



Report to the
79th Texas Legislature

**State University Fire Safety
Inspection Project**
Ninth Report

*State Fire Marshal's Office
Texas Department of Insurance*

February 2005

Executive Summary

The State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) is pleased to present the Ninth Report on the progress of the State University Fire Safety Project, also known as *Graduate Alive!* This report reflects the progress being made related to state university housing inspections and additional initiatives of the State Fire Marshal's Office and the universities.

Significant accomplishments reflected in this report include:

- Twenty-nine campuses have been fully inspected, as well as adjunct facilities providing housing.
- All occupied high-rise dormitories are now retrofitted with automatic fire sprinkler systems. Other corrections required by the initial high-rise dormitory fire safety inspection reports are completed.
- All state university campuses are completing renovations or have acceptable timelines in place to upgrade all other residential buildings.
- All universities are making purposeful progress in correcting the deficiencies noted in the reports for all inspected buildings.
- Since the start of these fire safety inspection projects in 1998, most universities have made progress institutionalizing fire safety. Recognition of fire safety, as an integral part of the university culture, is key to a fire-safe campus environment.
- The SFMO conducted an investigation and inspection of the Texas A&M University (College Station) fatal apartment explosion/fire. This incident was caused by leaking natural gas pipelines. The SFMO issued a directive for all state universities and agencies to install and maintain natural gas systems in accordance with state and federal regulations and with industry standards.

Staff assigned to the *Graduate Alive!* inspection program continue to work with the universities to correct outstanding problems in residential buildings and inspecting full campuses.

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**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE
STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE
AUSTIN, TEXAS**

GRADUATE ALIVE!

**NINTH REPORT ON STATE UNIVERSITY FIRE SAFETY PROJECTS
FEBRUARY 2005**

**TO THE
SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE
AND
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

*As required by the State Appropriations Act for 2004/2005, Article III, Section 34 Fire Safety
Issues at University Facilities*

October 2003 thru September 2004

Graduate Alive! Project Overview

The State Fire Marshal's Office University inspection program started in 1998. The *Graduate Alive!* program is a multi-tiered process. The components of the process are as follows:

- Each inspection requires an initial survey of the entire campus and subsequent communications with the university to establish timelines for corrections and to establish the methods of correction.
- Each building is reinspected at various stages of correction and after completion of corrections to verify repairs.
- On-going communication between the universities and the State Fire Marshal's Office is essential to ensure cost effective, prompt compliance.
- The inspection program also requires ongoing review of campus fire safety efforts to maintain the level of fire safety achieved; to protect the lives of students, staff, and visitors to the universities; and to preserve the state's investment.

Graduate Alive! is composed of three primary phases and several separate initiatives.

Phase I objectives targeted fire-safety problems in high-rise residential facilities. These structures had the greatest risk for disaster due to more limited escape

capacity for the residents. This phase placed special emphasis on campuses with existing unresolved complaints, which stemmed from students and parents. This phase was completed in 2002.

Phase II included inspections of all other on-campus residential facilities. Many of these non high-rise buildings were built between 1930 and 1960. The universities have upgraded many of the buildings with sprinkler systems, new fire detection and alarm systems and made structural upgrades to the buildings in compliance with the current code requirements.

Phase III includes continued inspection of all other university buildings and monitoring of fire safety project progress in residential buildings. The State Fire Marshal's Inspectors will continue inspecting every building owned by the state on university campuses and at auxiliary locations. The State Fire Marshal's Office estimates that more than 5,000 buildings will require inspections.

The State Fire Marshal's Office acknowledges the budgetary issues facing the state and the universities. The State Fire Marshal's Office is working with the universities to prioritize the buildings according to use and severity of fire safety hazards found. Through close and constant communication with the universities' administrators, the State Fire Marshal's Office will endeavor to address the most egregious problems first and establish reasonable timelines for all corrections. The first priority of the State Fire Marshal's Office, the coordinating board and the legislature is to provide fire-safe dormitories and other campus residential buildings. The State Fire Marshal Inspectors continue to monitor residential fire code compliance through spot inspections of residential buildings when the inspectors are on campus and maintain a schedule of inspection of each residential building every 18 months.

Graduate Alive! underscores the commitment of the State Fire Marshal's Office and the universities, and sets the stage for a long-term, comprehensive, cooperative fire safety endeavor. Most universities are beginning to have an institutional commitment to fire safety. These periodic reports are designed to update state leadership on the efforts of the State Fire Marshal's Office and the substantial efforts being made by state and community public institutions of higher education to ensure a fire-safe future.

Graduate Alive! Initiatives

In addition to the three phases of the main inspection project, the *Graduate Alive!* program includes initiatives directed at the total University fire-safety problem.

Off-Campus Inspection Verification Program: Universities are urged to participate in the off-campus inspection verification program, which is directed at the fraternity and sorority community. The program requires that organizations obtain a fire safety inspection from the fire official with jurisdiction and report that fire inspection to the State Fire Marshal's Office or university. The State Fire

Marshal's Office will report to the respective university on the status of the fire safety inspections. The university is, in turn, urged to restrict recognition of any off-campus affiliated organization that does not have a current fire safety inspection. The University of Texas at Austin and Texas Tech University are participating in the program.

Fire Safety Education Outreach Program: To more effectively reach the unregulated off-campus community, the State Fire Marshal's Office has encouraged the universities to establish fire-safety educational outreach programs through their appropriate offices to provide sound fire-safety information to off-campus students. The University of Texas System has assisted in a national effort to sponsor a Web site, entitled *Campus Watch*, through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which provides timely fire safety educational materials targeted at the off-campus audience. The State Fire Marshal is urging each state university campus to take advantage of these resources to extend the message of fire safety to the off-campus community. The University of Texas at Arlington and the University of Texas at Austin are leading in this program. UT-Arlington is incorporating its fall residential fire drill program into a campus event that emphasizes fire safety in residential buildings and the safe evacuation of buildings using theatrical smoke generation to obscure corridors and exits. The University of Texas at Austin has developed a work group within the Dean of Students Office to examine and incorporate fire safety messages and activities in all outreach programs. These programs include orientation of students moving from dormitories to off campus apartments for fire safe apartment living and fire safety habits while seeking entertainment in the Austin night club scene. The Dean's Office is seeking ways to incorporate fire safety into all programs supervised by the Dean's Office.

Off-Campus Retreat and Seminar Housing Program: A letter was sent to every university president and system chancellor in September 2002 urging that the universities incorporate in contract documents with off-campus providers of retreat and seminar housing notice that the facility meets the appropriate fire-safety standard and has been inspected by the fire official with jurisdiction for the facility. Texas A&M University and the University of Texas at Austin are participating and require off campus events to document fire safety inspections.

Campus Housing of Non-Traditional Students: Universities have addressed fire safety needs for short term leasing for seminars, summer camps, and retreats.

University Fire Safety Program Continuation and Maintenance: Preventive maintenance programs, educational initiatives, and enforcement of fire-safety policies must remain a high priority in order to preserve the safe environment being created. Universities must be willing to sanction those individuals and groups that violate campus fire-safety policies or vandalize fire protection systems. Administrations must pay attention to renovation and building change-of-use plans to ensure that fire-safety gains are not lost. Finally, universities must be proactive in their vigilance of campus fire-safety matters.

Fire Safety Program Integration

Some university administrations have recognized the importance of an active fire prevention and fire safety program and have developed policies that address these issues in their safety departments. These programs provide support for the decisions of the safety professionals on campus and provide an integrated environment that ensures proper planning, oversight, inspection, and enforcement. Students, faculty, staff and visitors enjoy greater fire safety when the importance of prevention is integrated within the various programs, not simply in reaction to a fire event or external change agents.

Universities that have not integrated fire safety and prevention programs continue to have problems managing these efforts on their campuses. These universities are more likely to incorrectly set priorities, miss corrective action deadlines, repeat mistakes and, ultimately spend more taxpayer dollars than necessary due to ineffective planning.

Most university fire safety departments are not able to conduct an acceptable level of fire safety inspections due to other demands, such as staffing special events, program and construction reviews, etc. An effective fire safety program demands frequent inspection of buildings to observe changes in use and building service conditions. The University of Texas at Arlington helped alleviate the problem on its campus by allocating funds from the housing budget to provide a fire safety inspector assigned to the housing department. Other universities with substantial residential units could benefit from similar strategies.

Several universities have expressed frustration for the lack of statutory authority that permits filing of criminal charges for disabling or vandalizing fire detection or alarm devices. This may be a violation of a locally adopted fire code but these codes do not apply on state-owned university campuses or other facilities not under the jurisdiction of a local fire code. Consideration should be given to the creation of an offense, relating to disabling or vandalizing a fire detection or alarm device, in the Texas Penal Code.

Graduate Alive! Inspection Schedule

Full campus fire safety inspections completed in FY04

- Stephen F. Austin State University - Nacogdoches
- Texas Southern University - Houston

University inspections that have been scheduled for FY05

- Sam Houston State University - Huntsville: Scheduled for 10-25-04

- Lamar University - Beaumont: To be conducted spring 2005
- Lamar State College - Orange: To be conducted spring 2005
- Lamar State College - Port Arthur: To be conducted spring 2005
- Lamar Institute of Technology - Beaumont: To be conducted spring 2005
- All University Housing - To be reinspected beginning in FY05 as a part of a cyclical, 18 month schedule.

Universities with full campus inspections not yet scheduled

- University of Texas at Austin
- University of Texas at San Antonio
- University of Texas at Arlington
- University of Texas at Tyler
- Texas State Technical College - Sweetwater
- Texas State Technical College - Waco
- University of Houston Downtown - Houston
- University of Texas Health Science Center - Houston
- University of Texas Health Science Center - San Antonio
- University of Texas Health Science Center - Tyler
- University of Texas Medical Branch - Galveston
- University of Texas Southwest Medical Center - Dallas
- Texas A&M University Health Science Center - Temple
- University of North Texas Health Science Center - Fort Worth
- Texas Tech University Health Science Center - Lubbock

Graduate Alive! Campus Inspection Update

Stephen F. Austin State University - Nacogdoches: The University submitted a detailed response with acceptable timelines for correcting noted violations. Many items of minimal expense and manpower have already been corrected. All of the violations listed in the fire safety reinspection report regarding housing have been corrected.

University of Houston - Houston: As of Sept. 20, 2004, the University indicated that they have corrected a number of deficiencies that were identified in the fire safety inspection report and that funds have been earmarked to correct violations and implement recommended remedies. A response will be provided once the process has been completed.

University of Houston - Clear Lake: The University has readdressed the use of candles with the residents and has changed their lease agreement to better inform residents of the prohibition of the candles. All non-functioning smoke detectors have been repaired.

Lamar University - Beaumont: The University has corrected the magnetic locking devices in the Cardinal Village Housing means of egress and has

imposed monetary penalties for possession of prohibited devices such as candles and unapproved cooking devices.

Sam Houston State University - Huntsville: The University Safety Department has undergone personnel changes and computer files and records were lost and/or misplaced, which resulted in uncertainties involving the University's progress. A campus-wide inspection was conducted in October 2004. During the inspection, a construction addition was noted adding a new press box to the football stadium. The new area did not comply with minimum exit requirements. Response from the facilities division of the University indicated that they were aware of the deficiencies but that the allotted budget would not cover the costs of compliance so the decision was made to build the press box without minimally required exits.

The investigation of the May 2004 science lab fire, as referenced previously, revealed numerous violations of the Life Safety Code including: laboratory doors blocked open, which will allow heat and smoke from a fire to enter the exit corridor; unapproved storage of chemicals in the open; storage of chemicals in fume hoods; fume hoods in the open position; fume hoods without air flow devices, air flow alarms or testing of the hoods; hasp locking device on room 303; fire alarm system manual pull boxes not readily visible; use of combustible construction materials that do not meet code; unapproved means of egress; a lack of laboratory policies concerning safe storage, handling, and use of chemicals. These violations were identified by University personnel through their inspection program; however, the faculty failed to implement corrective actions. Administrative support and faculty staff accountability is not established at this campus.

Texas Southern University - Houston: Inspection report delivered to the University, response pending.

Texas Woman's University Institute of Health Sciences - Houston: The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has approved a property swap to take place in April 2007. The University is adhering to approved interim measures that include limiting occupancy of the high rise structure to non-residential occupants and using only the lower floors for business occupancies.

Texas Tech University - Lubbock: The University was granted an additional 30 days from July 26, 2004, to submit their reply to the campus-wide inspection. As of this update, the SFMO has not received the reply. The University housing update is as follows: life safety upgrades have been completed on Hulen Clement Resident Hall. The life safety upgrades to Wall Gates is scheduled for summer 2005.

Texas Tech University - Junction: All noted violations have been corrected.

Midwestern State University - Wichita Falls: Numerous buildings are being renovated at this time. Killingsworth Hall renovation has been completed. The

University has corrected a number of violations; however they have not provided timelines for the remaining violations to be completed.

Sul Ross State University - Alpine: The University is inspecting residential housing to ensure all safety procedures are in place. The University will build new housing beginning in mid-December 2004 to replace an old apartment building. The University will continue to upgrade its fire safety on the campus as funds are available to replace outdated fire alarm systems.

Amarillo College: The University was contacted; however, no information has been received as of this update.

Texas State Technical College - Sweetwater: All noted violations have been corrected and the file is closed.

Texas State Technical College - Waco: No fire safety reinspections have been conducted since last update.

Texas State Technical College - Harlingen: All noted violations have been corrected, this file is closed.

Texas Woman's University - Denton: According to the University, all violations listed in the fire safety inspection report have been corrected. A fire safety reinspection will be conducted in the near future to verify completion.

University of North Texas - Denton: The University is adhering to the accepted timetables for corrections to be completed. Communications with the University have improved. The University administration, facilities staff and safety organization have not communicated well internally and initiatives are in place to establish authority and responsibilities for fire safety inspection review and enforcement.

Texas A&M - Galveston: A fire safety reinspection was conducted on April 15, 2004. All listed violations were corrected; this file has been closed.

Texas A&M - Corpus Christi: The University is maintaining agreed-upon timetables for corrections to be completed. Most of the remaining violations have been corrected or purchase orders have been issued to correct the remaining violations.

Texas A&M University - Texarkana: All previously noted violations were corrected, this file is closed.

Prairie View A&M: The University has corrected a majority of the violations and is scheduled to have the remaining items corrected by the end of 2004. The University apartments are being monitored and regular inspections are being conducted by University campus personnel.

Tarleton State University: The University is maintaining agreed-upon timetables. A new fire alarm and automatic fire sprinkler system has been installed in Wisdom Gym. Numerous violations have been corrected and other corrections are in progress.

Texas A&M - College Station: The University is maintaining agreed-upon timetables for violations to be corrected. Major project contracts have been negotiated to install sprinklers in two high-rise academic buildings. Other projects are being prioritized and budgeting secured.

Texas A&M - Commerce: The University is maintaining the agreed-upon timetables for corrections to be completed. The University has installed new, addressable fire alarm systems in housing units to replace the battery-powered smoke detectors and 18 buildings are now equipped with automatic fire sprinkler systems. The University is having unannounced fire drills and has implemented a monetary fine structure for violation of policies and procedures.

West Texas A&M - Canyon: The University is meeting stated timetables for correction of violations. The University has installed new, addressable fire alarm systems and fire doors in two residential dormitories.

University of Texas System: During the spring of 2004, the UT System Administration's Office of Risk Management coordinated four fire safety seminars for its 15 institutions. Two, one-day seminars were provided to cover the changes from the 2000 edition of the Life Safety Code to the 2003 Life Safety Code and a two-day seminar was held for construction plan reviews. A total of 75 professionals attended the seminars.

During the spring of 2004, the Office of Risk Management entered into a contractual agreement with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to facilitate NFPA Plan Examiner Certification for fire safety professionals across the UT System. The UT System is the first in the United States to enter into such an agreement with NFPA. A total of 34 professionals were accepted by NFPA as applicants into the program. The agreement includes provisions for preparing applicants for a written examination during a four-day preparatory course, a four-hour written examination, and a practicum phase.

University of Texas Pan American - Edinburg: The University has corrected all noted violations

University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio: The University is working on phase I renovation of the Medical School Building, which includes the installation of the primary infrastructure of an automatic fire sprinkler system; this project was to be complete by the end of 2004. No timetable has been received for the completion date of the full sprinkler system. A new fire alarm system is planned for the Dental School Building and should be complete in 2006. The University has also contracted an outside firm to formulate a plan to upgrade existing buildings as funding permits.

The University of Texas at El Paso: The University of Texas at El Paso has completed all items in the initial full-campus fire safety report with a few exceptions. The remaining uncorrected violations include the installation of a fire sprinkler system, adding panic and latching hardware to several doors, adding emergency lighting, installing additional audio/visual devices in the arena area, a system to override special event sound and communication equipment, installing landings on exterior doors, enclosing a stairwell, and removal of a storage room under a stairwell. Six of the 12 violations will be corrected by the beginning of the 2006 fiscal year. UTEP plans to have all noted violations corrected within the three to five years for total completion.

University of Texas - Permian Basin: The University is meeting established timelines. The new apartment units under construction will have a fully addressable fire alarm system and full automatic fire sprinkler systems.

University of Texas at Arlington: The violations listed in the last inspection report are scheduled for correction by the first of the year. This University has added a residential housing occupancy Inspector who is dedicated to inspecting on-campus housing and the privatized housing on state property. This Inspector is paid out of the housing and food budget, but is under the direction of the Safety Office.

University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston: The University either corrected the violations or has a strategic improvement planning process to provide a plan of action for the remaining violations to be corrected. The University is now on a schedule for inspecting its fire alarm systems and sprinkler systems as required. All maintenance and fire alarm deficiencies are now under contract with a licensed company. Fire drills are being conducted every six months in the residential housing units. Training has been provided for 325 Area Safety Liaisons to act as fire wardens to communicate any fire safety concerns to the Environmental Health and Safety Department.

University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College: The only remaining uncorrected violation involves the Jacob Brown Memorial Center. The building will be retrofitted with an automatic fire sprinkler system as soon as possible, when the funds are budgeted. The motel acquired to house students will not be occupied until the building meets current building and fire codes.

The University of Texas at Austin: Has completed 94 percent of the retrofit of automatic sprinkler systems in housing. Simkins and Whitis Court Residence Halls are scheduled for sprinkler completion in 2006. More than \$19 million has been spent improving residential fire safety on the campus with an additional \$3 million slated. In addition, 28 academic and special use buildings on campus have received major upgrades in fire safety improvements that included automatic sprinkler systems, upgraded detection and alarm systems, and structural improvements. Major fire protection water distribution upgrades were designed and partially completed for the north side of the campus.

The University of Texas McDonald Observatory - Ft. Davis: The University requested that the State Fire Marshal's Office perform a study of the fire protection needs for the University's McDonald Observatory Complex. The study also included Jeff Davis County and the Ft. Davis Fire Department, as the three are dependent on each other for fire protection. The University accepted the recommendations of the study and has corrective strategies in place to improve the overall fire safety of the facility. In co-operation with the Texas Forest Service, a demonstration project of wildland interface fire protection was arranged. The Wildland-Urban Interface program was completed on schedule. This includes the installation of a secondary road from Mt. Locke, fire breaks, undercover has been removed 50-75 feet from the main road, undercover has been moved 30 feet from the residential areas, tractors and equipment has been purchased to maintain the fire breaks, trees have been trimmed in and around the residences, signs have been installed to warn residents of the fire danger each day, new hoses have been installed in the yard cabinets, the University has requested a grant through the Texas Forest Service for a Type 3 fire truck, and several personnel have received training from the Texas A&M fire school. Other improvements are forthcoming and co-operation between the University, County and Fire Department is being pursued.

University of Texas at Dallas: The University was contacted on Sept. 20, 2004, and indicated that they are adhering to agreed-upon timelines. Campus Inspectors are conducting inspections on the campus. Changes in the inspection program were discussed and recommendations were provided the University. The University agreed to the recommendations.

Mary Hardin-Baylor - Belton: The University has made good progress in correcting the violations listed in the fire safety inspection report. The violations remaining will have to comply with the International Building and Fire Code adopted by the City of Belton, as this is a private university inside the Belton city limits. The Belton Fire Marshal's Office has taken this project over and the file has been closed; no further reinspections will be conducted by this office.

South Plains College - Levelland: The University is maintaining their agreed-upon timelines for the violations to be corrected.

Amarillo College: The University continues its schedule of repair of single-family residential complex.

Commonly Observed Fire Safety Violations

The following list identifies the most common types of fire safety violations observed at both state and private universities during the initial, full-campus phase inspections. These fire safety violations provide an awareness of the pervasive nature of the fire safety problems on the university campuses.

- Fire alarm and fire sprinkler systems in the trouble mode or in the alarm mode indicating impaired systems or ones that have not been inspected or serviced by qualified personnel.
- Stairwell doors lacking latching hardware or hardware inoperative.
- Inoperative or missing automatic door closers.
- Corridor fire doors are found propped in the open position throughout every structure that has been inspected.
- Dead-end corridors in buildings, which exceed permissible lengths, have been found in all occupancies inspected.
- Panic hardware instead of fire exit hardware used on fire doors. Panic hardware has a device that allows the latching mechanism to be retracted, allowing the door to free swing, and is not acceptable on fire doors.
- Lack of emergency lighting and/or exit signs in all types of occupancies.
- Inoperative emergency lighting units and/or exit signs in all types of occupancies.
- Use of extension cords as permanent wiring in all occupancies. Interconnecting or daisy-chaining power strips in computer labs, offices, and residential housing.
- Excessive combustible material in general offices.
- Storage in mechanical equipment rooms and in stairwells.
- Improper storage of flammable liquids, usually in laboratories, maintenance areas, and art studios.
- Hood sashes designed to prevent chemical fumes and vapors from contaminating laboratories were found in the open position in laboratories throughout both state and private university campuses.
- Fume hoods that are not equipped with airflow measuring devices to assure positive air flow to remove fumes and vapors.
- Refrigerators used to store flammable liquids that are not explosion proof.
- Use of double cylinder dead bolt locks that require the use of a key to open on corridor and exit doors in all types of occupancies.
- Exit corridors and stairwells with hollow core or non-fire rated doors instead of doors that will resist the passage of fire for a predetermined amount of time.

- Exit corridors and exit passageways obstructed by furniture, office machines, etc. in all types of occupancies.
- Several buildings have been found with only one means of escape, one exit door. This is also found in multi-level buildings. The first floor may have adequate exits but the upper floors are lacking exit ways.
- Fixed fire extinguishing systems in kitchens that are red tagged, meaning they will not work as designed; yellow tagged, meaning they do not meet the current NFPA requirements; and not tagged. Fixed fire extinguishing systems should be inspected and serviced periodically to ensure proper operation.

Recent University Fire Incidents

During this reporting period, 19 state university fires were reported to this office.

Thirteen of the fires occurred in residential buildings, including dormitories, apartments, and single family residences. Two of the fires were in academic buildings and two were in support buildings. One was located in a vehicle in a parking structure that caused damage to the structure. One was a university vehicle being used to haul hazardous waste.

Two fatalities and two serious injuries resulted from an explosion and fire at Texas A&M University in an apartment unit.

University of North Texas - Denton

1. January 28, 2004, at approximately 7:15 AM, a University of North Texas van loaded with hazardous waste caught fire in a residential neighborhood, causing minor burns to the driver and requiring the University to clean up and dispose of the environmental related waste, including fire debris, the van, fire suppression run-off water, etc.
2. March 6, 2004, at approximately 1:32 AM, a fire in Clark Hall Dormitory caused approximately \$600,000 in damage including cleanup costs. The fire occurred when an electrical short developed in the electrical switch gear for the building. Smoke spread into the first floor of the dormitory and into the cafeteria due to an open door in the chase way. The building was evacuated and occupants were relocated to temporary housing in other parts of the campus. No injuries were reported.
3. April 6, 2004, at approximately 6:22 AM, there was a fire in the Phi Kappa Sigma Fraternity House located on the campus. A tragedy was averted by the activation of an alarm clock in one of the rooms. Two remote fire alarm pull stations and the smoke detectors failed to activate the building's fire

alarm system. Three students were rescued from the second and third floors of the structure by fire department ground ladders.

4. On August 29, 2004, at approximately 5:30 AM, a fire was reported in a vacated sorority house. The sorority had lost the lease to the building and the only items left in the building at the time of the fire were a few bags of trash. The cause of the fire was undetermined.

University of Texas at Austin

1. On March 1, 2004, at approximately 11:48 AM, the University of Texas Police Department was notified that there was a vehicle fire on level five of Manor Parking Garage. The fire was determined to be accidental due to an unknown electrical/mechanical malfunction under the hood of a Ford F-150 pickup. The fire totally destroyed the Ford F-150 pickup and a Ford Explorer. A station wagon, parked adjacent to the pickup, was also damaged. Smoke spread throughout the fifth and sixth floors of the garage. No injuries were reported, but the fire caused approximately \$59,000 damage to vehicles and \$100,000 damage to the parking garage.
2. On April 19, 2004, at approximately 4:06 PM, a fire occurred in the Old Pharmacy Building on the fourth floor. A student was conducting an experiment using Trimethylaluminum when the substance began to heat (react) beyond safe limits. The container was placed in an ice bucket in an attempt to reduce the reaction. While the student was attempting to place the glass beaker in a chemical fume hood, the glass beaker exploded causing a slight burn to the forehead of the student. A portable fire extinguisher was used to extinguish the fire; no damage was caused to the structure.

Sam Houston State University - Huntsville

This office was notified on Monday May 24, 2004, of a fire that occurred in a science laboratory over the previous weekend. The fire apparently started when a towel ignited when placed over a hot plate. The fire spread beyond the towel, however the spread was insignificant and no structural damage was identified; smoke was limited to the room of origin.

Texas Southern University - Houston

On January 20, 2004, at approximately 11:03 PM, the University Police Department received an automatic fire alarm from Bruce Hall. They also received a 911 call from the Residence Hall Area Coordinator stating there was a fire in the first floor kitchenette and that the building was being evacuated. The cause of the fire was determined to be a pan of cooking oil, or similar material, that had been left unattended on the cook stove. A fire alarm system smoke detector located in the corridor near the community kitchenette detected the smoke from the fire and activated the building fire alarm system and transmitted

the alarm to the TSU Police Department. No injuries were reported; however, one student was treated at the scene for an anxiety attack. Damage was limited to the kitchenette and smoke damaged the ceilings and walls in the immediate area.

Texas State Technical College - Waco

1. On November 18, 2003, a fire occurred in an unoccupied house. The fire occurred when a power line was downed by high wind and fell across the gas meter, melting the metal pipe and igniting the escaping gas. The burning gas caught the kitchen area on fire. The fire spread into one of the bedrooms and smoke and water damaged the remaining portion of the residence. No injuries were reported.
2. On January 7, 2004, at approximately 8:30 AM, a student living in one of the apartments contacted the Residence Life Office to notify them that a fire had occurred over the weekend in his apartment. The student moved into the apartment on January 6, 2004, but did not notice the black soot throughout the apartment. It was not until he opened the door to the bathroom that he discovered that there had been a fire. The fire damaged the bathroom and caused smoke damage throughout the apartment. The fire was caused by a bathroom ventilation fan that overheated and caught fire. The fire self-extinguished.

Texas Tech University - Lubbock

On October 31, 2003, at approximately 2:59 PM, the safety office received a report that there had been a fire alarm system activation in Chitwood Hall Dormitory. The building was being evacuated and a resident assistant stated that there was a fire in room 624. The fire occurred when a string of lights had shorted out, causing a bulletin board covered in cloth to ignite. The automatic fire sprinkler system extinguished the fire. Heat and smoke damage was confined to the room of origin. It was estimated that \$8,000 in damage was caused by heat, smoke and water damage. The students advised that the lights had been left on when they left the room. No injuries were reported.

University of Houston - Houston

On September 25, 2003, a fire occurred in a Greek housing complex. The fire occurred in the kitchen on the fourth floor. The fire was extinguished by the automatic fire sprinkler system. No damage or dollar loss was reported.

University of Texas at Arlington

On October 24, 2003, a fire occurred on the campus causing approximately \$2.5 million dollars in damage. The fire totally destroyed the old central power plant that was in the process of being demolished. The fire was caused by construction worker using a cutting torch to cut pipe inside the building. The

torch came into contact with combustible material being used to build an enclosure for the campus electrical distribution equipment. The fire left the campus without electrical power, which forced the University to provide electrical generators to provide power to the buildings that were affected. No injuries were reported.

Texas A&M University - College Station

1. On October 28, 2003, a fire occurred in Wells Hall Dormitory. A student covered her lamp with a towel prior to going to bed. She wanted the lamp on to help further the growth of bacterial cultures for her class. About 4:00 AM, the resident was awakened by the smoke alarm in her room. She saw the towel on top of the lamp on fire. She knocked the towel from the lamp with a blanket and thought she had extinguished the fire. The student dressed and went to report the fire to her resident assistant, who returned with the student to find the towel on fire. The resident assistant activated the fire alarm system, which sounded a general alarm in the building and notified the TAMU monitoring point, who called the fire department. No injuries or dollar loss were reported.
2. On November 3, 2003, at approximately 3:33 PM, a fire in a dormitory was reported to the University Police Department. The fire resulted when a bottle of liquid shoe polish spilled on the floor. During an effort to clean the floor, a cleaning product was ignited and sprayed on the spill. While spraying the spill, some paper in a trash can was ignited. Wet towels were used to extinguish the fire. Damage was limited to the trashcan and the area of the spill. No injuries or dollar loss were reported.
3. On November 25, 2003, at approximately 1:53 AM, the University Police received a fire alarm at the Koldus Office Building. The police officer that arrived on the scene could see smoke on the second floor. College Station Fire Department personnel responded and upon entering an office on the second floor they extinguished a small fire on a desk. The investigation revealed that the occupant had left a candle burning on his desk the previous day. The candle was sitting in a dry plastic decorative waterfall that ignited when the candle burned down to the plastic, which produced thick black smoke and soot. The building's HVAC duct detector triggered the fire alarm when smoke entered the HVAC unit, causing the building's fire alarm system to activate and to notify the police department. Dollar loss for the unattended candle is estimated at \$2,000, not including loss of contents and furniture. The University does not have a policy prohibiting burning of candles in office buildings.
4. At 9:20 PM on July 31, 2004, an explosion and fire occurred in Apartment U-1-J of the Texas A&M University Apartment complex. Four occupants (two residents and two international visitors) were critically burned. One resident (a four-year-old girl) and one of the visitors (the 62-year-old grandmother of the child) died of their injuries. The other international

visitor (the 69-year-old grandfather of the deceased child) remained in critical condition. The other resident (the mother of the deceased child) was been released from the hospital but was undergoing continuing daily treatment. An investigation into the explosion determined that natural gas, which leaked from several minor interior leaking pipes and a large leak caused by corrosion in an exterior gas main, entered the building through utility openings and was ignited in the apartment, causing the explosion, inflicting the injuries and causing extensive structural damage.

University of Texas at Dallas

Information obtained indicated that there had been two fires in the privatized apartment complex located on the campus. Both fires involved residential cooking incidents.