

BAY COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM FIRE EVACUATION POLICY

All employees of the Bay County Library System are expected to be familiar with the Fire Evacuation Plan, which spells out actions to be taken in the event of either a planned evacuation drill or a real emergency. Building management will be responsible for making sure employees are properly trained and that drills are conducted on a semi-annual basis. Records of all equipment inspection, training, drills and real emergencies are to be kept on permanent file.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRE EVACUATION PLAN

The objective of the Bay County Library System Fire Evacuation Plan is to outline a procedure for the safe evacuation of all occupants from our buildings in the event of a fire. Fire safety is ultimately an INDIVIDUAL activity. One must take personal responsibility to conduct oneself in a fire safe manner at all times. This includes knowing the location of all exits, pull alarms and fire extinguishers, knowing the procedures for evacuating the building(s), and following directions given by people of authority.

Fire safety also includes conducting day-to-day office activities in a fire safe manner. This includes obeying smoking regulations: limiting the use, length, routing, and number of appliances connected to extension cords; avoiding the use of personal space heaters; keeping corridors and aisles unobstructed; keeping exit doors unobstructed and closed; and, carefully using kitchenette equipment.

While ultimately an individual activity, this Fire Evacuation Plan stresses the value of a TEAM effort, including communication and cooperation. With proper training the individuals who comprise the team will work together to ensure safe and orderly evacuation of persons from the building. Team members include firefighting and law enforcement personnel on the scene, building management (or the person in charge of the building), and all employees.

PRE-EVACUATION KNOWLEDGE:

PATRONS: In an ideal world all patrons would be fully trained in fire evacuation for every facility they enter. In reality, they are not. It is up to the TEAM to ensure they are directed out of the building in a safe and efficient manner.

EMPLOYEES: All employees shall:

1. Know the location of fire extinguishers and fire alarm pull stations.
2. Know the location of exits, including alternative exits and stairwells.
3. Know how to activate the fire alarm.
4. Know the procedures for evacuating the building.

GENERAL GUIDELINES – DISCOVERING A FIRE OR SMELLING SMOKE

1. If you see smoke or a fire pull the nearest fire alarm and begin immediate evacuation of the building.
2. If you smell an unusual odor or smoke, immediately notify your supervisors, library staff, and building management (or the person in charge of the building) so investigation can begin at once. If an active fire is confirmed, pull the nearest alarm and begin immediate evacuation of the building.
3. As circumstances allow, call 911 and report the following:
 - A. Describe the situation. What do you see or smell? Where is it?
 - B. Name of library building and address.
 - C. Your location within the building.
 - D. If caught in smoke or heat, stay low where the air is cooler and cleaner. Take short breaths (through the nose) until you reach an area of refuge.
4. **NEVER USE AN ELEVATOR DURING A FIRE EMERGENCY!** Smoke could enter the elevator shaft and asphyxiate the occupants. Also, elevators could be “called” to the fire floor by the heat of the fire activating the call button.
5. **IF YOUR CLOTHING CATCHES FIRE, DO NOT RUN!** Stop your travel, drop to the ground or floor, and roll back and forth to smother the flames. **STOP, DROP, AND ROLL.** Assist others if their clothes are aflame in the same way.

I. THE FIRE EVACUATION PLAN:

In the event of an activated fire alarm, immediately begin evacuation of the building.

1. Staff should work together to ensure that all areas of the building that may be occupied are “swept” so that all persons, staff and public, are aware of the emergency, directed to the nearest exit, and assisted if necessary.
2. Calmly advise members of the public that a fire emergency is at hand, ask them to remain calm and direct them to the nearest exit. Notification should be by both word-of-mouth and over the PA system. (A suggested script for the PA system: *“We are experiencing a fire emergency. Please remain calm and proceed to the nearest exit. Library staff is available to assist you. Please gather outside, away from the building, and without interfering with firefighting or law enforcement personnel.”*)
3. Assist those requiring help, such as children, senior citizens and the disabled, including the hard-of-hearing, who might not hear either the alarm or PA announcement.

4. Close all doors behind you, especially the door to a burning or smoke-filled room. (This will slow the spread of fire).
5. Do not go to the roof or above the “fire floor” unless absolutely necessary.
6. In the event exits are blocked in multi-story structures: in the Alice & Jack Wirt Public Library proceed to the nearest stairwell; in the Sage Branch Library proceed to the back stairwell. These are “safe” zones that are protected from smoke and heat. Upon arrival, alert firefighters to the fact that a person or persons are in one or more of the stairwells.
7. In all instances, follow the directions of firefighters and/or the police.
8. Assemble in an area away from the building that does not interfere with fire or police personnel or equipment. Do not return to the building until instructed to do so by authorities.
9. Contact the Administrative office, if during regular workweek hours. Otherwise, contact the Director, Assistant Director or Managing Librarian in charge at home.

II. EVACUATION DRILLS:

Fire evacuation drills will be conducted every six months by building management in coordination with the local fire department. When an alarm is sounded, the fire evacuation plan will be followed to rehearse safe evacuation of all building occupants. All drills will be documented and maintained on permanent file.

The building maintenance staff will conduct scheduled inspection and testing of all fire equipment. All such activity will be documented and maintained on permanent file.

III. DISABLED PERSONS:

All disabled persons should be attended to by library staff. In one-story buildings, such as the Auburn Area and Pinconning branches, disabled persons should be moved along with the rest of the public to the nearest exit. In multi-story buildings, such as the Alice & Jack Wirt Public Library and the Sage branch, disabled persons who are located on the 2nd floor or higher should be moved to the nearest stairwell at Wirt, or the back stairwell at Sage. They should remain there with at least one employee until rescued by firefighting personnel. Do not attempt to move them down the stairs. Our stairwell areas are “safe” zones, protected from heat and smoke. The TEAM should be aware that one or more persons have remained in the stairwell area with a disabled person so that that information can be communicated immediately with firefighters for rescue.

IV. TERMINATION OF A FIRE EVACUATION DRILL OR ACTUAL EMERGENCY EVENT:

1. Once the building is safe to re-enter, the “ALL CLEAR” signal will be given by the Fire Chief, Fire Incident Commander, or other authorized individual from the fire department.
2. Building management is responsible for ensuring the activity is documented either as a drill or an actual emergency. All fires should be documented using an Incident Report. Management is also responsible for reviewing TEAM performance with staff following all drills and incidents.

12/16/09 board approved