

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN (EAP)

Natural Gas Leaks

Natural gas is a staple of many of building heating/hot water systems, and gas metering devices external to most facilities are equipped with pressure equalization controls that intentionally but periodically “burp.” Further, natural gas is laden with mercaptans, which is a chemical added to the fuel to easily permit its detection by odor. As such, most gas “odors” external to buildings, when they are not accompanied with “hissing” sounds, are nothing more than this equalization process, and the Physical Plant (ext 4500) or the Director of Environmental Protection, Safety & Sustainability (ext 4647), may be called to confirm that no emergency exists. However, if gas odors are strongly detected inside or outside, and/or if the odors are accompanied by hissing sounds, an immediate emergency exists.

1. If you detect strong natural gas odors in an outdoor location, immediately proceed to the nearest non-affected building and call Campus Safety (ext 4000). Alert any passers-by to stay clear of the affected area.
2. If you detect strong natural gas odors in an indoor location and cannot determine the source, immediately vacate the room/space, close any doors behind you, and initiate a building evacuation by manually engaging the nearest fire alarm pull station.
3. If you detect strong natural gas odors in an indoor Science Center laboratory, immediately vacate the lab, turn off the gas shut-off valve on your way out the lab door, and initiate a building evacuation by manually engaging the nearest fire alarm pull station.
4. During building evacuations, assist the handicapped in exiting the building. Remember that elevators are reserved for handicapped persons during evacuations.
5. Following emergency evacuations, your designated place of shelter is the primary assembly point, or alternate assembly point if the emergency is impacting your primary location. Proceed to your assembly point once instructed to do so by your Building Coordinator, RA, faculty member or supervisor. Keep streets, fire lanes, hydrants and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and crews.
6. If requested, assist Emergency crews as necessary.
7. A Command Post may be set up near the emergency site. Keep clear of the Command Post unless you have official business.

IMPORTANT—DO NOT RETURN TO AN EVACUATED BUILDING until and unless told to do so by College officials. And remember—during an actual emergency resulting in a building evacuation, **HEADCOUNTS** are to be performed at the assembly point(s), not the initial gathering point. Stay there until an accurate **HEADCOUNT** has been taken.