



# **MENDOCINO COUNTY FIRE PREVENTION PLAN**

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PREPARED BY: Risk Management Division

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**MENDOCINO COUNTY  
FIRE PREVENTION PLAN**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This section provides fire protection guidance for all County-occupied facilities. This plan also incorporates the requirements of Section 3221, Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations and Section 142.3 of the California Labor Code (As Amended). Each County-occupied facility should review this policy to determine if additions need to be made for the specific location.

### A. DEFINITIONS

1. Supervisors--refers to employees who are responsible for overseeing the work of others and could refer to an individual in a class titled "Department Head" or "supervisor".
2. Departmental Safety Representative--refers to an employee who is appointed to act as the department's workplace safety representative, who is in a position to know the department and its special needs, and has the authority to speak for the department in making decisions regarding the department's safety program.
3. County-owned facilities--refers to facilities that the County owns or is purchasing. Building Maintenance is responsible for maintenance and housekeeping in these facilities.
4. County-leased facilities--refers to a facility that the County is leasing or renting from a property owner. In these facilities, Building Maintenance or the lessor (property owner) may be responsible for the maintenance and housekeeping. Refer to the lease for the specific facility to determine who is responsible for the maintenance and housekeeping.

### B. POTENTIAL FIRE HAZARDS

1. Accumulated wastepaper.
2. Short circuits in electrical equipment or building electrical systems.
3. Overheating and burning food/grease.
4. Electrical problems with microwaves, portable heaters, coffee makers, etc.
5. Heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment/systems.
6. Flammables, gas, diesel, paint, and greasy rags.
7. Smoking in unauthorized areas.

### C. PREVENTION

1. Wastepaper should be removed daily.
2. Boxes, flammables, and other items should not be stored near heat sources, under stairwells or stairwell landings, or points of ingress and egress.
3. Storage shall be maintained at two feet or more below the ceiling in non-sprinklered areas of buildings. Storage shall be maintained 18 inches or more below sprinkler head deflectors, in sprinklered areas of buildings.
4. Electrical equipment (office, computer, coffee makers, etc.) and associated power cords, surge protectors/power strips should be checked periodically for worn wires and cords, and prescribed maintenance should be followed.
5. Building electrical systems should be inspected regularly and should not be overloaded.
6. Microwaves, toaster ovens, coffee makers, etc., should be monitored during use and turned off when cooking is completed.
7. HVAC equipment should be regularly inspected and prescribed preventative maintenance schedules should be followed. Additionally, cleanliness of HVAC equipment rooms must be maintained to the highest standards.

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### D. CONTROL

1. Installed portable A-B-C fire extinguishers can be used to control a small fire involving wastepaper, grease and/or electrical short circuits. For more information on fire extinguishers, review the Mendocino County Emergency Action Plan.
2. Automatic fire sprinklers, if available, will activate when the temperature gets to a sufficient level.
3. County-owned or leased facilities shall be equipped with smoke detectors and a fire alarm system for notification in the event of a detected fire.

## II. MAINTAINING FIRE SYSTEMS

- A. In County-owned facilities, Building Maintenance is responsible for maintenance of equipment and systems installed to control ignition of fires, i.e., fire extinguishers, fire alarm systems, smoke detectors, and installed overhead fire sprinklers. Building Maintenance also maintains, repairs and performs preventative maintenance on the building electrical and HVAC system. In County-leased facilities, review the lease to determine whether Building Maintenance performs these tasks. If the lessor is responsible, then someone should be assigned to ensure the lessor is maintaining all the systems.
- B. Departmental Safety Representatives are responsible for monthly inspections of all portable fire extinguishers. This monthly inspection includes an operational readiness inspection and initialing and dating of individual extinguisher inspection tags.
- C. Building Maintenance will test fire alarm systems on a routine basis to ensure they are functioning in County-owned facilities. In County-leased facilities, the tenant department has responsibility to coordinate with lessor to perform these tests.

## III. HOUSEKEEPING

- A. Supervisors are responsible for the control of accumulation of flammable or combustible waste materials in their areas so they will not contribute to a fire or hazardous material emergency. The supervisor is also responsible for removal of combustible waste materials and residues as prescribed under law by the manufacturer.
- B. Building Maintenance or lessor is responsible for the removal of wastepaper, used paper products and garbage from the facility.

## IV. TRAINING

- A. Supervisors shall annually inform their employees of the fire hazards of any materials and processes to which employees are exposed and within 30 calendar days of the introduction of any new fire hazards.
- B. Supervisors shall also establish procedures to assure that each new employee has reviewed those portions of this fire protection plan that the employee must know to protect himself/herself in the event of an emergency. This review will also include the Facility Emergency Action Plan.
- C. Risk Management will provide fire extinguisher training to all departments upon request.

## V. MAINTENANCE

- A. Building Maintenance or lessor is responsible for regular and proper maintenance of installed facility systems (electrical and HVAC) to prevent accidental ignition of combustible materials.
- B. Supervisors are responsible for regularly and properly maintaining, according to

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established procedures, equipment installed in their spaces to prevent accidental ignition of combustible materials. Supervisors shall bring to the attention of the Departmental Safety Representative any potential fire or evacuation problems.

- C. Risk Management will annually review and update this plan as necessary.

### VI. RECOMMENDED EMPLOYEE ACTIONS FOR OFFICE ENVIRONMENT FIRE PREVENTION

- A. Be alert around electrical equipment. If electrical equipment is not working properly or if it emits an unusual odor (often the first sign of a problem that could cause a fire), immediately disconnect the equipment from the power source and notify your supervisor.
- B. Any electrical cord that is cracked or has a broken connection should be reported to your supervisor so a work order request can be completed.
- C. Protect surge protectors/power strips from damage. Do not put them across doorways or any place where they will be stepped on or chafed. Check the amperage load specified by the manufacturer or the "listing laboratory" and do not exceed it (call Risk Management or Building Maintenance if you need assistance).
- D. Do not plug one surge protector/power strip into another or plug more than one surge protector/power strip into one wall outlet. **Surge protectors/power strips should not be used as substitutes for permanent wiring.** NOTE: Surge protectors/power strips will be the type with built-in 15 to 20 amp. circuit breaker. Extension cords should not be used in the office areas.

If a department is unable to comply with this section, Building Maintenance should be notified of the need for additional electrical outlets. Use the "Safety Hazard Condition Incident Report" form (Appendix A) indicating the problem and send to Risk Management. Risk Management will review the request and the specific location and make any recommendations to Building Maintenance. Building Maintenance should inspect the location within ten (10) working days and determine if additional outlets are needed.

If an additional outlet is needed, Building Maintenance should use the most appropriate means (based on specific application/situation) to add electrical outlets in an expeditious manner.

- E. When possible, departments should plan moves and desk locations based on the room/space available and access to the appropriate or necessary electrical outlets.
- F. Keep all heat-producing equipment/appliances away from the wall and away from anything that might burn. Leave plenty of space for air to circulate around copy machines, computers, and other equipment/appliances that normally radiate heat.
- G. Make sure all equipment/appliances in your work area, e.g., coffee makers, hot plates, etc., are turned off at the end of each workday. One person should be assigned to verify that the plugs have been disconnected from the outlet or if connected to a switched outlet or power strip, the switch or power strip is turned off.
- H. Help keep storage areas, stairway landings and other out-of-the-way locations free of wastepaper, empty cartons or other material that could cause a fire.

The County is requesting your assistance in complying with Section 3221, Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations and Section 142.3 of the California Labor Code (As Amended). If you find a violation or concern with your work area, please report the situation immediately to your supervisor. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Risk Management Division at (707) 463-4445.