



University  
of Windsor

**University of Windsor - Environmental Health & Safety**  
**Procedure for Burning Traditional and Sacred Medicines  
by Indigenous Peoples for Spiritual or Cultural Purposes**

**Introduction & Purpose**

The University of Windsor recognizes the unique and spiritual relationship that many Indigenous cultures have with Traditional and Sacred Medicines such as tobacco, sweet grass, sage, and cedar, among others.

This procedure is intended to recognize that the use of these Traditional and Sacred Medicines for ceremonial purposes is separate and distinct from the 'recreational' use of tobacco, and other substances, and as such is not subject to the same restrictions outlined in the Smoke Free Campus Policy.

The primary goals of this procedure are:

- To ensure that Indigenous ceremonial practices are recognized and supported on campus;
- To ensure the health and safety of all campus community members; and
- To prevent miscommunication (false fire alarms, smoke reports, etc.).

**Procedures for Events or Ceremonies**

The burning of Traditional and Sacred Medicines by Indigenous Peoples for events or ceremonies held in common areas, spaces indoor or outdoor that will be shared by non-participants or bystanders, and/or ceremonies where use of Traditional and Sacred Medicines will be expected to take place for an extended period of time will require advance notification.

This process includes notification to Environmental Health & Safety at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled event in order to assess the need for further action with respect to ventilation, fire safety, and alarm systems. Source of the product being used in the ceremony/event may be required.

Notification:

Individuals who wish to burn Traditional and Sacred Medicines are expected to make all reasonable efforts to notify anyone in the vicinity that may be negatively impacted by smoke, this includes signage and notification to building occupants.

Fire and Life Safety:

Individuals participating should be aware of their nearest fire extinguisher, fire exit, and fire alarm pull station. Individuals who burn Traditional and Sacred Medicines must also take steps to fully extinguish and or dispose of all materials remaining after the burning of sacred medicines.

For more information, please contact Environmental Health & Safety at [safety@uwindsor.ca](mailto:safety@uwindsor.ca), or at extension 4521.