



Excelsior Fire District

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Excelsior Fire District School Fire Drill Recommendations

The recommendations from the Excelsior Fire District on school fire drills are not meant to replace or void any sections, paragraphs, or verbiage in the Minnesota Department of Public Safety State Fire Marshals Division School Fire Drill Instructions and Record required to be posted in public school offices, Chapter 4 of the Minnesota State Fire Code, or other rules and regulations set forth by the school governing body. The recommendations are only for schools to use as an accompaniment to the above documents.

Frequency

As stated in the Minnesota State Fire Code 5 drills are required each school year and one drill shall be conducted within the first 10 days of school.

The drills should be conducted during different times of the day.

The Excelsior Fire District recommends that at least one of the drills be conducted during the winter months when students and staff would be wearing boots, coats, hats, and mittens in order to evacuate outside.

Other weather related circumstance should be considered, heavy rain, thunderstorms, and blizzard conditions.

If the school is considering modifying a drill by simulating a blocked exit, missing staff member, or student, this drill should be done after the staff and students have had a few regular drills.

The Excelsior Fire District requires a drill at the beginning of any private school/church having an overnight event and/or weekend retreat.

Drills should be conducted during after school activities, Explores Clubs, Scout troops, weekend activities, youth group, summer school sessions, etc...

Mock drills simulating a large event at the school should be conducted by the staff on regular basis.

Records

The State Fire Marshal School Fire Drill Instructions and Record for public schools lists the date, time, and evacuation times of the drill. It is recommended by the Excelsior Fire District to keep notes on who was in charge, the type of drill (routine, simulated exit blocked etc.), weather conditions, the number of occupants in the buildings, and any lessons learned during the drill.

Posting of Routes

Post escape routes from each classrooms and area showing 2 ways out with a red arrow in a conspicuous area by the main door in the classroom, lunch room, gym, library, computer lab, etc.....

Any written directions should be bold, brief, and to the point.

The interior side of classrooms doors should not have mirrors, be covered, or decorated.

Preparedness/Notifications

Notify the fire alarm company that monitors the fire alarms system at least 30 minutes prior to the drill that a school fire drill is going to be conducted. Inform them of how the fire alarms will be activated, pulling a pull station, flowing water, using a magnet to activate a smoke alarms etc....

School fire drills should be as realistic as possible in order for the students and staff to be prepared for a true fire emergency. The verbal and written notice of drills after the first initial drill occurs should be limited to the least number of people possible, such as persons in charge of the cafeteria, custodian, school nurse, staff in charge of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and/or those with special needs, sensitivities, and with physical disabilities.

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and/or those with special needs and sensitivities, and medical conditions should be included in all school fire drills whenever possible. If the students mentioned above cannot participate in the drills conducted with the rest of the student body and staff they should participate in the same amount of fire drills required for the school. The fire drill should be as realistic as possible with the only modifications being the ones that are needed in order for students to participate.

Staff members and children with physical disabilities should be included in all drills unless there are circumstances that do not allow them to be included. The paragraph above would apply to those persons who could not participate in the drill.

Use these suggested guidelines for advanced notice:

- Give advance notice only 1 hour prior to conduction the school fire drill.
- Make provisions for students to have their outer clothing with them when the fire drill is conducted. Students cannot go to other parts of the building for clothing or for any reason after an alarm has sounded.

Evacuation Procedures to Consider

Teachers and staff members should make it a habit to close their classroom or office doors as they leave the rooms for evacuation.

The meeting places for students and staff should be away from areas firefighters will be using for fire and rescue activities. Fire hydrants, PIV valves, Fire Department Connections, access to the exterior boiler room, mechanical, or sprinkler riser room doors.

Meeting places should be at least fifty (50) feet from the building if possible.

Crossing streets is not recommended in any fire drill / evacuation plan.

A plan should be place if the students and staff have to be removed from the site for safety reasons, weather conditions, or any situation that may require them to be evacuated from the building grounds.

Partner with another school or business in a large enough building close to the school that the staff and students could be evacuate too if need be.

Accountability of Students and Staff

Teachers and heads of departments should have a list of students and staff they are accountable for readily available when a fire drill occurs.

One person should be designated/ liaison to communicate with fire department once they arrive. A back up person should also be designated. Any missing students or staff members should be reported to that designate person immediately. As part of the 5 required fire drills the designated person (s) should simulate the report that they would give to the fire department.

A bright orange or yellow vest should be worn by the designated person/liaison. The vest should have the name of the school listed across the back and labeled on the front.

Note: In an actual fire emergency where there are missing students or staff members call 9-1-1 and inform the operator who can notify the Excelsior Fire District while they are enroute to the call.

Assistance

The Excelsior Fire District is available to help plan, participate, and/or observe school fire drills. Please feel free to contact us at 952-401-8801.

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