

Northern Kentucky University	Policy Link: Fire and Life Safety Policy
Issue Date: 11/02/2018	Title: TUNNEL SAFETY PROCEDURE
Revised Date:	

OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE

Northern Kentucky University maintains an extensive tunnel system to maintain and repair campus utility distribution systems as well as for the conveyance of materials. The tunnel system is a critical portion of the University's utility distribution system and must be maintained and used in a safe manner at all times. The purpose of the Tunnel Safety Procedure is to provide guidance to individuals who may need to transit through the tunnel for work related reasons. This procedure is administered under the authority of the University Fire and Life Safety Policy.

DEFINITIONS

Authorized entrant: An individual who has received authorization to enter the tunnel system for maintenance or university related work.

Tunnel system: The system of passageways connecting buildings and conveying utilities across the campus. Normal reason for entry of a tunnel system include inspections, maintenance and conveyance of material, including recycling and catering carts.

RULES AND PROCEDURES

Authorized Use

To mitigate risk it is prudent to restrict entry in the tunnels. The layout and presence of potential hazards in these areas requires that transit of personnel through the area be controlled and kept to a minimum. Only faculty, staff, student workers and contractors requiring transit between buildings for university related work may receive authorization.

Access

The potential of personal injury and presence of steam lines and other utilities warrants that all authorized entrants be aware of the risk associated with transiting these areas. Anyone requesting access to this area must complete tunnel safety training offered by Safety and Emergency Management before authorization is permitted. Access to the restricted tunnel system and utility corridors is provided through the Key Authorization process.

Personal Safety

Authorized personnel entering the restricted tunnel system and utility corridors are responsible for their own safety and should be aware of all potential hazards. Potential hazards within these areas include, but are not limited to:

- Steam Line Leaks/Breaks
- Wet Floors/Tripping Hazards
- Natural Gas Leaks
- Utility Vehicle Traffic
- Complete Darkness From Electric Failure/No Emergency Lighting
- Limited points of egress

The tunnel between the Power Plant and Business Academic Center and between the Business Academic Center and the main tunnel system are classified as confined spaces. Even during normal operations, these sections of the tunnel system:

- have the potential for a hazardous atmosphere (the mechanical ventilation system does not adequately ventilate these spaces);
- have a small enough cross section that entrants could become trapped by pipes in the area; and
- have limited access.

Person entering into any of these sections of the tunnel system shall be trained and follow the confined space entry procedure.

General Rules

- While in the tunnel system, be alert of potential hazards.
- It is recommended that personnel in the tunnel system have some type of personal lighting with them in case of an electrical failure.
- Be aware of the location of all exits from the tunnel system.
- Unauthorized persons entering the restricted tunnel must be accompanied by a person with authorization at all times.
- Make sure that doors into the tunnel system close and lock behind you when entering and exiting the tunnel system.
- Immediately report any unsafe conditions to Work Control (x5660).

Prohibited Activities

- Recreational activities including walking, jogging, running or sports of any kind
- Use of earplugs (unless needed for work being performed) or headphones
- Roller blades, bicycles, Segway's, etc.
- Allowing access to other non-authorized entrants

Storage

The areas defined by this procedure are not be used for storage of materials except where authorized. Contact the Director of Safety and Emergency Management for a list of these areas. Authorization for temporary storage may be requested through Safety and Emergency Management. The Director of Safety and Emergency Management has authority to have all unauthorized materials removed from the tunnel system and require a reduction of authorized storage if it becomes a hazard.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Safety and Emergency Management Responsibilities

Safety and Emergency Management is responsible for procedure development, review, and compliance with all applicable federal and state regulations. Safety and Emergency Management staff are authorized to halt any unsafe work practice that is not in accordance with this or any other NKU safety policy or procedure.

Chair/Director Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the chair/director to comply with applicable environmental, health and safety laws and regulations, University policies and procedures, and accepted safe work practices.

Chairs and Directors may delegate the details of program implementation to appropriate personnel within their authority. The ultimate responsibility, however, for ensuring implementation of these programs at the academic department/administrative unit level remains with the chairs/directors.

Departments

Departments are responsible for making all employees aware of this policy and requesting tunnel access authorization through the Key Request Procedures.

TRAINING

Departments are responsible for reviewing this procedure with any employee that has authorization to use the tunnel system. Safety and Emergency Management will schedule required training on a bi-monthly basis. Additional training dates may be requested through Safety and Emergency Management.

For additional information, forms, training, and other resources visit nku.edu/safety.