

T H E E . M . N E W S

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BUILDING SAFETY AND OCCUPANT EMERGENCY PLANS

What would be the course of action to take if there were an emergency event occurring in building you work in? Would you know where to exit, or where to hide, or where to shelter?

A building’s occupant emergency plan provide essential information about how to safely act to remove oneself and others from the path of danger. According the U.S.. Department of Commerce, “An Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) is an essential part of an emergency



management program. Properly developed plans can reduce the

risk to personnel, property, and other assets while minimizing work disruption in the event of an emergency.”



Per National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) regulations and related state and local codes, buildings are equipped with alarm systems. These usually target fire and smoke-related events and prompt an evacuation response.

However, depending on what activities take place in a building, for example, research, or the types of materials that are housed

in it, for example, hazardous materials, or the type of weather event that may be occurring outside, for example lightning producing storms, knowing what actions to take to prevent loss of life or injury and destruction of property and other assets, is vital.



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **FAU’s OEP**
- **Who needs it?**
- **Why is it needed?**
- **What is needed?**
- **Crisis Action Guide**
- **FAU Alert**

BUILDING SAFETY PERSONNEL PROGRAM

The Building Safety Personnel Program, previously known as the Building Supervisor program, is FAU’s Occupant Emergency Plan program.

FAU saw the need for this program so that information could be relayed to key individuals in a building should any issues or

emergency events arise. It is a vital program that has allowed FAU to respond quickly and effectively.

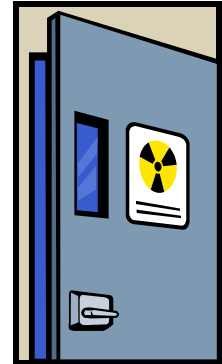


A sub-committee (Building Safety Personnel committee) was appointed, an off-shoot of the University Safety committee, to evaluate this program for efficacy and efficiency. Several policies, procedures and initiatives have been borne out of this effort for University-wide implementation.

BUILDING SAFETY PERSONNEL PROGRAM—WHY IS IT NEEDED?

To prevent injury and loss of life and protect equipment and assets!

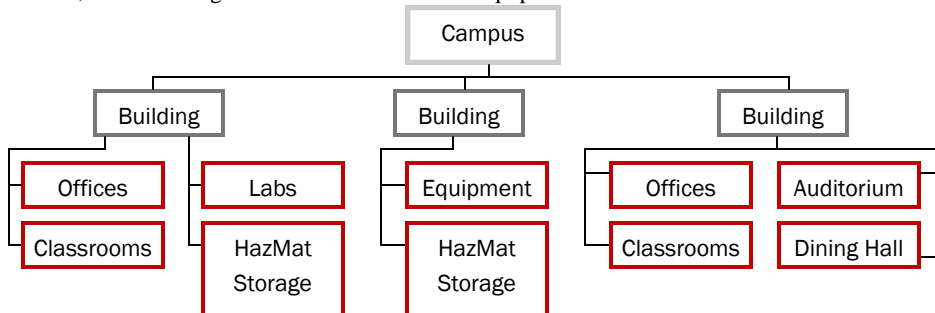
FAU buildings serve many purposes; housing, teaching, research, operations, dining, thus serving many individuals; faculty, staff, students and visitors. Should an emergency event or threat occur in or in the immediate vicinity of a building, for example, fire, hazardous materials release, hostile intruder or tornado, having trained personnel within a building, to guide the response, lends an enormous advantage to protecting life and property. Familiarity with the day-to-day operations within the building, the occupants typically stationed there, and the building layout and safety systems, is crucial for a quick and appropriate response as they are a key source of information for first responders.



BUILDING SAFETY PERSONNEL PROGRAM—WHO NEEDS IT?

Everyone needs it!

For this program, all buildings can be categorized in two ways: occupied and unoccupied. Occupied buildings are considered to house individuals on a regular basis, thus requiring a comprehensive program, for example cafeteria, office buildings, classrooms, and laboratories. Unoccupied buildings are those that do not house individuals on a regular basis, thus requiring a simple program. These tend to be those that house equipment and assets needed for building operation, for example chiller/boiler, lift stations, those housing electrical and mechanical equipment.



...all buildings can be categorized in two ways: occupied and unoccupied...

BUILDING SAFETY PERSONNEL PROGRAM—WHAT IS NEEDED?

A viable program!

Key elements are:

- Organization (staffing structure)
- Communication (receiving and disseminating emergency event info.)
- Information Dissemination (seminars, workshops, updates)
- Succession Planning (redundancy in key positions—alternates)
- Capabilities Analysis (what safety systems are incorporated in building)
- Hazard Assessment and Vulnerability Analysis
- Contingency Planning (planning for most likely hazards)
- Test, training and exercise program (to ensure proper planning and response)



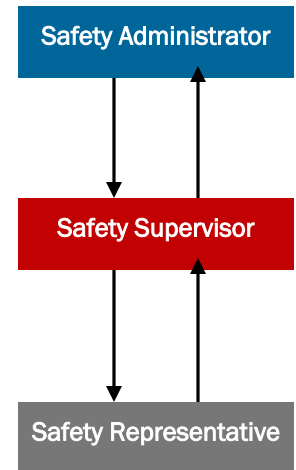
BUILDING SAFETY PERSONNEL PROGRAM—POLICY AND PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The program is governed by the Environmental Health and Safety Policy #27—Building Safety Personnel. This policy delineates the roles and requirements of each position, including training, as well as the qualifications required of those assuming these roles.

The program consists of a three group structure of personnel:

1. The **Building Safety Administrator**: (can oversee many buildings)
Role: Planning—emergency plan review
2. The **Building Safety Supervisor**: (usually oversees 1 building and has an alternate)
Role: Planning—emergency plan review
Implementation—emergency preparedness and response
3. The **Building Safety Representative**: (per departmental or floor in building)
Role: Implementation—emergency preparedness and response

The structure allows for a healthy flow of information among the groups.



BUILDING SAFETY PERSONNEL PROGRAM—PROCEDURES

The program committee, with aid of existing literature and input from key sources, including:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| University Police | Environmental Health and Safety | Division of Facilities |
| Partner Campuses | University Executive Committee | University Safety Committee |

created targeted procedures for each group. These guidelines provide information based on the roles of planning and implementation and include the overlapping of each group’s roles.

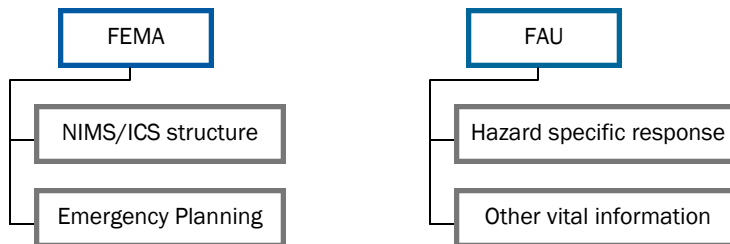
Most directives are tailored from the University’s Crisis Action Guide. This guide is a tool that provides pertinent information for the University community to respond to an emergency or crisis using the most likely hazards/emergency events that could occur.

Building Safety Personnel, with particular emphasis on the Supervisor and Representative roles, are asked to acquire comprehensive knowledge of the guide before learning these targeted directives.

These guidelines provide information based on the roles of planning and implementation...

BUILDING SAFETY PERSONNEL PROGRAM—TRAINING

The training component of this program is essential for successful implementation and consists of two main areas:



Training takes the form of both online and classroom learning. Annual updates include informational sessions and/or drills and exercises.

- | Hazard specific response |
|--------------------------|
| Shelter-in-Place |
| Emergency Evacuation |
| Utility Issues |
| Suspicious Packages |
| Severe Weather Events |
| Hazardous Materials |
| Other vital information |
| FAU Alert |
| Card Access |
| Essential Personnel |

BUILDING SAFETY PERSONNEL PROGRAM—FLOOR PLANS AND SAFETY SYSTEMS

Buildings contain several systems inherent to the basic structure, such as a primary and secondary means of egress (stairwells, doorways), a fire alarm system (can be a simple system using monitored smoke detectors to sophisticated systems employing sprinklers and voice evacuation software), fire extinguishers (regularly inspected and maintained) and shut-off valves (water supply).

In addition to this, since each building may serve several purposes and house varying activities ranging from teaching and research to dining and recreational, it is necessary for the Safety Supervisor (and alternate) to have knowledge of the building's layout, location of safety systems, shut off valves and mechanical and electrical rooms and other information pertinent to the building's use.

The committee with the help of the Division of Facilities has undertaken a project to provide floor plans indicating the location of:

- Fire alarm panels**
- Fire alarm pull stations**
- Mechanical and electrical rooms**
- Evacuation routes**
- Emergency generators**
- Shut-off valves (water, gas, air)**
- Fire extinguishers**
- Laboratories**
- Hazardous Materials storage**



BUILDING SAFETY PERSONNEL PROGRAM—DATABASE AND RECORDKEEPING

In order to advance such an encompassing, comprehensive program, a means to properly:

1. Ensure that personnel are assigned to buildings
2. Track training: FEMA and FAU
3. Update personnel changes effectively
4. Maintain accurate contact information

must be employed. Such a database has been developed and is managed by Environmental Health and Safety. Reports can be produced with information regarding Safety Personnel by building, campus, etc.

As Safety Supervisors fill such an important role in building occupant safety, the committee is also pursuing the ability to extract contact information for this group, by campus, and import into the university's call out and text message system. By making them a dedicated group in this FAU Alert system, they can be a targeted, smaller sized group to disseminate emergency information.

Reports are also located on the Emergency Planning and Response website under the Building Safety Personnel Program heading:

[Building Safety Personnel sorted by campus and building](#)

[Building Safety Personnel sorted by Safety Coordinator](#)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

"Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) Self Assessment." Office of Security. May 1, 2008. U.S. Department of Commerce. September 26, 2008. <<http://www.osec.doc.gov/osy/OEP/OEPSA.htm>>

Reports can be produced with information regarding Safety Personnel...

Websites

Emergency information:

<http://www.fau.edu/admin/EmergencyInformation.php>

Emergency Planning & Response:

www.fau.edu/facilities/ehs/safety/Emergency-Planning.php

www.fau.edu/facilities/ehs

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The goal of Environmental Health and Safety is to ensure a safe and healthy environment for students, faculty, staff and visitors through comprehensive service-oriented programs.

For information or to submit a subject that you would like to see addressed in a future update, contact:

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