



Ave Maria University
Annual Fire Safety Report 2024

Overview of HEOA Fire Safety Requirements

Ave Maria University (AMU) is required to comply with the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) provisions regarding fire safety. The HEOA of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-315), signed into law on August 14, 2008, amends the Higher Education Act of 1965. The act is codified within 20 USC § 1092(i) and published as 34 CFR 668.49, *Institutional Fire Safety Policies and Fire Statistics*.

In accordance with HEOA fire safety provisions, each year, beginning in 2009, AMU, and all Title IV institutions, must maintain a fire log and release an annual Fire Safety Report to the campus community. Title IV institutions must be in compliance with the act's fire safety policies and fire statistic requirements by October 1, with 2009 as the first calendar year of mandatory compliance. For more information about the act, go to http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_cong_public_laws&docid=f:publ315.110.pdf.

The HEOA is enforced by the United States Department of Education; institutions that fail to comply with the act are subject to fines of up to \$27,500 per violation (34 CFR § 668.84).

The act has three fire safety policy and fire statistics requirements, which mandate the following for Title IV institutions:

1. Maintain a fire log
2. Report fire statistics to the Secretary of Education
3. Publish an annual Fire Safety Report

All three provisions pertain only to fire statistics record keeping and fire safety procedures for residence halls owned by the institution or located on the institution's campus. The act does not, at the time of this report's issuance, apply to other campus facilities. The fire log must include the date, time, location, and nature of all fires in university-owned or controlled residential buildings. All fire data must be recorded in the log within two business days of the fire's occurrence. AMU's HEOA-compliant fire log is maintained by the AMU Security Department. A paper copy of the log is available upon written request to the Director of Campus Safety and Security at director.security@avemaria.edu.

The HEOA directives effective at the time of this report's publication apply only to residence halls owned and/or operated by the university. AMU-owned residence halls and all other campus buildings are also subject to building fire safety code as promulgated by the Collier County Fire and Emergency Management Services and Immokalee Fire District. The Annual Fire Safety Report is produced by AMU's Campus Safety and Security Department.

Notice, Availability, and Location of the Annual Fire Safety Report

The AMU Campus Safety and Security Department publishes the Annual Fire Safety Report by October 1 of each year. The HEOA requires that all enrolled students and current employees receive either the Annual Fire Safety Report in its entirety or receive notice of the report's availability and location (see appendix A). This information is conveyed to all enrolled students and current employees via e-mail concurrent with or in advance of the report's publication.

The Fire Safety Report must also be available to prospective university students, faculty, and staff. Details of the report therefore can be viewed at the following AMU website: <https://www.avemaria.edu/student-services/campus-safety/jeanne-clery-act-reports-compliance/>.

Prospective students have access to this report by entering the AMU Prospective Student Portal at: <https://www.avemaria.edu/student-services/campus-safety/jeanne-clery-act-reports-compliance/>.

AMU must also comply with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act). In accordance with the Clery Act, each year AMU prepares an Annual Security Report. This report contains statistics for the previous three years concerning reported crimes that occurred on campus; in certain off-campus buildings, on property owned or controlled by AMU, and on public property within, or immediately adjacent to and accessible from, the campus. This report also contains institutional policies regarding campus security, such as sexual assault and other matters. You may access the report here: <https://www.avemaria.edu/student-services/campus-safety/jeanne-clery-act-reports-compliance/>. A paper copy is also available to all applicants upon request by calling Campus Security at 239-280-6289.

Residence Hall Fire Safety Systems

In calendar year 2024, AMU owned and operated five residence hall structures. All five are located on the main campus. All main campus residence halls link to the automated

smoke detection and fire alarm system. Upon activation, the automated system communicates to Ave Maria Security through a monitor that indicates the building, specific area in the building, and specific device that has been activated. The automated system monitors the residence halls for fire and smoke 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Each hall is equipped with a full sprinkler system. Each residential room is equipped with a smoke detector on the ceiling. Smoke detectors are electronically operated, with preventative maintenance scheduled annually. Kitchen areas in the residence halls are equipped with heat detectors.

Table 1 presents the fire safety systems for each residence hall.

Building-wide fire alarm systems consist of smoke detectors, pull stations, bells, and strobes. Activation of this building-wide system produces both audible and visual signals to indicate fire alarms. Individual smoke detectors in the resident's rooms produce audible signals localized to the room. Rooms designated for disabled students also connect to the building-wide fire safety system and have individual smoke detectors.

Table 1: Residence Hall Fire Safety Systems

Resident Hall	Building Wide Smoke Detection	Building Wide Fire Alarm Monitoring System	Full Sprinkler System	Resident Room Smoke Detectors	Fire Extinguishers
Goretti Hall	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sebastian Hall	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Xavier Hall	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Joseph Hall	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
UGH-6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Mandatory, Supervised Fire Drills

Supervised fire drills are conducted during the spring and fall semesters for resident halls. The projected 2025 drill schedule for the residence halls is presented in table 2. The fire drill tests the fire alarm and safety systems at all levels, including alarm transmission, Security Department response, and residence hall evacuation. Upon activation of the fire alarm, students are expected to evacuate and gather at a predetermined location. Residence Life conducts a review of fire safety for the student body, while Security and Facilities Management personnel conduct a sweep of the hall.

The Division of Student Affairs conducts the drill making note of the details of each fire drill in a Residence Hall Fire Drill Assessment Report (see appendix B). Assessment reports are archived in the Security Department at 5050 Ave Maria Blvd. Ave Maria, FL 34142.

Table 2: 2025 Residence Hall Fire Drill Schedule

Resident Hall	Spring Semester	Fall Semester
	Month	Month
Goretti Hall	January 2025	October 2025
Sebastian Hall	January 2025	October 2025
Xavier Hall	January 2025	October 2025
Joseph Hall	January 2025	October 2025
UGH-6	January 2025	October 2025

Residence Hall Policies on Fire Prevention

Residence Hall Policies on Electronic Appliances, Smoking, and Open Flames:

Student responsibilities and prohibitions related to fire safety and prevention are detailed in the Student Handbook, published annually by AMU's Office of Student Affairs. For more information, please visit: <https://www.avemaria.edu/student-handbook-policies/>.

AMU students are expressly prohibited from having the following items in residence hall rooms, on carpeted areas, in hallways, or in other non-designated areas:

- halogen lamps
- appliances (popcorn poppers, toaster ovens, woks, sun lamps, hotplates, or other electric water-heating devices)
- refrigerators drawing greater than a 2.5 amp current
- Any cooking device with an open flame. Any open-flame devices, including candles, incense, and open burners

The combined wattage from all electrical devices in a resident's room must not exceed 850 watts.

Resident Hall Fire Safety Prohibitions

AMU students are further prohibited from:

- Setting any fire within buildings or areas contiguous to the buildings.
- Tampering with fire equipment.
- Activating any fire alarm system under false pretenses or making fraudulent fire or emergency reports.
- Disconnecting or tampering with any smoke detection device.
- Running electrical wires beneath any rug or carpet.
- Smoking anywhere other than in smoking permitted areas.

Procedures for Student Housing Evacuation (in Case of Fire Alarm)

All students and employees are required to evacuate all university buildings immediately upon the sounding of a fire alarm. Students and employees are further restricted from entering a building during or following a fire alarm until receiving permission from a housing or public safety staff member.

During fire drills, Residence Halls are swept by AMU Security and/or Residence Life staff to assist disabled students, verify evacuation, and inspect for fire safety violations. In the event of an actual fire, Residence Halls would be swept for complete evacuation and to assist disabled students by the Immokalee Fire Department and/or Collier County Sheriff's Department.

The residence halls are scheduled for semiannual fire evacuation drills in the spring and fall semesters. Evacuation drills are coordinated by the AMU Security Department.

Policies on Fire Safety Education and Training Program for Students and Employees

Fire safety training for residence hall directors and assistants is provided by AMU Security administrators. Residence hall directors and assistants are also trained in evacuation procedures. Following fire drills, students are also advised on these procedures by Resident Life staff.

Fire safety training is also available for employees through the Immokalee Fire Department. This training includes fire survival skills, evacuation procedures, and fire extinguisher use. Fire safety training custom tailored to specific departments' requirements is also available.

Contact Number for Reporting Fires

AMU faculty, staff, and students are instructed to dial 911 for all emergencies, including fires and notify the Department of Campus Safety and Security at 239-280-6289 when safe to do so. The Patrol Officers support campus safety activities 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

Fire Statistics

Table 3 presents the 2024 fire statistics for the AMU campus.

Table 3: Ave Maria University Main Campus Residence Hall Fire Statistics

Residential	Other (non-residential)
0	0

Synopsis

In calendar year 2024, AMU residence halls experienced one fire with fire-system alarm activations.

Future Improvement in Fire Safety

In 2024, the Departments of Campus Safety and Security, Residence Life, Dining, Student Life, and Physical Plant departments will continue to review fire safety procedures, training, and policies. Changes to current practice are identified and implemented as necessary to maintain the safety of AMU’s students and employees.

AMU strives to provide a safe and fulfilling residence life program on our campus. The University staff is committed to promoting fire safety in all AMU buildings.

Definitions

Fire: Any instance of open flame or other burning in a place not intended to contain the burning or in an uncontrolled manner.

Fire Drill:	A supervised practice of mandatory evacuation of a building for a fire.
Fire-Related Injury:	Any instance in which a person is injured because of fire, including an injury sustained from a natural or accidental cause involving fire control, attempting rescue, or escaping from the dangers of a fire.
Fire-Related Death:	Any instance in which a person is killed because of fire, including death resulting from a natural or accidental cause involving fire control, attempting rescue, or escaping from the dangers of a fire. (Including any person that dies within 1 year of injuries sustained because of a fire).
Fire-Safety System:	Any mechanism or system related to the detection of a fire, the warning resulting from a fire, or the control of a fire, including the following: • sprinkler or other fire-extinguishing systems • fire-detection devices • stand-alone smoke alarms • devices that alert students, faculty, and/or staff to the presence of a fire, such as horns, bells, or strobe lights • smoke-control and reduction mechanisms • fire doors and walls that reduce the spread of fire
Person:	The term <i>person</i> may include students, faculty, staff, visitors, firefighters, or any other individuals.
Title IV Institution:	A postsecondary educational institution that has entered into a formal agreement with the Secretary of Education allowing the institution to participate in Title IV federal student aid programs.
Value of Property Damage:	The estimated value of the loss of a structure and its contents, in terms of the cost of replacement in like kind and quantity, including: • Contents damaged by fire.

- Related damage caused by smoke, water, and overhaul.
- Does not include indirect loss such as business interruption.

Appendix A: Memorandum Announcing Annual Fire Safety Report

Memorandum

Date: September 30, 2024

To: Ave Maria University Community

From: Director of Campus Safety and Security

Subject: Notice of Availability and Location of the Annual Fire Safety Report

The Department of Campus Safety and Security in conjunction with the Departments of Physical Plant, Residence Life, and Dining are committed to a continuous improvement and review process for fire safety within university residence halls. To this end, the Annual Fire Safety Report for 2024 is posted on the AMU web site at:

<https://www.avemaria.edu/student-services/campus-safety/jeanne-clery-act-reports-compliance/>.

2009 was the inaugural year for institutions such as Ave Maria University to publish an annual report detailing fire prevention policy and fire safety equipment within institution owned and operated residence halls, as required by the 2008 amendments to the Higher Education Opportunity Act. The report also includes statistics for all fire events that occurred in the residence halls during the 2024 calendar year.

A paper copy of the report will be provided upon request by contacting AMU Campus Safety and Security. The Department of Campus Safety and Security is also available for any questions or comments. Please direct any inquiries by phone to the Director of Campus Safety and Security, at extension 2401 on campus or by email at director.security@avemaria.edu.

Thank you for your time and attention in this regard.

Appendix B: Residence Hall Fire Drill Assessment Report

RESIDENCE HALL FIRE DRILL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Building _____ Date of Drill _____ Number of Participants _____

Observed By _____

Time Alarm Activated _____ Time Evacuation Started _____ Time Evacuation

Ended _____

Public Safety Arrived _____ Fire Alarm Deactivated _____ "All Clear"

Given _____

Time All Residents Inside _____ Fire Drill Total Time _____

	YES	NO	NA
Did occupants immediately begin to evacuate the building when alarm sounded?	☐	☐	☐
Did Public Safety officers conduct a search to ensure that everyone evacuated the building and that the fire systems were operating correctly (checked rooms, restrooms, and other areas)?	☐	☐	☐
If handicapped persons were present, did Public Safety assist them?	☐	☐	☐
Did the handicapped door open automatically after the alarm sounded?	☐	☐	☐
Were doors closed to contain smoke/fire?	☐	☐	☐
If Fire Doors were available, did they operate properly?	☐	☐	☐
Did Housing and Dining staff direct students to exits?	☐	☐	☐
Did Facilities Management staff check the alarm fire panels for malfunctions?	☐	☐	☐
Did the elevators shut down once the alarm was activated?	☐	☐	☐
Are Housing and Dining staffers knowledgeable in their assigned duties?	☐	☐	☐
Did the residents go to their assembly areas outside the building and wait for further instructions?	☐	☐	☐
Was the fire drill conducted in an orderly manner?	☐	☐	☐
Were the fire alarms loud enough?	☐	☐	☐

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Key:
PP—Physical Plant;
CS—Campus Security;
RL—Residence Life & Housing