

## Guideline: Temporary Bagging of Smoke Detections involving Construction / Renovation / Maintenance Projects

Issue Date: September 8, 2025

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**Applies to:** This guideline applies to authorized University of Michigan (UM) staff and contractors performing construction / renovation / maintenance work within all UM facilities.

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### Summary:

In general, smoke detectors should be disabled and protected by qualified Fire Alarm Electricians (FAEs) when dust generating work is being performed in a space with an active fire alarm system. In limited circumstances detailed below, covering ("bagging") detectors will be allowed as an exception. This exception may be rescinded by the University Fire Marshal if it is determined that this guideline is not consistently being followed.

### Procedures:

1. When dust generating work is to be performed within a space with an active fire alarm system, an evaluation of the circumstances regarding the work should be conducted to determine if the detectors can be covered (bagged) or if there is a need to have qualified FAE fully disable the fire alarm system or, if possible, isolate the fire alarm points involved.
2. The covering (bagging) detectors is an allowed practice ONLY when ALL of the following conditions are met:
  - There are a limited number of detectors that will be impacted by the work. For purposes of this guideline, limited will be defined as a maximum of 6 smoke detectors per work activity.
  - The majority of detectors in the area are not impacted by the work and thus life safety would NOT be diminished by disabling the system.
  - Workers are present in the areas where the work is being performed while the work is being performed.
  - Covers will be completely removed when workers are not present and at the end of each workday.
  - The work in the area is somewhat incidental and not of a long duration no more than 2-days.
3. If all of the conditions stated above are met to allow bagging, the following approach is required:
  - A plastic manufactured or improvised bag must fully encapsulate a smoke detector head.
  - A form of painter's tape can be used to secure the bag over the plastic material.
    - At no time shall tape come into direct contact with a smoke detector head.
    - Contractor companies shall be responsible for all costs associated with the replacement of a smoke detector(s), if tape comes into contact with a University smoke detector.

- Care shall be exercised in removing a secured bag placed over a smoke detector head to eliminate the potential for dust from the cover to activate or dirty the smoke detector.
  - The Contractor shall provide photographic evidence to the assigned Project Manager of the involved smoke detectors to show that they have been restored to normal operations.
  - Discovery of bagged smoke detectors not being restored to normal operations will result in an investigation and additional follow-up by EHS Fire Safety Services.
4. If all of the conditions listed under Item 2 are not met, then the process should be followed for disabling the fire alarm system.