



## Fire Prevention Administrative Procedure 8.64

8.0 Safe Schools

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**Board Governance Policy Cross Reference:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 17

**Legal Reference:** E10-468R, Section 36, Manitoba Fire Code

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**Date Adopted:** August 1976

**Date Amended:** November 2006, June 2008, September 2010, January 2016, May 2018, December 2018, June 2019, September 2024, **August 2025**

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All staff must be aware of and follow all fire prevention rules.

### Fire Extinguishers

1. All members of the teaching staff and custodial staff must be familiar with the exact location of fire alarm stations and fire extinguishers.
2. Fire extinguishers are to be inspected monthly by the Head Custodian; each tag is to be dated and signed. This inspection is to be documented on **6.40B Buildings and Grounds: Monthly Report**. This report needs to be accessible to the Principal, Buildings Supervisor and Safety Officer.

### Exits and Passageways

1. All stairways, landings and passageways must be kept free of anything that would block or narrow the exits.
2. All doorways of classrooms must be kept entirely clear. There must be a clear space at each door and all furniture that has the potential to interfere with rapid movement to any exit must be relocated.
3. The use of fire door wedges or kick down stoppers are not permitted on any fire exit door; doors shall be held open by magnetic devices that release if the fire alarm is activated.
4. Fire exit doors must be kept clear of ice, snow and other obstructions.

### Gymnasiums and General- Purpose Rooms

1. All stairways, landings and passageways must be kept free of anything that would block or narrow the exits. This applies to school events and public events.
2. Movable chairs must not be used to increase the seating capacity of auditoriums beyond that approved by the Fire Department.

3. All scenery, drapes, decorations and other materials used in places of assembly shall be maintained in flame-proof condition, in accordance with provincial fire codes.

#### Storage and General Housekeeping:

1. Doors of shops, science rooms and any other rooms containing supplies or equipment likely to present a hazard, must be locked when these rooms are not in use. Students must not be permitted access to such rooms unless an adult is onsite and able to supervise.
2. Crawl spaces must not be used for storage of any kind.
3. Boiler Rooms must be kept free of all materials at all times.
4. A clear 1-meter wide passageway to all electrical/mechanical equipment must be maintained at all times.
5. Excess storage of material stacked on top of shelving units is not permitted. There must be a 14" clearance to ceiling; an 18" clearance is required if near a sprinkler head.
6. Combustible waste materials in buildings shall not be permitted to accumulate in quantities or locations that will constitute an undue fire hazard.
7. Only waste receptacles made of noncombustible materials shall be used.
8. Exterior waste receptacles must be kept as far as reasonably practicable from all buildings.
9. Extension cords must not be used as permanent wiring.
10. Teachers and other staff members need to consider location of existing power supply outlets when planning furniture layout, etc.
11. Power bars will be permitted but only using the approved type (#14-gauge, 120 volt, 15 amp) and with Principal approval. Multi – adaptor plugs are not permitted.
12. Users need to ensure all cords are in good working condition and safely bundled.
13. Lamps must be plugged directly into an outlet and bulb wattage must follow manufacturer's recommendation.
14. Storage rooms must be equipped with a heat sensor and have appropriate fire rating (ex. cinderblock, drywall)

## Small Appliances

1. Small appliances are to be used in accordance with manufacturer's recommended safety instructions.
2. All small appliances are to be plugged directly into a wall outlet when in use, and unplugged, when not in use. Where this is not practical (ex. outlet is very difficult to access), the Principal may allow appliance to stay plugged in.
3. *This does not apply to portable heaters.* They **MUST** be unplugged at end of each day, regardless of outlet location.
4. Extension cords are not to be used to operate small appliances.
5. Coffee makers, electric kettles, hot plates and popcorn makers must only be used in school areas that have no student access (eg. staff room, office).  
These items are allowed in Home Economics classes, Life Skills classes, Canteens and the like, with adult supervision.
6. Microwave ovens must only be used with adult supervision. This applies to Home Economics classes, Life Skills classes, Canteens and the like.

## Flammable & Combustible Materials

1. Any combustible materials attached to classroom walls shall not exceed 20% of the wall surface (art work, teaching charts, etc.).
2. Any combustible materials attached to walls in hallways shall not exceed 5% of the wall surface. All corners must be attached to a bulletin board.
3. No items are to be hung from the ceiling. This includes mobiles, etc.
4. Bulletin boards may be covered with background paper and 1 additional layer of paper. Bulletin boards must not be covered with plastic, fabric, multiple layers of paper, etc.
5. Paper items must be secured flat to the board. Three-dimensional bulletin board displays are not permitted.
6. Only water-based paints are to be used in schools. This includes walls, shelving units, ceiling tile art, murals, etc. Any other paints need to be approved by ESD Buildings Supervisor.
7. Classroom doors must not be covered with decorative, flammable or combustible materials.
8. All paper must be kept at least ten (10) feet away from all exterior entrance and exit doors.

9. Combustible material must not be stored under or near gas meters, electrical meters or any other electrical apparatus.
10. When purchasing or bringing in carpets, draperies, furniture, etc. into schools, combustibility of fabrics must be considered, and highly combustible items kept to a minimum. Consult ESD Safety Officer as needed.
11. All flammable liquids must be kept in approved fire-proof metal containers.
12. Matches must not be stored in schools. In science rooms where it is necessary to ignite gases, it is advisable to use friction lighters instead of matches.
13. Gas mains to laboratories must be shut off when not in use.
14. All members of the custodial staff must be familiar with the procedure to be followed when it is necessary to turn off gas valves outside the building.
15. Gasoline must be kept in a U.L.C. approved metal safety can with a spring - loaded cap to take care of expansion. Plastic storage cans are not acceptable for gasoline storage or transfer in a school.
16. Portable heaters pose a high safety risk and must not be used unless they are pre-approved by Principal and/or Head Custodian to ensure they meet CSA standards.
17. *If heater is approved*, it must be kept a minimum of one (1) meter away from all combustibles. Employee must unplug heater at end of each day and heater must always be plugged directly into an outlet (**no** extension cords).
18. Outside gas valves are to be accessed by maintenance and/or custodial staff using appropriate tools only.
19. Fire inspections are to be conducted every three years in all schools, by the local Fire Chief. Schools with day care facilities will be inspected yearly.

#### Holiday Lighting and Decorations/Décor Lighting

1. Holiday trees must be artificial C.S.A. approved; combustible trees are not permitted.
2. All holiday and/or décor lighting must be LED C.S.A. approved lights.
3. All holiday and/or décor lighting must not be surface mounted on or around combustible materials like bulletin boards.
4. Holiday and/or décor lights must not be left on outside of school hours; teachers are responsible for any lights used in their classrooms.

5. Decorations must not be placed near or on top of heating units.
6. Decorations are not to hang from ceilings, light fixtures, doorways, etc. as suspended materials pose a high safety risk.
7. Extension cords are not to be used as permanent wiring.

#### Concerts and Special Events:

1. Schools need to know and follow their maximum occupancy loads (consult ESD Safety Officer)
2. Clear exit paths need to be established:
  - Aisle widths must be at least forty-four (44) inches wide (unless occupant load is less than sixty (60)).
  - Maximum of sixteen (16) seats per row between aisles
  - Minimum of sixteen (16) inches between rows.
3. When occupancy exceeds two-hundred (200) persons, non-fixed seating shall be fastened together in units of no fewer than eight (8) seats.
4. Front of building must have a designated open area for emergency vehicles.
5. Prior to any concert/special event, Principal/Supervisor needs to alert all present to the nearest emergency exit locations.