

# **Louisiana Tech University**

Part III

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN FOR STUDENTS**

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## **Section I. Introduction**

### ***Purpose***

The primary purpose of this Emergency Response Plan for Students is to provide important safety information in the event an emergency or natural disaster that occurs within Louisiana Tech University campus or the general area.

### ***Communications***

#### **Plan Activation**

In case of any type of emergency, individuals making the discovery should first move to a safe location and then contact University Police at 257-4018. Individuals making the discovery may also contact 911 using a cell phone or non-campus phone, pull the fire alarm or take other appropriate emergency actions.

#### **Media Communications**

Individuals authorized to speak with the news media have been designated by Louisiana Tech University. No one else is authorized to represent La Tech University while speaking with the news media.

#### **Information**

For emergency information regarding events that are affecting or may affect normal university operations, contact Louisiana Tech University Police (318) 257-4018 or visit Louisiana Tech University Emergency Response Team website ([ert.latech.edu](http://ert.latech.edu)). This information is updated regularly and as needed.

### ***Role of Students***

Every student should familiarize him/herself with the emergency procedures and evacuation routes in buildings in which they live or use frequently. Everyone should also be able to execute shelter-in-place/emergency lockdown procedures. Students should be prepared to assess situations quickly but thoroughly, and use common sense in determining a course of action.

Students should evacuate to assembly areas in an orderly manner when directed to do so by emergency personnel or when an alarm/siren sounds. Students should also maintain contact with Student Affairs, International Student Services and/or Residential Life, whichever appropriate, after a disaster.

## Proximity Threats

Louisiana Tech University is geographically located near a number of “proximity threats.” In other words, certain transportation systems and utilities present possible threats to the university merely due to proximity to the campus. Members of the University community should be aware of these potential threats.

**Proximity Threats** such as:

**Rail:** Kansas City Southern railroad transports hazardous cargo through campus area

**Highways:** U.S. Highway 80 and LA Highway 850 (West Alabama Avenue) adjoin and traverse the campus area. Trucks transport hazardous cargo on these highway systems.

**Utilities:** Centerpoint Entergy has numerous underground natural gas lines within the campus boundaries

## **Critical Procedures**

### ***Fire and Facility Evacuation***

#### **Immediate Actions**

1. If a fire is discovered, the individual shall immediately pull the closest fire alarm switch.
2. When a fire alarm is activated, all occupants will evacuate the building in an orderly and safe manner.

#### **Evacuation Procedures**

When an evacuation of a building is ordered, the evacuation will be performed in an orderly and safe manner. All students are to assemble in a designated area. Evacuation orders may be given for multiple purposes.

1. Become familiar with your living area and exit locations.
2. When the fire alarm sounds, prepare to evacuate immediately.
3. Do not panic but walk quickly to the closest emergency exit.
4. Do not use elevators. Do not use cell phones (until outside building).
5. Walk in a single file to the right through corridors and stairwells.
6. Avoid unnecessary talking and keep the lines moving.
7. Individuals requiring assistance in evacuation should proceed to stairwell entrance area and wait for assistance.
8. If smoke is encountered, drop to the floor and crawl along the wall to the nearest exit.
9. When approaching a closed door, feel the door with the back of your hand. If the door is cool, carefully open the door and (if safe) proceed with the evacuation.
10. No one is to return to the building until authorized by on scene emergency personnel

## **Special Evacuation Procedures**

“Vertical Evacuation” is a procedure where individuals in lower floors relocate themselves to higher floors. This type of evacuation is conducted when there is a danger on the lower floors and there is either a danger in passing through the lower floors or if the outside environment is also dangerous. The most likely use of vertical evacuation is if there is a chemical spill either outdoors or within the lower floors. Vertical evacuations are also used as an evacuation of last resort in a flooding event.

“Silent Evacuation” is a procedure conducted when it is advisable to evacuate without causing alarm. This procedure is most likely used during some type of crime or crime-threatening emergency.

## **Evacuation of People Needing Mobility Assistance**

Faculty and supervisory staff having people with disabilities under their direction shall meet with them as soon as possible to discuss evacuation procedures in case of fire or other emergency.

Evacuation of people with disabilities who are ambulatory, such as those who have vision or hearing impairments:

- Should take place normally with other building occupants.
- Escorts should be offered from within the class or work area at the beginning of the semester.

People who are dependent upon equipment for their mobility:

- Should be assigned an Escort from within the class or work area at the beginning of the semester.
- Should not use elevators unless directed to do so by the emergency personnel.
- Remain in a protected place to await arrival of emergency personnel. Individuals who cannot evacuate the building due to mobility problems should proceed to the designated handicapped stairway in the building, accompanied by a prearranged Escort. Emergency personnel are trained to look for persons with mobility difficulties in these designated areas.
- Once the stairs have begun to clear of other evacuating people, the Escort and the person needing mobility assistance should enter the stairway and remain on the landing near the door.

If the stairway becomes smoke-filled or unsafe before the arrival of emergency personnel:

- Move back into the building and proceed to another usable stairway.
- If another stairway is not available, find a room that is safe and close the door.
- Wave a coat or similar object in a window to gain attention.

**If there is a direct and immediate threat, the individual should be moved.** If there is potential for fire, explosion, biohazards, or gas in the area where the person needing mobility assistance is located, a Buddy along with the Escort will need to assist the person to leave the building.

Faculty and staff who have individuals needing mobility assistance under their direction are responsible for notification of emergency personnel about the location of these people within the building.

### ***Shelter-in-Place (a/k/a Emergency Lockdown)***

There are a number of emergency situations where an evacuation of a building, room and/or office area is not advisable – hostile intruder, hazardous release outside, etc. These threats require shelter-in-place procedures to be executed – the exact opposite of a facility evacuation. Often shelter-in-place situations constitute life-threatening events and conducting a facility evacuation or failing to respond properly could be a fatal mistake.

## **Communications**

A shelter-in-place will be announced by text message, e-mail, website, intercom where available, or other voice communication. The ELS students will be contacted through the ELS Director. If a situation that may require a shelter-in-place is discovered, the individual making the discovery shall immediately move to a safe location, contact University Police and provide as much information as possible. Fire evacuation alarms are not to be sounded.

## **Procedures – Earthquake**

An earthquake is not typically a threat to the Louisiana Tech area, but this information is valuable for individuals who travel to other locations.

- If an earthquake strikes take cover immediately under a sturdy object.
  - Be prepared to move with the object and, if possible, grab the object.
  - Cover your head, neck and face to the fullest extent possible.
  - Stay away from, to the fullest extent possible, windows and items that might fall.
- Do not attempt an evacuation during the earthquake.
- Once the shaking stops; evacuate and remain prepared for aftershocks.
  - Do not move seriously injured individuals.
  - Provide search and rescue personnel with the last known location of any missing victim.
- Once outside seek open areas away from power lines, buildings and objects that might fall.

## **Procedures – Hazardous Release Outside**

- Everyone in hallways or open areas is to seek shelter in the nearest room.
- Close windows and window treatments.
- Everyone is to remain quiet and not enter hallways or open areas.
- Crouch down in areas that are away from windows.
- Air ventilation systems will be shut down.
- A vertical evacuation may be considered.
- Should the fire alarm sound, do not evacuate the building unless:
  - You have firsthand knowledge that there is a fire in the building, or
  - You have been advised by University Police to evacuate the building, or
  - There is imminent danger in the immediate area.

## **Procedures – Hostile, Violent Intruder, Student or Employee**

- Everyone in hallways or open areas is to seek shelter in the nearest room.
- A silent evacuation should be considered if it can be conducted safely.
- Lock and barricade doors.
- Close windows and window treatments.
- Turn off lights.
- Everyone is to remain quiet (quietly contact 911) and not enter hallways or open areas.
- Crouch down in areas that are **out of sight from doors and windows**.
- Should the fire alarm sound, do not evacuate the building unless:
  - You have firsthand knowledge that there is a fire in the building, or
  - You have been advised by University Police to evacuate the building, or
  - There is imminent danger in the immediate area.

## **ACTIVE SHOOTER EVENT**

(Dept of Homeland Security)

An “active shooter” is an individual who is engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area; in most cases, active shooters use firearms(s) and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.

- Victims are selected at random
- Event is unpredictable and evolves quickly
- Knowing what to do can save lives

When an Active Shooter is in your vicinity, you must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with the situation. Please take a few minutes and watch the short video “Run, Hide, Fight” (approx 7 min)

<https://www.dhs.gov/options-consideration-active-shooter-preparedness-video>

### **You have three options:**

#### **1. RUN**

- Have an escape route and plan in mind
- Leave your belongings behind
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow
- Help others escape, if possible
- Do not attempt to move the wounded
- Prevent others from entering an area where the active shooter may be
- Keep your hands visible
- Call 911 when you are safe

#### **2. HIDE**

- Hide in an area out of the shooter’s view
- Lock door or block entry to your hiding place
- Silence your cell phone (including vibrate mode) and remain quiet

#### **3. FIGHT**

- Fight as a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger
- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter
- Act with as much physical aggression as possible
- Improvise weapons or throw items at the active shooter
- Commit to your actions . . . your life depends on it

### **When law enforcement arrives:**

- Remain calm and follow instructions
- Drop items in your hands (e.g., bags, jackets)
- Raise hands and spread fingers
- Keep hands visible at all times
- Avoid quick movements toward officers, such as holding on to them for safety
- Avoid pointing, screaming or yelling
- Do not ask questions when evacuating
- Information to provide to 911 operations:
  - Location of the active shooter

- Number of shooters
- Physical description of shooters
- Number and type of weapons shooter has
- Number of potential victims at location

The first officers to arrive on scene will not stop to help the injured. Expect rescue teams to follow initial officers. These rescue teams will treat and remove injured. Once you have reached a safe location, you will likely be held in that area by law enforcement until the situation is under control, and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Do not leave the area until law enforcement authorities have instructed you to do so.

### *Emergency Situations*

- If an **Accident or Medical Emergency** is discovered, the individual making the discovery shall immediately contact University Police and provide as much information as possible. If possible, stay with the injured person and keep the victim calm and comfortable. Do not move any seriously injured person. Administer CPR or first aid only if qualified to do so.
- If a **Criminal Activity** is discovered, the individual making the discovery shall immediately contact University Police and provide as much information as possible. Do not approach the intruder or intervene in any ongoing crime.
- If a **Hazardous Substance** is discovered, the individual shall immediately contact University Police and provide as much information as possible. At a minimum, the individual should provide a description of the substance (color and texture) and any specific characteristics (odor, smoke, etc.). Close off and evacuate any contaminated areas. Exposed individuals should quarantine themselves at a safe location.
- If a **Hostile Intruder, Violent Student or Violent Employee** is discovered, the individual making the discovery shall immediately contact University Police and provide as much information as possible. Do not approach the intruder or intervene in a dangerous situation.

## **Section II. Natural Disasters**

### **All activities focus on safety issues.**

#### **Earthquakes**

- If an earthquake strikes take cover immediately under a sturdy object.
  - Be prepared to move with the object and, if possible, grab the object.
  - Cover your head, neck and face to the fullest extent possible.
  - Stay away from, to the fullest extent possible, windows and items that might fall.
- Do not attempt an evacuation during the earthquake.
- Once the shaking stops; evacuate and remain prepared for aftershocks.
  - Do not move seriously injured individuals.
  - Provide search and rescue personnel with the last known location of any missing victim.
- Once outside seek open areas away from power lines, buildings and objects that might fall.

#### **Hurricanes and Floods**

Louisiana Tech University will close if it has been determined that travel conditions have become dangerous and would not reopen until conditions improve. Therefore, there are no special on-site safety guidelines for non-storm personnel. If necessary, student shelters will be open.

#### **Mid-Latitude Storms, Winter/Ice Storms and Tropical Storms**

When traveling under bad weather conditions, keep your motor vehicle in good mechanical condition with properly inflated tires with good tread. Reduce driving speeds. If hydroplaning occurs on wet pavement or slipping occurs on a frozen road, take your foot off the gas to gradually reduce driving speed. Steer into the skid and gradually regain control of the vehicle. Do not drive into moving water, deep water or into water where the depth is unknown.

## Thunderstorms

Observe the following rules if lightning is occurring or is about to commence:

- Avoid water fixtures, telephone lines and any electrical conducting materials.
- Stay inside buildings and off the grounds.
- Modern buildings are designed to withstand significant damage resulting from thunderstorm wind, rain, hail and lightning strikes.
- If you are outdoors or not on campus, depending on your location, keep the following in mind:
  - If in your home or a building, follow the aforementioned rules.
  - While in your car, keep in mind that because cars are low profile and supported on rubber tires (an effective electric insulator), they are generally (but not always) safe from lightning strikes. Electrical current will also generally follow a path around, rather than through, the passenger compartment (not necessarily true for convertibles).
  - If in an open area, go to the nearest ditch or ravine and drop to your knees. **Do not** do any of the following:
    - stand in an open area
    - stand underneath a tall tree (especially if it is in an isolated area)
    - seek shelter in a small structure in an open area
    - stand in or around a body of water
  - If in a wooded area, go to a low area of small trees/bushes.
  - Stay away from anything metal (farm equipment, golf clubs, wire fences, metal buildings, etc.).
  - If you feel your hair standing on end, drop to your knees bend forward and put your hands on your knees; do not lie flat on the ground.

## Tornadoes

Louisiana Tech University will monitor the weather on an ongoing basis if the Weather Service issues a tornado watch. If a tornado is spotted or imminent, take the following steps immediately:

- Notification of a pending disaster will be announced by e-mail, university website, and intercom where available.
- Fire/evacuation alarms are not to be activated.
- Evacuate all trailers and temporary structures; proceed immediately to a structurally secure building.
  - Go to the interior area of the building.
  - Avoid west and south facing exterior walls and rooms (tornadoes generally travel from the southwest to the northeast in the U.S.A.).
  - Take cover under a sturdy object.
  - Protect your head, neck and face.
  - Stay away from windows, glass and items that might fall.
- There is not a sufficient warning period to close Louisiana Tech University or to effectively protect University assets. Therefore, no special effort should be made to protect University assets; all attention should be directed towards life safety procedures.
- If you are working outdoors or not at work, depending on your location, keep the following in mind:
  - If in a house or small building, go to the basement or cellar.
    - If there is no basement, go to an interior room on the lowest level.
    - Take cover under a sturdy object while covering your head, neck and face.
  - If in a school, office, shopping center, etc. go to an interior hallway on the lowest level.
  - Do not seek shelter in gyms, auditoriums and other large open areas.
  - If in a high-rise building, go to an interior hallway on the lowest level possible. Do not take the elevator!
  - If in a car and the tornado is nearby, get out. Tornadoes can move swiftly and are often erratic.
  - If in a mobile home, get out immediately!
  - If in an open field, lie face down in a ditch or nearest ravine and cover your head with your hands: this procedure is preferable to remaining in a car or mobile home.