

Fire alarm system

900 West Hastings is equipped with modern fire alarm equipment. The fire alarm and emergency communication systems were replaced in 2009 with modern, solid state equipment. The system is inspected annually to ensure its readiness and good operation. The fire alarm system is integrated with the elevator controls and mechanical systems of the building.

Fire detection devices include smoke and heat detectors, pull stations, and flow detectors on the sprinkler system. These devices are located throughout the building. The fire alarm system includes annunciator panels on the main floor lobby and in the 15th floor building engineer's office.

Fire fighting equipment include an automatic sprinkler system, fire pump, standpipe system, as well as fire extinguishers and fire hoses. The fire extinguishers are located in a cabinet near the south stairwell doors on each floor and are available for use in fighting small fires.

The fire alarm system, the emergency communication system, fire pump, and fire fighter's elevators are connected to the building's emergency generator to ensure proper operation during an emergency or power failure.

Two stage system

The fire alarm system at 900 West Hastings is a two stage system. Bells will ring either intermittently (30 strokes per minute) or continuously (300 strokes per minute).

If you hear the bells on your floor ring intermittently (30 strokes per minute), this means that there is a fire alarm condition elsewhere in the building, but you do NOT need to evacuate. In this case, please STAND BY, wait for further instructions (over the public address system), and get ready to leave if needed (i.e. get your coat, purse, lock your drawers etc). But there is no need to evacuate your floor if the bells ring at 30 strokes per minute.

If you hear the bells ring fast and continuously (300 strokes per minute), you must EVACUATE without delay. Go to the elevator lobby, and find your way to one of the two stairwells. Follow the instructions of the Floor Warden.

The reason for the 2 stage system is twofold. First, it allows us to investigate if an alarm is false, and if so, silence the bells. At that time, only the highest risk floors will have evacuated. The highest risk floors include the 'fire floor', the one below, and the two above the fire floor. The other floors will be in standby mode. Secondly, if the fire alarm is 'real', the people on the highest risk floors will have received priority in evacuating the building.

Evacuation routes

There are 2 fire exit stairwells in the tower: one on either side of the elevator core. The north stair leads to West Hastings Street. The south stair leads to the lane behind the building. Additional stairwells are located in the lower floors of the building.

Familiarize yourself with the exit stairwells. Use both stairs for a 'practice run' so you know where you end up at street level. Previous fire drills have shown the following user errors:

- Some people descend past the ground floor and continue down to the basement level, only to have to track back up.
- Unequal loading of the two stairwells. People tend to gravitate to the north stairwell, resulting in some congestion.
- At the ground floor, follow the red signs and go straight out to the street (or lane). Do not use the side doors which lead back to the main lobby.

Large red signs have been posted in the stairwells at ground level to provide clear direction to the exits.

Cross over floors

Floors 3, 7 and 12 are 'cross over floors'. That means that the stairwell doors on these floors are always unlocked. If, in case of an emergency, you find one stairwell is blocked or unpassable (i.e. due to smoke), you can cross over to the other stairwell by exiting the first stairwell and using the elevator lobby on these floors to reach the other stairwell. In the stairwells, the cross over floors are indicated by signs on the inside face of the stairwell doors.

What to do if you discover a fire

1. Call 9-1-1
2. Activate the fire alarm station by pulling the nearest pull station
3. Fight a fire only if the fire is small. Extinguishers are located in each elevator lobby.
4. Close doors behind you (to reduce the spread of fire or smoke)
5. Evacuate the building via the stairwells. In case of a fire, do not use the elevators.

What to do when you hear the fire alarm bells

If you hear the bells on your floor ring intermittently (30 strokes per minute), please STAND BY, and wait for further instructions over the public address system. You may want to get ready to leave (i.e. get your coat, purse, lock your drawers etc) but do not evacuate your floor if the bells ring at 30 strokes per minute.

If you hear the bells ring fast and continuously (300 strokes per minute), you must EVACUATE without delay. Go to the elevator lobby, and find your way to one of the two stairwells. Follow the instructions of the Floor Warden.

Do-s and don't-s of an evacuation

When evacuating the building, please follow the following instructions:

1. Walk. Do not run, push, or shove. Do not pass others unless it is safe to do so. A calm evacuation will ensure everyone gets out safely and no one is injured in the stairwells.
2. Use the stairwell closest to your office or workstation. We want to use the two stairwells equally so that one stairwell does not become congested.
3. Follow the instructions of the Floor Warden. They are responsible for the orderly evacuation of your floor.
4. Exit at ground level. Do not exit through the lobby, and do not go back into the building.
5. Go to the designated gathering place, and stay there. We need to account for everyone.

Further information

Further information is available from the following sources:

1. The Floor Warden on your floor.
2. The **Fire Safety Plan** for 900 West Hastings, a copy will be available in your office.
3. The building management office - call 604-688-7900.