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Revision: 1.0	Subject: Storage in Building Corridors and Egress Routes	

1. Introduction

The standard operating procedure (SOP) for building corridors and egress was developed by the Department of Environmental Health & Safety in accordance with the University's Policy Statement on Health and Safety and to ensure compliance with the Ontario Building and Fire Code.

The Ontario Fire Code indicates that no means of egress may be obstructed, blocked, reduced or otherwise impeded by any object, article or equipment not included in the original design of the building. The purpose of these procedures is to guide faculties, departments and units with regard to items that are improperly stored in the corridors, stairwells, access to exits, barrier-free access areas, areas-of-safe-refuge and any other area(s) that could pose an immediate threat to life in the event of either a man-made or natural emergency or disaster.

2. Applicable Legislation

- The Ontario Building Code 1997 (O. Reg. 403/97)
- The Ontario Fire Code (O. Reg. 388/97) as amended by (O. Reg. 398/98 and 428/98)
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA 101, "Life Safety Code")

3. Responsibilities

Faculties, Departments and Units

Faculties, departments, and units are responsible for their own equipment, as well as shared equipment that is located in corridors. They must monitor the condition of the corridors used by their staff during the day to day operations to ensure that possible obstructions are dealt with proactively, and are removed in accordance with this procedure.

It is the responsibility of the department/unit head to ensure that pertinent supervisors and employees are notified of their responsibilities under this procedure. Furthermore, it is their responsibility to ensure that the components of this SOP and the Ontario Fire Code are implemented in all facilities under his/her authority.

Department of Environmental Health and Safety

The Department of Environmental Health & Safety will ensure that:

- Each department is made aware of responsibilities under this procedure.
- Review this procedure periodically and amend as necessary.



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- Serve as a resource to departments which require assistance in complying with the SOPs.
- Conduct regular inspections to ensure that faculties, departments and units are complying with the requirements of the SOP and the Ontario Building and Fire Codes.

4. Obstruction of a means of egress

The Ontario Building and Fire Codes require that every means of egress, which includes public or secondary corridors, fire exits, stairwells, landings aisles, fire escapes or other exits intended to be used during an emergency, shall be so maintained as to provide free and unobstructed exiting from all parts of the building at all times in case of an emergency. Therefore, no means of egress shall be blocked or obstructed with chairs, tables, equipment, storage, vending machines or other articles that would reduce the exiting width.

All exit doors must be usable without keys, access cards, or specialized knowledge. Magnetic locks and other locking security systems must release automatically upon activation of the buildings fire alarm system and must be reset manually from a secure location. Exit doors cannot be tied, chained, or otherwise secured in a closed position, in a manner that would not allow their immediate use during an emergency.

5. Hallways/Corridors

No person shall place, store, or keep any materials of any kind in a hallway. The use of laboratory or office equipment in hallways is not permitted. Only drinking water fountains, fire suppression equipment, and other safety equipment (i.e.: emergency showers and eye-wash stations) can be installed in hallways.

Permanently attached lockers, bulletin boards, and display cabinets may be permitted in some locations, subject to the approval of the “Authority Having Jurisdiction” (Kingston Fire & Rescue) and the Department of Environmental Health & Safety.

Temporary placement of equipment, building materials, etc. in a corridor is generally allowed as long as a minimum of 42” of clearance in the corridor is maintained. If the corridor is located in a high traffic area, more clearance will be required.

If it is necessary to obstruct a corridor for more than 3 days, approval must be obtained from a building operations manager (or equivalent position). If the location or building does not have a building operations manger (or equivalent), then approval must be obtained from the Department of Environmental Health & Safety.



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A corridor that contains temporary obstructions must be “signed” as such at all entrances (stair tower doors, adjoining corridors and tunnels etc.) to the area.

6. Stair Tower/Wells

The storage of any materials on stairs, or in stair towers is strictly prohibited. Items found in these locations will be immediately removed at the owner’s expense.

7. Fire Doors

Fire doors must not be blocked or wedged in the open position. Doors that are held open by automatic release devices which will function upon activation of the buildings fire alarm system will be allowed.

8. Exterior Steps and Walks

Areas immediately outside of a required fire exit must be maintained free of obstructions, including buildups of snow and ice.

Revision History:

July 2006 – Initial Release