
Division of Institutions
Policy and Procedure

I. PURPOSE

To establish operational procedures for the protection from and response to fire in all prisons, institutions, correctional centers, plants, office buildings and other properties operated under the authority of the North Carolina Department of Adult Correction (DAC), Division of Institutions. ***All properties will adhere to all applicable safety and fire codes and have in place the required equipment and written local fire safety and evacuation procedures necessary in the event of an emergency (2-CO-2A-01, 2-CO-3B-01, 5-ACI-2A-02).***

II. POLICY

A. ***It is the policy of North Carolina Department of Adult Correction, Division of Institutions to maintain a system of fire prevention, fire evacuation, and fire control of structures to ensure the safety of employees, visitors, and offenders in compliance with DAC Safety Policy and Procedures, applicable local, state, and federal codes and standards. Compliance with these standards, to include any approved variances/exceptions, will be documented by the fire department having jurisdiction or authorized authority (5-ACI-2A-02, 2-CI-1B-2).***

B. The properties which compose the entirety of Institutions all face the possibility of a fire emergency. The potential for loss of life and property is a reality that must be confronted with a thorough and systematic approach to the elimination of fire hazards and preparation for a fire emergency. Each facility, including Region and Division offices, shall adhere to this policy in the development and conduct of fire drills at their locations. This policy is designed to help ensure the preparation of staff to manage the orderly and effective evacuation of employees, clients, visitors, and offenders in the event of a fire emergency. Facility, office, and property administrators should plan and execute all reasonable procedures for the prevention and prompt control of fire.

C. Fire Safety Equipment

1. ***Each facility shall maintain adequate fire protection equipment at appropriate locations throughout the facility. The local Fire Prevention and Safety Plan shall detail the availability of fire protection equipment throughout the facility(5-ACI-3B-01).***

2. Fire protection equipment shall include the use of an automatic fire alarm system to provide an early warning of the presence of fire or smoke. Institutions facility locations with code-required fire protection systems shall adhere to North Carolina / International Fire Code / Life Safety Code policies in the development of local Fire Prevention and Safety Plans. When a required fire protection system is out of service, procedures outlined in the DAC Safety policy [SOEH-500-04, Fire Protection Systems Out of Service](#), shall be followed. The local fire

department and the code official shall be notified immediately and, where required by the code official, the building shall either be evacuated or approved fire watch procedures shall be provided for all occupants left unprotected by the shut down until the fire protection system has been returned to service.

3. When buildings are classified as non-fire protected, a written fire notification system shall be developed and implemented for that building. Written plans for addressing fire alarm and detection system deficiencies shall be developed.
4. All fire protection equipment and egress doors shall always remain visible and unobstructed.
5. **Power generators used for emergency backup power shall be started and inspected weekly and load tested monthly or in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations and instruction manuals (See Institutions policy [L .0100, Preventive Maintenance](#)) (5-ACI-3B-09).**

D. Local Fire Plans

Wardens shall be cognizant of and responsible for the need to provide an overall fire protection service adequate for their facility (5-ACI-3B-01). The administration of every correctional facility shall have in effect, and available for all supervisory personnel, a written plan for the protection of all persons in the event of fire and for their evacuation to areas of refuge and for evacuation at least fifty feet from the building when necessary.

1. **In accordance with the DAC Safety policy [SOEH-500-01, Pre-Incident Planning](#), each facility shall establish fire safety and evacuation plans, to be incorporated into a written Pre-Incident Plan (2-CI-1B-3, 5-ACI-3B-11).** The local Pre-Incident Plan shall be considered a supplement to this policy and be established using the guidelines provided in SOEH-500-01, Appendix A and Appendix B.
2. **The local Pre-Incident Plans shall address any fire prevention practices that are used in addition to the prevention measures specified in this policy and the DAC Safety Manual, and the immediate response and evacuation process utilized in the event of a fire (5-ACI-3B-12).** The local Pre-Incident Plan shall detail the means for the immediate release of offenders from locked areas in case of emergency and provide for a backup system. The local Pre-Incident Plan shall also detail the procedures for conducting simulated fire drills to include all staff actions, roles, and duties to be exercised during a simulated drill.
3. **The local Pre-Incident Plan for all facilities must include the location and identification of hazardous material storage. If there are no hazardous materials stored at that location, a statement to that effect shall be included in the local plan (2-CI-1B-3).**
4. The local Pre-Incident Plan shall identify the responsible/responding fire department. If the responding fire department is not continually staffed, fire alarm notification must be made to local law enforcement or equally reliable source.
5. **The Pre-Incident Plan shall be reviewed annually and after each incident for updates as needed. (5-ACI-3B-11)** The plan shall also be developed and reviewed by the facility's Safety Committee and local emergency responders/local fire department. **Plans must be certified by**

- an independent, outside inspector trained in the application of national fire safety codes and reviewed annually at which time fire alarms are sounded to test operability (2-CI-1B-3, 5-ACI-3B-11).*
6. *Facilities shall also develop and post written evacuation plans for each building/area of the facility. Evacuation plans shall include location of building/room floor plans and the use of exit signs and/or directional arrows for traffic flow (2-CI-1B-3, 5-ACI-3B-11).*
 7. *The local plans shall be publicly posted for all interested parties. The location of the public posting must be included in the evacuation plan. The facility administration shall make the fire safety and evacuation plans available for reference and review by employees and copies shall be furnished to code officials for review upon request and to the local fire department if required or requested (2-CI-1B-3, 5-ACI-3B-11).*
 8. *Employees shall be trained in the fire emergency procedures described in the facility fire and evacuation plans (2-CI-1B-3).* All employees shall be instructed and drilled with respect to their duties under the plan. The plan shall be coordinated with and reviewed by the fire department having jurisdiction to serve the facility. The fire drills shall be planned to utilize different routes of exit access, exits, and exit discharges throughout the year. At least once per year, the manual means of release shall be used by each shift in their fire drills.
- E. Fire Drills
1. To ensure facility staff is adequately prepared to respond in the event of a fire, fire drills shall be conducted on a regular basis in all Institutions facilities, following guidelines as established in DAC Safety policy [SOEH-500-03, Fire Drills](#).
 2. Fire drills shall include drilling staff on the primary means of releasing offenders from locked areas of the facility and the secondary, backup system in the instance the primary means of release does not function properly. Staff will be aware of the location/identification of keys and knowledgeable about evacuation routes. *Fire drills should include evacuation of all offenders except when institutional security will be jeopardized by extremely dangerous offenders. Fire drills will not include evacuation of infirm or bedridden patients (2-CI-1B-3, 5-ACI-5-3B-11).*
 3. *Fire drills shall be conducted at least quarterly on each shift and in every area of the institution or center (5-ACI-3B-11).* A minimum of 12 or 16 drills must be conducted every year, depending on shift schedule. An actual fire evacuation will replace the required quarterly drill for that area of the institution or center.
 4. *Staff in administrative areas must also participate in fire drills on a quarterly basis (5-ACI-3B-11).* The conducting of fire drills should be recorded and include pertinent information such as fire scenario, exit route taken, time to exit the building and clear count, type of door release and any difficulties encountered requiring corrective action.
 5. Institutions administrative office buildings, Central Supply Warehouse, Central Engineering Warehouse and Fabrication Shops, and Transportation and Communication are all examples of non-institutional properties that also require fire drills on a regular basis. Fire drills shall be

conducted twice per year on each shift and in every area, and the responsibility for the planning and conduct of these drills shall be assigned to the designated Safety Officer. The drills shall be held at unexpected times and under varying conditions to simulate the unusual conditions that occur in the event of an actual fire. An actual fire evacuation will replace the required semi-annual drill.

6. All fire drills shall be documented locally at each facility and the report should be maintained with the building's permanent records.

F. Inspections

1. **Facilities administration must coordinate a system of fire inspection and testing of equipment at least quarterly and facilitate an annual inspection by local fire officials. They shall also insure the availability and maintenance of fire protection equipment at appropriate locations throughout the institution (2-CO-2A-02, 2-CI-1B-1, 5-ACI-3B-01).** All inspections will maintain compliance with DAC Safety policy [SOEH-200-01, Safety Inspections](#).
2. **A comprehensive and thorough monthly inspection of the property will be conducted by a qualified fire / safety officer for compliance with safety and fire prevention standards. There shall be a weekly fire and safety inspection of the property by a qualified staff member, who shall, at a minimum, be familiar with the use of checklists and documentation pertaining to regulations and inspections (5-ACI-3B-02).**

G. Facility Furnishings (2-CO-4D-01, 5-ACI-3B-03)

Furnishings, mattresses, cushions, or other items of foamed plastics or foamed rubber (for example, polyurethane, polystyrene) can pose a severe hazard due to high smoke production, rapid burning once ignited, and high heat release. Such materials should be subjected to careful fire safety evaluation before purchase or use. All polyurethane should be removed from living areas unless it is approved in writing by the fire authority having jurisdiction. The fire authority should consider the flammability and toxicity characteristics of the products being evaluated. For the purpose of this policy, "furnishings" are defined as draperies, curtains, furniture, mattresses and bedding, upholstered or cushioned furniture, wastebaskets, decorations, and similar materials that can burn, and applies to all living quarters. Specifications shall be known, if available, at the time of selection; there are no standards mandating knowledge of fire performance characteristics of furnishings in the facility prior to implementation of this policy.

H. Combustible Material Receptacles

Special containers must be provided for flammable liquids and for rags used with flammable liquids. All receptacles are to be emptied and cleaned on a daily basis (5-ACI-3B-04).

III. REFERENCES

- A. 5th Edition Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions

5-ACI-2A-02, 5-ACI-3B-01, 5-ACI-3B-02, 5-ACI-3B-03, 5-ACI-3B-04, 5-ACI-3B-09, 5-ACI-3B-11, 5-ACI-3B-12

- B. 2nd Edition Administration of Correctional Agencies
2-CO-2A-01, 2-CO-2A-02, 2-CO-3B-01, 2-CO-4D-01
- C. 2nd Edition Standards for Correctional Industries
2-CI-1B-1, 2-CI-1B-2, 2-CI-1B-3
- D. [National Fire Protection Codes \(NFPA\)](#)
- E. [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#)
- F. [North Carolina Fire and Rescue Certification Commission](#)
- G. [North Carolina Department of Administration](#)
- H. [Fire Alarm Guidelines and Policies](#)
- I. [North Carolina Department of Labor](#)

R.0300_08_19_21.doc