with governing fire code regulations.
- Electrical outlets shall not be overloaded. Electrical appliances and cords shall be monitored by responsible employees and shall be maintained in good working condition at all times. Defective equipment or cords shall promptly be taken out of service.
- Small internal combustion engines shall be routinely maintained and kept in proper working condition.
- Equipment with hot manifolds shall not be utilized or placed in close proximity to flammable of combustible materials.
- All laboratory equipment, including heat guns, must be unplugged after the planned activity is completed and/or at the end of each class or day.

5.5 Identifying Common Fire Hazards

Fire prevention starts with identifying common fire hazards. All members of the university community (faculty, staff, students and visitors) have a personal obligation to be aware of fire hazards and to reduce or eliminate the risk of fire at NMHU. ***The following is a list of common fire hazards found during daily activities on campus.***

Combustible Waste Material	Waste accumulation is prohibited. When these items are allowed to accumulate, the risk of fire is increased. Under the right conditions, the buildup of dust from wood, plastic or certain metal operations can lead to a fire or explosion. Construction debris must be properly disposed of to eliminate the risk of fire.
Ignition Sources	A safe clearance between ignition sources such as light fixtures, heaters and flame-producing devices and combustible materials needs to be maintained.
Open Burning	Due to the hazards associated with open burning, all such activities require an open burn permit. A permit application for an activity can be submitted to EHS.
Open Flames	Similar to open burns, activities involving open flames require an open flame permit. Open flames activities include, but not limited to, all open flame decorative devices, theatrical performances, religious ceremonies, torches for removing paint, lanterns, kerosene heaters, and gas fired heaters..
Smoking	Smoking is prohibited in facilities owned or leased by NMHU. Be aware, discarded smoking materials carelessly tossed in waste containers or into landscaping can easily start a fire. Use approved waste containers to discard all smoking materials properly.
Vehicle Impact Protection	Vehicle impact protection is required at locations where a moving vehicle could strike a piece of equipment that contains fuel. Guard posts and other physical barriers must be installed to prevent impact to the equipment.
Indoor Displays	Indoor displays of merchandise or other items pose a number of fire hazards to building occupants, such as blocked egress paths and rapid fire burning.
Miscellaneous Combustible	The management of combustible materials storage will reduce the risk of fire.
Storage	Materials should be stored in such a way that they will not obstruct the fire suppression sprinkler heads. Items should be stored 18 inches away from the ceiling if the room or area is protected by a fire suppression system (sprinklers) and 24 inches from the ceiling if there is no fire suppression system. Exceptions are allowed for attached wall shelving unless located directly under a sprinkler head. If wall shelving is located directly under sprinkler head the 18" clearance should be maintained.

The following is a list of fire prevention techniques that can be used to mitigate ignition sources.

Accumulation of combustible materials	The accumulation of combustible materials (such as cardboard boxes, magazine/journals and paper products) is prohibited. Combustible material must never be stored any closer than 36" from a heating appliance or electrical light. Items no longer in use should be properly disposed to avoid stacking and accumulation on counters, top of cabinets, floors and desks.
Scrap, waste materials, dust and trash	When these items are allowed to accumulate, the risk of fire is increased. Under the right conditions, the buildup of dust from wood, plastic or certain metal operations can lead to a fire or explosion.
Plastic and foam items	The storage and use of foam or plastic cups, utensils, etc. close to heat sources should not be allowed. These materials are combustibles and can quickly start a fire. Plastic foam also burns rapidly and gives off dense toxic black smoke.
Material Storage	• **Ceiling Clearance** - 24 inches in non-sprinkle buildings is strictly required for ceiling clearance. 18 inches in a sprinkler building. This will allow manual hose streams of water to effectively reach the top of a burning piles and any adjacent storage. • **Means of Egress** - Combustible materials cannot be stored in corridors or egress paths that could jeopardize the safety of occupants leaving the building. • **Equipment Rooms** - Combustible materials cannot be stored in boiler rooms, mechanical rooms, data rooms, electrical closet and/or equipment rooms. • **Fueled Equipment** - Chainsaws, power tools, drip torches, lawn-care equipment cannot be stored inside buildings if they contain any fuel.
Decorations	Decorations, signs and other items should not be hung on or near a fire sprinkler head.
Obstructing Portable Fire Extinguishers	Access to portable fire extinguishers should not be obstructed by other equipment, furniture or miscellaneous storage. Extinguishers must be clearly visible with notification signs displayed.
Spills on Floor	Any condition causing leaks or drips of flammable or combustible liquids should be corrected. The area of the spill should be cleaned immediately.
Hoarding	The act of “hoarding” increases the risk of fire. Maintain premises free of unneeded and unnecessary combustible materials. Properly discard unused items being stockpiled or hoarded. Hoarding is a serious fire code violation and will be treated as such.
Clear Passage	Keep passageways clear of obstacles, including furniture, trash, storage and equipment.
Materials that spontaneously combust	Oily rags or other materials soaked in oil can start a fire by themselves if placed in areas where the air does not circulate. All

oily rags or other materials soaked in oil must be stored in approved oil rag disposal container.

5.7 Portable Heater Safe Use

Space heaters are allowed if the following conditions are met:

- The individual space heater has an automatic shut-off system in case the heater is accidentally left on or is tipped over.
- The heater should carry an Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label.
- The heater should be kept on a level surface area and on a hard floor. Avoid placing the heater on carpet, countertops, desktops, etc.
- Keep all combustible or flammable materials/liquids at least 3 feet away from the heater.
- The heater needs to be plugged directly into an outlet. No extension cords.
- Unplug after use.

6.0 FIRE SAFETY REPORTS AND STATISTICS

INCIDENT	2022	2023	2024
Actual Fires	1	1	0
Student Housing	1	1	0
Damage Amount	$500	$250	$0
Injuries	0	0	0
Deaths	0	0	0
Other Campus Buildings	0	0	0
Damage Amount	$0	$0	$0.00
Injuries	0	0	0
Deaths	0	0	0
FIRE ALARM RELATED			
False Fire Alarms	2	9	31
Intentional (Criminal Charges Filed)	0	0	0
Accidental	0	1	1
Trouble (Diagnostic Test)	7	37	2
Supervisory (Device)	6	30	0
Smoke in Building- No Fire Found	0	0	0
Smoke Caused by Cooking	2	1	1
Caused by Building Maintenance	3	0	0
FIRE DRILLS			
Student Housing (*one per semester*)	30	20	30
Other Campus/Building	65	42	65