

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN (EAP) **Other Environmental Releases**

There are many different types of releases which could cause physical or chemical harm to individuals or the environment. Common examples include the following:

- the activation of equipment-specific fire detection/suppression systems that use inert gas to quench fires by displacing oxygen (like in computer server rooms in CA Johnson, Burke and McEwen);
- the release of a large amount of refrigeration gas (like from the Sage hockey rink mechanical room);
- the release of a small amount of compressed gas (like from a compressed gas cylinder in Science); or
- the release of flammable propane gas (like from small household grill-style propane tanks or larger tanks that fuel heating systems).

Since the level and type of threat posed to human health and the environment is largely based upon chemical, location, and other equipment-specific criteria that further determine the appropriate response and mitigation efforts, keep the following general rules in mind:

1. All personnel should have a general awareness of where systems and equipment with the potential for an environmental release are located, relative to the buildings where they normally work or reside.
2. Many of these systems (such as all fire detection/suppression systems that use inert gas, as well as the Sage rink refrigeration system) have signage and warning signs indicating their location/presence, as well as audible/visual alarm systems indicative of system use/release/failure.
3. Where these systems are not otherwise protected by audible/visual alarms systems (like compressed gas cylinder or propane use/storage areas), the following observational criteria are usually indicative of a problem:
 - **Smell**—strange odors that range from sweet/fuel like, to sharp/acrid—but also recognize that some gas leaks **HAVE NO ODOR** and may cause asphyxiation by displacing oxygen;
 - **Sound**—slow and/or continuous hissing sounds arising from cylinder/tank locations;
 - **Visual**—the accumulation of ice around cylinder/tank valves.
4. If activated audible/visual alarm systems (or other observational techniques in their absence) indicate an actual or potential environmental release, immediately evacuate affected building spaces and notify Campus Safety by phone (ext. 4000) or by manually activating a fire alarm pull station.
5. During building evacuations, assist the handicapped in exiting the building. Remember that elevators are reserved for handicapped persons during evacuations.
6. 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.
7. If requested, assist Emergency crews as necessary.
8. 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.