TAKING SEvere weather serIously

As part of its efforts to prepare UTD for severe Spring weather, the Department of Environmental Health and Safety hosted SKYWARN® StormSpotter, a free storm spotter basic training session, on Tuesday, March 24, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the Facilities Management Training Room (FM 1.502). Mark Fox, regional training officer with the National Weather Service, lead the course, which covered:

- Basics of thunderstorm development
- Fundamentals of storm structure
- Identifying potential severe weather features
- Information to report
- How to report information
- Basic severe weather safety

The training session was open to all faculty, staff and students. Around 20 persons participated from among auxiliary services, EHS staff, campus police, facilities employees, CERT and SafeLeaders.

Watch vs Warning

Watch: Conditions are favorable for the severe weather event in or near the watch area. When a watch is announced, stay alert and be ready to take action.

Warning: Severe weather event is imminent or occurring in the warned area. Take action based on the emergency at hand.

Severe Weather: What to Do

If you can hear thunder, you’re close enough to be struck by lightning—find safe shelter immediately.

Move to a sturdy building and stay away from the windows (don’t take shelter in a shed, under isolated trees or in a convertible vehicle).

If a sturdy shelter is not available, get inside a hardtop vehicle and keep the windows up.

Get out of boats and away from water.

Unplug appliances and avoid using the telephone except in an emergency.
EXTREME HEAT

As we head into the sweltering summer months here in Texas, be aware of the dangers of extreme heat. Heat kills by pushing the human body beyond its limits. In extreme heat and high humidity, evaporation is slowed and the body must work extra hard to maintain a normal temperature.

Most heat disorders occur because the victim has been overexposed to heat or has over-exercised for his or her age and physical condition. Older adults, young children and those who are sick or overweight are more likely to succumb to extreme heat. Conditions that can induce heat-related illnesses include stagnant atmospheric conditions and poor air quality. Consequently, people living in urban areas may be at greater risk from the effects of a prolonged heat wave than those living in rural areas. Also, asphalt and concrete store heat longer and gradually release heat at night, which can produce higher nighttime temperatures known as the “urban heat island effect.”

A heat wave is an extended period of extreme heat, and is often accompanied by high humidity. These conditions can be dangerous and even life-threatening for humans who don’t take the proper precautions.

THE PREPAREDNESS PLEDGE

BE SMART. TAKE PART. PREPARE.

America’s PrepareAthon! is a nationwide, community-based campaign to increase emergency preparedness and resilience through hazard-specific drills, group discussions, and exercises conducted at the national level every fall and spring. Its goal is to increase the number of people who —

- Understand the hazards that affect their community
- Know what to do to be safe and mitigate damage
- Take action to increase their preparedness
- Participate in community resilience planning

In the spirit of America’s PrepareAthon!, UT Dallas encourages you to take the Preparedness Pledge, to Do-One-Thing, to better prepare yourself for all hazards. Those who take the Preparedness Pledge are automatically entered to win a NOAA Weather Radio. The winner for the Preparedness Pledge was chosen at random and announced on April 30, 2015.

The Spring 2015 Preparedness Pledge winner is Helen Roth!

Your next opportunity to take the pledge will be in September at: www.utdallas.edu/ehs/tools/pledge.
**FACTS ABOUT FIRE SPRINKLERS**

**What are sprinklers?**
An automatic fire sprinkler system is one of the most effective methods of controlling or suppressing a fire. Sprinkler systems are made up of a network of pipes in the walls and ceilings that have sprinkler heads providing protection to hallways, rooms, stairways and other areas of a building. In most systems, the pipes are always filled with water, under pressure and the system is ready to do its job of putting out a fire quickly! Sometimes sprinklers are concealed behind small metal plates in the walls and ceiling. Even though you can’t see the sprinkler head, they are still there and able to spray water on a fire.

**How do sprinklers work?**
Sprinklers are generally located at the ceiling level of a building. They are equipped with a fusible link that melts when the heat given off by a fire heats the sprinkler. When the sprinkler opens, water flows out in a spray pattern. The sprinkler system is designed to flow a specific amount of water per square foot based on the type of hazard that it is protecting.

**How many sprinklers activate in a fire?**
Despite what many people think, generally only one or two sprinklers open up and flow water during a fire—all of them do not go off at once!

**How much water flows out of a sprinkler head?**
A single sprinkler head will generally flow about 3 gallons per minute. This is not very much at all when compared to a fire hose, which will flow 150 gallons a minute or more!

**How much water damage will a sprinkler head cause?**
Since the amount of water coming out of a sprinkler head is significantly less than that in a fire hose, the water damage will be considerably less. After a fire is put out by a sprinkler head, there are often comments about “all of the water damage that the sprinkler caused.” What people often don’t realize is how much fire AND water damage there would be if the sprinkler head had not activated and controlled the fire!

**How effective are sprinklers?**
According to the NFPA, sprinklers typically reduce your chances of dying by one-half to two-thirds in any kind of property where they are used. NFPA reports that, in 1997 (the latest year that statistics are available), unfortunately sprinklers were present in only 28% of all dormitory fires.

**Can sprinklers be damaged?**
While sprinklers are very rugged devices, they should not be tampered with, misused or vandalized. For example, you should not hang a coat hanger from a sprinkler head because the hanger may accidentally strike the fusible link element and cause the sprinkler head to open. In addition, if a sprinkler head is covered with clothing, this may reduce the heat getting to the sprinkler and delay its opening.

**My building is fireproof. Why do I need sprinklers?**
Often, it is not the building that burns in fatal fires, but the contents—furniture, clothing and other furnishings. A sprinkler system will stop the fire in its tracks before it has time to spread very far.

**We have smoke detectors in our building. Do we need sprinklers too?**
Smoke detectors provide an excellent method of detecting a fire early and warning everyone to get out. However, the fire still has to be put out, and quickly, before it can spread and put a lot of other people in danger. That is the job for sprinklers, which can react in seconds. It may take the fire department up to ten minutes, or more, until they are able to put water onto the fire.
Safe Leader and Floor Monitor Program

This program has been developed to facilitate the safe evacuation of campus buildings by encouraging and increasing awareness. It is staffed by trained university employees who work in buildings across the campus. They serve as a resource to provide safety and security information to other staff and students, especially during emergency situations.

For more information about the Safe Leader and Floor Monitor program contact Angela Dees at 972-883-2831 or email emergencymanagement@utdallas.edu.

CAMPUS EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

The Campus Emergency Response Team is a trained group of faculty, staff, and student volunteers who have pledged to assist UT Dallas in the event of a disaster or crisis.

The CERT program is sponsored by the Environmental Health and Safety Office of Emergency Management.

CERT does not self-deploy, instead the Office of Emergency Management will activate the team if needed. The types of incidents CERT will participate in is severe weather, exercises, special events and community outreach.

For more information about CERT call 972-883-2831 or email cert@utdallas.edu.

CERT had 8 new graduates join their program. In order to graduate, they completed a 4 hour drill. From left to right: (front row) Angela Dees, Program Coordinator, Alishah Vidhani, Brittany Smith, Thu Nguyen, Paridhi Seth, Jing Zhao, Debra Boss (back row) Marietta Schell, Zain Mohammad.
Business Continuity Planning

The goal of Business Continuity Planning is to continue our mission of teaching, research and public service through any disaster or disruption and to reduce the consequence of any disruptive event to a manageable level.

The Office of Business Services (OBS) completed several projects during the month of April including relocating the UT Dallas Police headquarters. During the renovation and relocation process, continuity of business for one of UT Dallas’s critical departments became a top priority. The renovation, relocation and remediation process tested the critical components of their business continuity plan, which are: space, infrastructure, people, and equipment.

Business Continuity Plans

Training: During the training phase, OBS trains university units on the importance of developing a business continuity plan and provides a planning tool with a step by step process.

Development: After the comprehensive training, OBS continues to provide guidance and support until the plan is fully developed (e.g. identifying critical functions, backup/recovery solutions, key personnel, and priority courses).

Annual Reviews: OBS has developed more than 97 business continuity plans for

Continued on Page 6....

LAB SAFETY TIPS:

Emergency Eye Washes Not Flushed Weekly: Eye washes must be flushed weekly by the user. This will ensure that the water is clean, should emergency use become necessary. Facilities and EHS conduct regular inspections to maintain the equipment and ensure that the equipment will work in the event of an emergency.

Corrosives Storage Area Signage Not Posted: By definition a corrosive is any solid, liquid, or gas which causes visible destruction or irreversible damage alterations in human skin tissue or materials at the site of contact. It is important to use care when selecting materials that contact corrosive chemicals so that the equipment, including storage containers, will not be damaged by the chemicals. Storage areas where corrosive materials are stored must be labeled.
UT Dallas (administrative, academic and research departments). Every year, OBS performs an annual review for each active plan. We achieve this by conducting internal reviews, meeting with stakeholders and reviewing critical functions, information technology, key resources and action items. Each plan complies with applicable internal university policy and state regulations and supports recommendations provided in the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Continuity Guidance Circular 1 (CGC-1) and Continuity Guidance Circular 2 (CGC-2).

OBS continues to provide a framework to minimize the potential impact and allow for the rapid recovery from an incident that disrupts operations.

Records Retention & Facilities Inventory

FY 2015 Quarter 1 & 2 Accomplishments

Destroyed records that had reached their retention period. Over 450 boxes (12,000 lbs. of paper) were destroyed resulting in environmental savings of: 100 Trees, 40,000 gallons of water, 352 lbs. of air pollution and conserved 20 cubic yards of landfill.

Facilities Inventory file was certified with the Coordinating Board. Our Space Usage Efficiency (SUE) scores are 100 for both classrooms and class labs. These scores justify the need for an increase in our facilities to accommodate projected student enrollment.

FY 2015 Quarter 1 & 2 Metrics

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) has finalized two reports based on the Fall 2014 facilities inventory submitted 11/20/2015.

The Fall 2014 Space Usage Efficiency (SUE) score is 100 for both classrooms and labs. This not only documents our efficiencies in utilizing our available classrooms and class labs but also our need for additional facilities.

The THECB Space Projection Models provide an assessment of space needs at Texas’ public universities, technical colleges, the Lamar State Colleges, and public health-related institutions. The models respond to an institution’s evolving characteristics that drive its need for space, such as semester credit hours, programs, level of instruction, faculty, and E&G and research expenditures. The model predicts need in the areas of teaching, office, library, research, and support space. The following chart documents our need for more space.

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**Indoor Warning System Test**

On June 3rd, the Office of Emergency Management and Police Department will test the Indoor Warning System campus-wide. The Indoor Warning System is used to notify building occupants of an impending hazard, such as severe weather or a fire. By testing the Indoor Warning System quarterly, it will ensure the system is working properly; if any issues arise they will be fixed before a real life activation. Building Liaisons and Safe Leaders campus-wide will notify our office if there are any issues with any of the devices.

Issues they will be looking for:
- The alert is too low and is not understandable
- The strobe (light on the device) is not flashing
- The device is not functioning at all

**What to Do: Tornados**

**TORNADO FACTS:**
- Peak tornado season in the South is March through May.
- Tornadoes may strike quickly, with little or no warning. Winds may also die down then pick up again.
- Tornadoes may appear nearly transparent until dust and debris are picked up or a cloud forms in the funnel creating a rain-wrapped tornado.
- Look for the following danger signs: Dark green-ish sky, hail, low-lying clouds, or loud roar.
- A tornado watch is issued when conditions are right for a tornado; a tornado warning is issued when a tornado has been spotted or indicated by radar and is imminent.
- Tornados are measured on the Fujita Scale by six categories as shown below.

**WHAT TO DO:**
- Be prepared to take shelter immediately when storms are approaching.
- When a tornado is sighted, the most important rule is to get low and stay low.
- Never stay in a vehicle or chase the storm.
- If you’re outside and no shelter is available, take cover on low, protected ground, such as a ditch.
- In a house, dorm or apartment, immediately take cover at the lowest floor of the structure in a small room away from windows, and crouch, covering your head.
- In a building: Go directly to an enclosed, windowless area on the lowest floor in the center of the building away from glass, and crouch, covering your head.
- Be aware, not scared! Know the severe weather shelter areas on campus.