



UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

RISK MANAGEMENT AND SAFETY

STOP THE PROP

Propping doors open presents significant safety and security concerns. Fire doors are designed to contain smoke and flames, and leaving them open can compromise emergency response efforts and put building occupants at greater risk. Propped doors also allow unauthorized individuals to enter secured areas, increasing the likelihood of theft, vandalism, or personal harm especially in dormitories, labs, and offices containing valuable equipment or sensitive information. Ensuring that doors remain closed and function as intended is a key part of maintaining a safe and secure campus.



THINGS TO LOOK FOR

Check exterior doors regularly.

- Monitor limited-access doors that have frequent unauthorized use.
- Check doors that are in convenient areas for parking lot access.
- Identify doors with faulty push bars, that do not self close, or have lock sets that can be opened without a key.
- Look for items that may be used to prop doors such as rocks, trash cans, or mats that may seem out of place.

FIRE CONCERNS

Spaces often become cluttered from lack of housekeeping and organization. Excess materials, such as books, papers, boxes, or Styrofoam increase a building's fire load. This excess material presents a safety hazard to staff, students, and visitors.

The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) recommends keeping unnecessary materials to a minimum to maintain a safe and well-organized space.



LAB SAFETY CONCERNS

Propping open laboratory doors is another common habit in research labs, usually for the convenience of moving from one lab to another.

The use of doorstops, wedges, or other types of hold-open devices is not permitted by NFPA Fire Code. Doors that are designed to self-close must be allowed to close.

Laboratory building ventilation design is intended to prevent the air in chemical and biological labs from flowing into the hallways and corridors.



WHAT TO DO IF YOU SEE A PROPPED DOOR

Check to see if the door is currently in use by someone in the vicinity. If there is someone around, be sure to request they remove the prop as soon as they are done with their activity. If nobody is present, remove the door prop and check the door to ensure it has latched completely and is now secured.

You may also enter a Good Catch. Simply take a picture of the door with prop to include on the form and provide a description of the door's location.