Storage in Corridors

**Purpose:**

This policy prohibits the placement or storage of materials and equipment in corridors and stairways that may negatively impact emergency evacuation, contribute to or cause hazards, or reduce or delay emergency responders entering the area. This includes, but is not limited to temporary, short-term or long-term storage or spill over from offices, laboratories, classrooms, or from shipping and receiving areas.

**Applicability:**

This policy applies to all WSU owned and leased space. The storage restrictions and clearance requirements identified in this policy go into effect immediately and apply to all items currently stored in the corridors and pathways.

**Codes and guidelines**:

 29 CFR 1910 Subpart E

2006 International Fire Code; Chapter 10, Chapter 3 Section 315

**Definitions**:

**Building Corridor / Hallway**: Any passageway connecting individual rooms and spaces that lead to an exit door, stairwell, or other place of refuge used by personnel evacuating the area and emergency personnel arriving to the area. Unless the building has been closed to occupancy and posted as such at all entrances to the building, building corridors and hallways are considered active and fully occupied.

**Equipment:** Includes but is not limited to all carts, furniture, filing cabinets, printers, photocopiers, refrigerators, freezers, construction related materials and devices, etc.

**Stairwell:** One or more flights of stairs, either exterior or interior, that serves as the primary vertical means of egress for personnel evacuating the area and emergency responders arriving to the area.

**In-Room Egress Pathway:** The central means of egress from points inside of a room to the exit door(s) which lead to a building corridor/hallway or stairwell. The interior room egress pathway allows for safe passage out of the room in the event of an emergency. This includes flex and collaborative spaces.

**Responsibilities:**

**Environmental Health and Safety / Fire Safety**

* Inspects WSU corridors and hallways and notifies the responsible person and/or Department when items are not in compliance with this policy.

**Facilities Services**

* Assists EHS and Fire Safety in the removal and disposal of supplies and equipment improperly stored in building corridors and hallways.
* Ensure proper egress clearance is maintained for projects which impact active egress paths.
* Ensures their contractors maintain their equipment and supplies in accordance with the policy.

**WSU Custodial Services**

* Collects all trash and other refuse materials from within the offices, laboratories, and other locations.
* Stores and transports collected waste materials in a manner consistent with this policy while in the public corridors.

**Facilities Planning**

* Incorporate effective design specifications for adequate storage within all newly renovated or constructed spaces to avoid the use of corridors for storage.
* Ensure proper egress clearance is maintained for projects which impact active egress paths.
* Ensure their contractors maintain their equipment and supplies in accordance with this policy.

**Contractors**

* All contractors must adhere to the storage restrictions and clearance requirements identified in this policy.

**Procedure:**

**Stairwell Storage Restrictions**

In the event of an emergency, stairwells serve as the primary vertical egress path for personnel evacuating the area. It is critical that stairwells remain clear and unobstructed at all times. No equipment, furniture, or materials may be stored or located in stairwells regardless of combustibility or location within the stairwell.

**Building Corridor / Hallway Use and Restrictions**

* **Clear and Unobstructed Path –** A clear and unobstructed egress path must be maintained at all times. Safety shower, eyewash stations, fire extinguishers, fire doors, exit doors, fire alarm pull stations, electrical panels, or any other building safety feature must never be obstructed.
* **Minimum Clearance Width –** A minimum clearance width of 44 inches must be maintained except for corridors that exclusively serve classrooms and service elevators. A minimum clearance width of 66 inches must be maintained for service elevator corridors and classroom corridors.
* **Renovation and Remodel Areas –** Coordination between Facilities Services and Facilities Planning, for equipment to be moved and stored, shall be made prior to the start of the project.
* **Prohibited Items –** Hazardous materials, combustible materials (including but not limited to paper products, magazines, cardboard, wood crates, and pallets), and laboratory operations are prohibited in building corridors and hallways.
* **Temporary Storage of Equipment Deliveries –** Corridors may not be used for temporary storage. If new equipment needs to be stored prior to installation, storage allowances within a room allocated to the project or department must be made prior to delivery through Facilities Planning.

**Normal Trash and Red Bag Waste**

* Placing normal trash (e.g. trash bags, boxes) or red bag waste in building corridors and hallways is prohibited.
* Red bags ready for collection must be properly closed and sealed.

**In-Room Egress Pathway and Clearance Requirements**

Laboratories, offices, maintenance shops, flex and collaborative spaces, and other rooms must have an egress pathway to the exit door(s). In-room egress pathways allow for safe passage out of the room in the event of an emergency.

* **Obstructions –** Storage must not obstruct safety showers, eyewash stations, fire extinguishers, fire doors, exit doors, fire alarm pull stations, electrical panels, or any other building safety feature.
* **Clear Path –** All storage must be confined to one side of the egress pathway to allow a clear and unobstructed path through the room to the exit door(s).
* **Clear Exit –** Equipment and combustible material storage immediately adjacent to exit doors must be minimized to promote safe passage out of the room in the event of an emergency.
* **Minimum Clearance Width –** A minimum clearance width of 36 inches must be maintained for the central egress pathway and other interior walking aisles.
* **Flex and Collaborative Spaces –** Facilities Planning shall design flex and collaborative spaces to ensure compliance with the requirements of this policy. Space use and equipment arrangements shall be posted in the space. Continued violations of this policy may result in modification of the space or possible removal of equipment.

**Monitoring Procedures**

EHS and Fire Safety will periodically inspect building corridors and hallways. Items stored which violate these storage restrictions and clearance requirements will be addressed as follows:

**Contact Owner –** EHS and Fire Safety will attempt to contact the owner or responsible Department. If the owner cannot be identified, a removal notice tag will be affixed to the equipment/items and items will be removed at the discretion of the inspectors (EHS/Fire Safety).

**Relocate –** Hazardous materials and items that significantly decrease corridor widths below the required minimum clearance must be relocated immediately. All other equipment or items must be relocated/moved within one week.

**Remove/Discard –** If the items are not relocated within the specified time frames, Facilities Services will remove the items. There is no guarantee that removed items will be stored for recovery by the owner.

For any questions or clarification contact Fire Safety at 978-5531 or 5803.