



**HOUSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT
LIFE-SAFETY BUREAU (LSB)**



**LSB STANDARD 24 REV 03
MID-RISE ATRIUM FIRE SAFETY PLANS**

SUPERSEDES: Revised LSB Standard 24, Rev 02 date 5/22/08.

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LSB STANDARD 24 Rev 03 MID-RISE ATRIUM FIRE SAFETY PLANS

SECTION 24.1 - GENERAL

24.1.1 Scope.

This standard shall apply to all mid-rise atrium buildings as defined by Appendix I of the *Fire Code* and located within the City of Houston.

24.1.2 Purpose.

This standard shall provide general and specific guidance for all owners, managers and occupants of mid-rise atrium buildings in the event of a fire emergency by applying all applicable provisions of the City of Houston *Fire Code* and *Building Code*, respectively, and this standard.

All mid-rise atrium buildings shall comply with all applicable Fire Codes and Building Codes and city ordinances that require alarm or sprinkler retrofit (Appendix I of the Fire Code).

Prior to compliance with the above referenced, city ordinance required retrofit deadline, all property management of mid rise atrium buildings shall provide adequate temporary measures to accommodate all fire wardens with a means to alarm the building.

Acceptable measures will include whistles, public address systems, bullhorns, air-horn noise emitting canisters or other temporary measures as approved by the Fire Marshal. Temporary measures shall be provided by building management and universally applied within any mid rise atrium building located in the City of Houston so that all occupants are familiar with the temporary alarm signal.

The use of any such temporary devices will be introduced in training and included in the written Fire Safety Plan, along with the intentions to transition into compliance with the alarm/sprinkler retrofit ordinance. Training in the temporary and alarm/sprinkler retrofit will be determined effective by successful completion of a supervised fire drill by an approved instructor.

SECTION 24.2 - DEFINITIONS

24.2.1 Mid-rise Atrium Building.

Mid-rise atrium buildings are buildings with space that extends vertically and connects three or more stories and where the highest floor used for human occupancy is less than 75 feet above grade.

24.2.2 Property Management.

The members of the property management of mid-rise atrium buildings are considered the authorized agent of the owner and shall be required to attend Mid-rise Evacuation Training (MET) and become certified in emergency evacuation procedures. The training

shall include, but not be limited to, how to organize and conduct fire drills, fire safety and related activities.

Such training shall be approved by the Fire Marshal and may include achieving a passing score on a written examination and demonstrations of individual proficiency.

Certification training shall be conducted by persons, institutions, or companies approved by the Fire Marshal.

MET Certificates, issued upon successful completion of training, shall be valid for a period of five (5) years from the date of issue.

24.2.3 Fire Safety Coordinator.

The representative of the owner and or management-company of a mid-rise atrium building, who is mandated by the Fire Marshal to implement and manage all the requirements of the Fire Safety Plan.

The Fire Safety Coordinator is not required to be a tenant of the building and may manage more than one mid-rise atrium, provided that all the Fire Safety Plan requirements are successfully implemented at each location.

24.2.4 Occupants.

Occupants include management, staff, tenants, residents, guest, or visitors.

24.2.5 Tenants.

Tenants are lessees and their employees in a mid-rise atrium office/mercantile building.

24.2.6 Resident.

A resident is a person(s) inhabiting a mid-rise atrium condominium/apartment/dormitory building.

24.2.7 Guest.

A guest is an occupant of a mid-rise atrium hotel room.

24.2.8 Fire Safety Team

The Fire Safety Coordinator and Fire Wardens, as specified in the approved safety plan, make up the Fire Safety Team.

The members of the Fire Safety Team shall attend required MET for certification and possess a certificate signed by the Fire Marshal.

SECTION 24.3 - SUBMITTING AND IMPLEMENTING A PLAN

24.3.1 Process of receiving plan.

The process of submitting an approved Fire Safety Plan consists of the three following essential training elements conducted by persons, institutions or companies approved by the Fire Marshal, according to established regulations:

1. Consultation with property management,
2. MET certification for Fire Safety Coordinators and Fire Wardens; and
3. A fire drill supervised by persons, institutions or companies approved by the Fire Marshal

24.3.2 Possession of Fire Safety Plan.

The property management of any mid-rise atrium building shall possess and maintain a Fire Safety Plan approved by the Fire Marshal according to established regulations by the Fire Marshal and applicable city ordinances.

24.3.3 Plan contents.

The emergency plan should include the following:

1. Identify the person or persons responsible for maintenance of facilities and personnel required by the plan.
2. Identify the responsible person designated as the "Fire Safety Coordinator" and their duties.
3. List of sufficient alternates shall be provided for each Fire Safety Coordinator and Assistant Coordinators.
4. Provide approved procedures for reporting fires and / or fire alarms.
5. Instructions on the fire alarm system operations.
6. Procedures for fire safety.
7. Identify the building's fire safety features.
8. Fire drill instructions.
9. Maps with means of egress. A means of egress comprises the vertical and horizontal ways of travel to a public way.
10. The maps shall also indicate those stairwell doors through which under emergency conditions re-entry may be made into the corridor.
11. The locations of any of the following components will be required on the maps:
 1. Fire Alarm Pull Stations
 2. Fire Extinguishers and Fire Hose Cabinets
 3. Elevator Lobbies
 4. Fire Depository Box
 5. Emergency Generator
 6. Fire Alarm Annunciator Panel
 7. Fire Extinguishing Systems
 8. Smoke Removal Controls
 9. Public Address System Panels
 10. Two-way Communications means
 11. Fire Command or Central Control Room
 12. Elevator Fire Service Recall Location
 13. Stairwell Identification
 14. Air handlers, Mechanical and Electrical service rooms

15. Other Emergency Control or Indicating Systems

SECTION 24.4 - FIRE SAFETY COORDINATOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

24.4.1 Maintain records.

Maintain current Fire Safety Team training, fire safety system maintenance records, fire depository box contents and fire drill records. Records shall be made available to the Fire Marshal upon request.

24.4.2 Notify Acting Safety Coordinator.

Notify a management representative, who shall be the Acting Fire Safety Coordinator and shall be capable of managing and implementing the fire safety plan when the Fire Safety Coordinator is not available. The training and related activities of the Acting Fire Safety Coordinator shall be under the direction of the Fire Safety Coordinator. Such activities shall be subject to fire department control.

24.4.3 Distribute plans.

Distribute the applicable parts of the approved Fire Safety Plan to all tenants, contracted employees, residents, and property management or contract employees where applicable as applied by approval of the Fire Marshal.

24.4.4 Conduct Fire Drills.

Be familiar with the approved Fire Safety Plan and conduct a fire drill at least every six (6) months. The Fire Marshal, upon survey of conditions, may require additional drills. A written record of such drills shall be kept on the premises and shall be readily available for fire department inspection.

24.4.5 Implement training program.

Implement an approved training program to provide fire prevention and emergency procedures for, but not limited to, the following person(s): building maintenance personnel, security personnel, custodial personnel, concierge, housekeeping, kitchen personnel, laundry personnel, doorman, manager on duty, PBX operators, and such other specialized personnel the Fire Marshal deems applicable to each building. Provide the instruction and materials to enable each employee to be familiar with the Fire Safety Plan, the location of exits, and the location and activation of any approved alarm device and fire alarm pull stations when applicable.

24.4.6 Fire Depository Box (FDB).

Be responsible for installation and maintenance of the FDB and its contents. See LSB Standard 06, "Fire Depository Boxes".

24.4.7 Fire safety Assistance List (Hotels).

Maintain a current guest Fire Safety Assistance List at the front desk and **update it daily**.

24.4.8 Assist the Fire Marshal.

Provide facilities and assistance as needed by the Fire Marshal to obtain approval for the Fire Safety Plan.

24.4.9 Method for reporting fires by telephone

The Fire Safety Coordinator shall instruct PBX operators, off-site alarm monitoring companies and answering services, on how to properly notify the Houston Fire Department when a fire, the smell of smoke, or a fire alarm is reported to them. PBX operators, off-site alarm monitoring companies and answering services outside of the local City of Houston/Harris County "9-1-1" service area shall call the Houston Fire Department Office of Emergency Communications emergency telephone number (713-884-3143).

On-site callers may dial 9-1-1, to report an emergency.

24.4.10 Individuals neglecting responsibilities.

Notify the tenant when any employee of the tenant or individual is neglecting their responsibilities contained in the Fire Safety Plan. If the tenant fails to correct the condition, the owner or person in charge of the building shall notify the Fire Marshal.

24.4.11 Fire and Life-Safety systems.

Understand the purpose and operation of all fire and life-safety systems located in the building under the control of the building owner or manager.

24.4.12 Training.

Shall be trained in accordance with regulations established by the Fire Marshal.

24.4.13 Duties.

Duties and responsibilities shall be in accordance with regulations established by the Fire Marshal.

24.4.14 Fire and life-safety plan.

Shall be familiar with the Fire Safety Plan, the location of exits and the location and operation of all available fire alarm systems.

SECTION 24.5 - TENANTS DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

24.5.1 Complying with approved Fire Safety Plan.

Each tenant shall be required to comply with the approved Fire Safety Plan.

24.5.2 Availability of Fire Wardens.

All tenants, upon request of the owner, management or designated representative, shall make responsible and dependable employees available for Fire Warden certification training towards approval and implementation of the Fire Safety Plan.

1. A Fire Warden shall be provided for each tenancy per floor. When the floor area of a tenancy exceeds 7,500 square feet of occupiable space, a Warden shall be assigned for each such 7,500 square feet or part thereof.

2. Each floor of a building shall have a minimum of two (2) Fire Wardens.

24.5.3 Duties in the event of a fire or fire alarm.

In event of a fire or fire alarm the Fire Warden shall:

1. Ensure that the fire department has been notified immediately whenever there is a fire of any size and / or fire alarm of any nature.

2. Report any known conditions on the fire floor or alarm floor to the fire department upon their arrival.

3. Direct tenants to evacuate the building using the safest exit / stairwell.

Exception: If the building is protected one hundred percent with an approved automatic sprinkler system and has an operable public address system throughout the building, prepare to evacuate by proceeding to a stairwell. If there is evidence of fire or an announcement is made to evacuate, proceed to a safe location outside of the building.

4. Be familiar with the location of all exits / stairwells and select the safest exit/stairwell to use for fire safety on the basis of the location of the fire and any information available. If affected by smoke, an alternate exit/stairwell shall be selected.

5. Follow instructions given by the fire department.

6. Mobility-Impaired occupants may require special assistance in the event of an evacuation. Occupants not providing or requiring assistance should evacuate first. This avoids the possibility of persons in need of assistance being bumped and / or falling down, thus slowing evacuation and / or causing injury. Person(s) having mobility impairments, if unable to safely use the exit stairs, should seek a safe area near the fire exit / stairwell that is located farthest away from the fire. If fire conditions pose a personal threat, the fire warden or person assisting should enter into the fire exit stairwell with the person(s) needing special assistance and wait for the Fire Department. If fire conditions pose a personal threat in the stairwell, the mobility-impaired person(s) should be evacuated to a safe location. Fire Wardens shall notify the fire department the location of all mobility-impaired occupants that require special assistance.

24.5.4 Distribution of Fire Safety Plan.

The applicable parts of the approved Fire Safety Plan shall be distributed by the tenants to all their employees.

24.5.5 Occupants needing special assistance.

Advise the Fire Safety Coordinator of any occupants that may need special assistance in fire safety so that the Mobility Impaired List can be updated in the Fire Depository Box (FDB).

24.5.6 Drill Participation.

When fire drills are conducted, all persons who are subject to the fire drill shall participate in the drill.

SECTION 24.6 - FIRE DRILLS

24.6.1 Frequency.

A fire drill shall be conducted at least every six (6) months.

24.6.2 Notification.

All occupants shall be notified prior to the fire drill.

24.6.3 Participants.

When fire drills are conducted, all persons who are subject to the fire drill shall evacuate using the stairs. All persons unable to use the stairs shall submit a written request to the fire safety coordinator in advance of the scheduled drill. Persons that are not required to evacuate using the stairs will be required to relocate to the stairwell, unless specifically exempted.

Exception: If the building is protected one hundred percent with an approved automatic sprinkler system and has an operable public address system throughout the building, prepare to evacuate by proceeding to a stairwell. If there is evidence of fire or an announcement is made to evacuate, proceed to a safe location outside of the building.

24.6.4 Additional fire drills.

The Fire Marshal, upon survey of conditions, may require additional drills.

24.6.5 Fire Drill records.

A written record of such drills shall be kept on the premises and shall be readily available for Fire Marshal's inspection.

REFERENCES

- 1 City of Houston *Fire Code*, International Fire Code, 2000 edition, as amended.
- 2 City of Houston *Building Code*, all editions.
- 3 Life Safety Bureau (LSB) Standard 08, "Fire Drills"