I. **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to define procedures that will ensure compliance with fire safety rules and regulations for events that occur on Washington University properties and provide all people attending the event with a safe environment.

II. **Scope**

These procedures apply to individuals and the representatives of organizations who sponsor events that take place on Washington University properties. The individual sponsor or a representative of the sponsoring organization must review these procedures prior to the event and assure compliance with the specified procedures before, during and after the event.

III. **Procedures**

The following procedures are established to assure compliance with the local fire code and university fire regulations during events in assembly spaces on our campuses when open-flame sternos are used. Candles are not authorized for use at the University. If candle use is required for a religious ceremony please contact the Environmental Health & Safety Office. Propane gas will require a special permit, so the Environmental Health and Safety Office must be contacted. The event sponsor is responsible for complying with these requirements.

IV. **Responsibilities**

**Event Sponsor**

Event Sponsors will use only caterers or vendors that can meet, abide by and adhere to the requirements outlined in this policy.
Individuals or groups that sponsor events in University assembly buildings must appoint an individual who will be responsible for fire safety procedures. They will be responsible to assure the following:

The responsible individual will be familiar with the content of this policy, the Solid Alcohol (Sterno) Fuel use Guideline, and Where to Go responsibilities in the event of a fire and assure compliance with fire safety rules and regulations. If more than 100 people will attend your event the sponsor will contact the University Director of Emergency Management at 314-935-9261. This is to ensure an emergency plan is in place should there be a fire, severe weather or other natural disaster.

The responsible person shall perform an inspection of the space before the start of the event and shall be present throughout the duration of the event to assure compliance. Assure no open-flame device sterno or heating/serving table is in or blocking a means of egress to include doors, stairs and hallways. An ABC 10 lbs or Type K fire extinguisher is readily available and someone is trained to use it. The person shall appoint a designated representative to assume their duties if they leave the event.

At the completion of the event, the responsible person or their designated representative shall complete an inspection to ensure all open flame sternos are out and removed from the building. They should also ensure the building is returned to its standard configuration.

Assure that candles are NOT used at any time during the event if the appropriate permit has not been obtained.

**Solid Alcohol (Sterno) Fuel Use Guidelines – University Policy**

- Solid alcohol (Sterno) heating of food is permitted provided that the following precautions are taken to prevent ignition of combustible material and ensures the safety of occupants.

- Sterno use is permitted in public space, (i.e. Public Assembly Space, meeting rooms, etc.) only. It is not permitted in a private office space, sleeping areas, or other non-public space. Sterno use is not permitted in exit/egress areas or hallways within a building.
Outside food vendors and caterers shall be allowed to utilize sterno heating devices, providing they comply with the Solid Alcohol (Sterno) Fuel Use Guidelines of Washington University. Vendors shall be provided a copy of this policy and upon request shall provide written certification that their employees are properly trained in the lighting and handling of sterno as well as the knowledge of how to operate a fire extinguisher.

Portable open-flame sterno devices fueled by flammable or combustible gases or liquids shall be enclosed or installed in such a manner as to prevent the flame from contacting combustible material.

Sterno fuel use shall be attended at all times by a member of the catering staff or an event organizer who has been trained in sterno use and fire safety. If a non-catered event, an organizer must be designated as a “Firewatch” to ensure this policy is being complied with.

A 10 pound ABC dry chemical extinguisher, or Type K extinguisher, shall be available within ten (10) feet of the serving table or tables.

Use of secondary containers for sterno, i.e. fuel holders with cover, is mandatory. Proper tools must be available for the smothering of the flame if needed, i.e. snuffer paddle.

All chafing racks and beverage urns using sterno shall be placed on non-combustible mats, ceramic or metal trays extending at least eight inches beyond the sterno container in each direction, to prevent accidental contact with any combustible materials.

Sterno shall be placed under food or beverage tray before lighting. Sterno shall only be lit by means of a butane lighter or long handled match. Chafing racks or beverage urns shall not be moved while sterno are lit.

Only table decorations that are flame resistant shall be used. Paper or plastic table coverings are not permitted. Combustible material such as plates, napkins, plastic utensils, cups and similar products shall be separated by a minimum of three feet from sterno.

Sterno must be immediately extinguished when the food tray is empty or no longer used. When the event is over, all sterno must be extinguished, immediately capped and removed from facility.
• The staff of the facility shall be notified of all sterno usage within their respective buildings.

• If serving flaming foods or beverages it shall be done in a safe manner and shall not create high flames. The pouring, ladling, or spooning of liquids is restricted to a maximum height of 8 inches above the receiving receptacle. Flaming foods and beverages shall be prepared only in the immediate vicinity of the table being serviced. They shall not be transported or carried while burning. The person preparing the flaming foods or beverages shall have a wet cloth towel immediately available for use in smothering the flames in the event of an emergency.

1. In the event of a fire, Washington University Where to go fire reporting procedures shall be followed immediately.
2. Pull fire alarm.
3. Exit the building.
4. Go to the Emergency Assembly Point.
5. Call 314-935-5555 at the Danforth Campus and 314-362-4357 at the Medical School and “911 at off campus properties.

Disposal Requirements for Solid Alcohol (Sterno) Containers

• If a solid alcohol (Sterno) container is completely empty it may be thrown away with general waste. If a container is NOT completely empty it is a regulated waste and must be disposed of through Environmental Health and Safety (Environmental Compliance division). NEVER throw away any containers which still have fuel present.

Reviewed 3/2019

QUICK SAFETY TIPS

○ DO NOT LEAVE AN OPEN FLAME UNATTENDED

○ DO NOT USE ANYTHING BUT SOLID ALCOHOL STERNO-TYPE FUEL IN THE BURNER

○ FOLLOW UNIVERSITY WHERE TO GO PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF FIRE