

Evacuation Frequently Asked Questions

Q - I don't take attendance in my class. How am I supposed to know if everyone made it to the evacuation area?

A - Count heads as they exit the building if possible, if not, just count heads at the evacuation site and ask the students if they think anyone is missing.

Q – Why do the evacuation instructions say to remain silent and stay off cell phones?

A - All Faculty and staff should reinforce this instruction so that everyone is able to hear safety instructions and situation updates.

Q - I saw people trying to drive off during the drill. Is that OK?

A - No. There should be no vehicle movement during a drill - except for emergency personnel.

Q - There was no evacuation map in my room. How do I know which parking lot to go to?

A - You should evacuate to the closest parking lot. Tell your students what parking lot is the closest. If for some reason, that lot, or the path to that lot, is unsafe you can go to ANY parking lot and check in. Depending on where you are on campus at the moment of the evacuation, your closest parking lot may be different.

Q - I don't have a Head Count Form

A – There will be Head Count Forms available at the Check In Station. You can also download the most recent version by going to wvm.edu/emergency and clicking the Evac. Head Count Form link in Emergency Guidelines.

Q – Where is the Check In Station?

A – You will see a bright orange sign sitting on top of a car in the parking lot and a lot of people with bright colored vests standing there. Faculty and staff without an emergency role do not need to go to the Check In Station unless they have a question or concern.

Q - What is the purpose of Check In?

A - Check In is the first step in gathering information about the situation. It allows the Incident Management Team to get an idea of how many people are in the parking lots, how many people need medical assistance and who is missing. The next step is to get the appropriate supplies out of the campus emergency cache and request assistance from the District or the City as needed. In a long term even, we may need to try to provide shelter from the elements, food and water.

Q - What about faculty who are not in class at the moment? Does someone also take a census of faculty?

A - The only way we will know if an individual faculty member is missing, is if someone tells Check In that they are missing.

Q - I was not in class when the evacuation notice came out. How will I know what to do?

A - Someone will tell you to go to the evacuation site, or you can ask someone walking past you what's going on. Evacuate to the closest parking lot and "attach" yourself to one of the faculty members who has a class already there. The faculty member will include you in their head count and you can stay with them to receive updates on the emergency.

Q - Why can't I leave campus?

A - Depending on the emergency, the area around the campus may be hazardous (roads damaged, gas leaks, gunmen, etc). The Campus leadership team will contact the City to gather information and relay it to everyone at each evacuation site. When they can confirm it is safe for you to leave, they'll let you know.

Q - What if I have a student in a wheelchair and they can't get down the stairs? Do I stay with them?

A - If you feel it is safe to stay, yes, and tell others to report your location to the Check In point. If it is unsafe to stay, you will have to leave the person in a safe zone at the top of a stairway and quickly report their location to the Check In point. No one is expected to put themselves in danger to help someone else. When we plan and train ahead of time, we can figure out ways to make sure everyone can get out.

Q - If there is a real earthquake, will someone come around and tell me to evacuate?

A - We don't know. The person who is responsible for alerting you area may be injured. If you feel that it is unsafe to stay in the building, you may make the determination to evacuate your students. In an earthquake, if objects fall over, or off shelves, the building structure may be damaged and you should leave without needing to be notified.

Q - I'm afraid I'm going to get hit with falling debris when I evacuate during an earthquake.

A - You always stay protected (Drop, Cover and Hold On) while the ground is shaking. AFTER the shaking has stopped, evacuate.

Q - I couldn't hear instructions from the bull horn. What do I do?

A - Make sure everyone around you is complying with the "remain silent and stay off cell phones" procedure. Go up to the person with the bullhorn and tell them that they aren't loud enough.

Q - I'm a faculty member and didn't know that a drill was scheduled.

A - Several notices were sent out to your campus email.

Q - Can we sit in cars?

A - Not for a drill. In a real event, when you are in the parking lot for an extended period of time, sitting in cars and listening to news reports is OK as long as the faculty member can still account for his/her students. We can also arrange to have vehicles moved from one parking lot to another if your car is somewhere else.

Q - Is it "Drop, Cover and Hold On" (under a table) or the Triangle of Life (drop next to a table or heavy object) to protect myself during earthquakes?

A - Drop, Cover and Hold On under a table. The Triangle of Life is bad information. If you don't have a table to get under, drop and cover wherever you are and try to protect your head.

Q - People around me were not taking the drill seriously. Will their attitudes put me in danger?

A - Yes, and it puts them in danger too. Encourage people to participate.

Please forward additional questions to the Emergency Services Coordinator, esc@wvm.edu or call Campus Police.