



City Safe

A Guide To Assist In Training
Employees About:

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Emergency Response/ Disaster Preparedness

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No one likes to think about disasters. We tend to think they won't happen to us. But the truth is, disasters do happen, often when we least expect them. It takes a little time to become familiar with what you should do in response to a disaster. Your level of preparedness and ability to respond in a disaster situation could mean the difference between life and death, not just for you, but for many others as well.

Fire, electrical power loss, severe weather conditions, and bomb threats are some of the more frequent types of disasters we must cope with. How many of you are familiar with the written procedures for these disasters? Familiarize yourself with the disaster plan and review it frequently. Know what actions you and others working in your immediate environment should take in response to the various types of disasters in the plan. Participate in emergency/disaster drills; they are a very important part of planning for disasters. In fact, the very best plans may not be helpful at all if they are not rehearsed. In the event that a disaster does occur, carry out your responsibilities as indicated by the disaster plan without delay; be alert for additional instructions.

Tornadoes:

Tornado watches are announced by weather stations when conditions in the area are right for the development of a tornado. This announcement does not mean that a tornado is on the way. If a tornado watch is announced, you should be alert for further instructions and take necessary steps to prepare for a tornado, in the event one develops. If a tornado warning is issued, you should move to interior corridors and close doors to rooms that have windows or move to the lowest available level in the building.

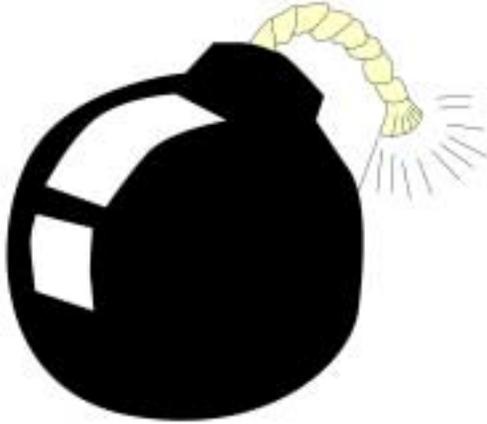


Bomb Threats:

Most bomb threats are just that - threats. But because there is no way of knowing whether an actual bomb exists, we must take

precautions when any bomb threat is received. If you receive a bomb threat on the telephone, here is what you should do:

- Keep the caller on the phone as long as possible and signal to someone else to notify the operator on another line that a bomb threat is being made.



- Try to get information about the bomb from the caller, such as the type of bomb and where it is located, but don't be "pushy".
- Avoid excitement in your voice.
- Write down a detailed account of the call and deliver it to security immediately. The account should include: time of call, voice quality, any noticeable speech patterns such as accents or slurred speech (suggesting influence of alcohol or drugs).
- Keep the call confidential, unless you are instructed by security officers to do otherwise. Bomb threats, un-

derstandably, tend to make people panic.

- Report any suspicious-looking devices to security. Explosive devices can have a variety of appearances, depending upon whether they are military, commercial, or homemade. Do not touch suspicious-looking devices.

Fire:

Large and small workplaces alike experience fires and explosions. To protect employees from fire and other emergencies and to prevent property loss, whether large or small, companies use preparedness plans (also called pre-fire plans or pre-incident plans). The two essential components of a fire preparedness plan are the following:

- An emergency action plan, which details what to do when a fire occurs
- A fire prevention plan, which describes what to do to prevent a fire from occurring



Emergency Action Plan:

Emergency escape procedures and emergency escape route assignments. To ensure that all employees understand the general procedures to be followed, the plan must document procedures, such as equipment to shut down or suppression efforts, and the escape route to be followed by each specific facility location.

Procedures to account for employees. The emergency action plan should include procedures for accounting for all employees after an emergency evacuation. It is important to know that everyone got out.

Fire Prevention Plan:

List of major workplace hazards. The fire prevention plan should include a list of major workplace fire hazards and their proper handling and storage procedures, potential ignition sources, their control procedures, and the type of fire protection equipment or systems that can control a fire involving them.

Personnel responsible for maintenance. Included in the plan should be the names or regular job titles of the personnel who are responsible for the maintenance of equipment and systems installed to prevent or control fires.

Personnel responsible for fuel source hazards. The fire prevention plan should include the names or regular job titles of the personnel who are responsible for the control of fuel source hazards.

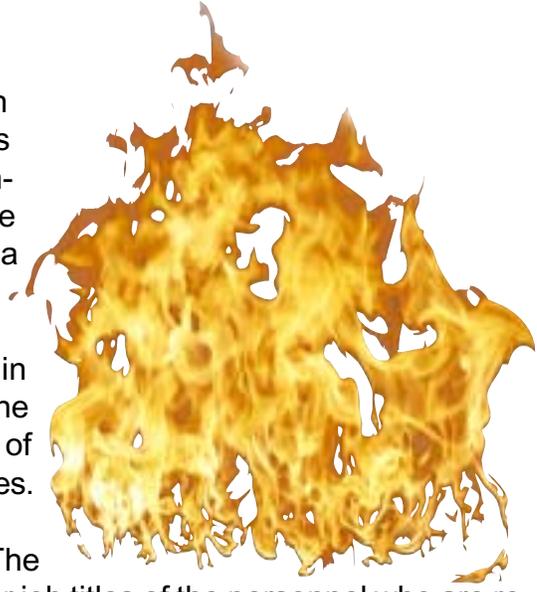
We can never predict with certainty when disasters will occur. All we can do is attempt to minimize damage to life and property. Management is responsible for formulating a well-developed plan for each type of disaster that may be encountered, and your responsibility is to be thoroughly familiar with each plan so you can carry out the plan immediately. Remember, your life and the lives of others depend on it.

Emergency Response/Preparedness:

The first step in emergency response is being familiar with all the risks in your work area. By knowing the location and purposes of the types of workplace hazards listed below, it is easier to both reduce the likelihood of disasters and to minimize the spillover effects if one should occur.

- Flammable liquids and the circumstances in which they could catch fire;
- Reactive chemicals and the types of reactions they could cause;
- Explosive agents and what could cause them to explode;
- Electrical hazards that could cause fires;
- Vapors and dusts that could burn or explode;
- Chemical vapors that could be toxic in the air;

Second, it is important to make sure that each employee has the same understanding of policies and relative definitions. Here are some points to cover:



- **Definition of “emergency”.** Specify what is considered an emergency situation for the purposes of your policy statement. Be sure to identify each type clearly on the page if you are trying to cover more than one. A supervisor who is in a hurry should be able to locate the information he or she needs without searching unnecessarily.

EMERGENCY !!

- **Procedures to follow.** For each type of emergency situation, state clearly and concisely what the supervisor should do and in what order of priority.

- **Emergency numbers.** You may want to include some useful outside telephone numbers - such as the local hospital, ambulance service, police, and fire departments. You may also want to list in-house extensions for people who must be notified; for example, the safety manager, human resources department, city manager/administrator, or city clerk.



- **First aid.** If you don't have a separate policy statement covering first-aid procedures, this would be a good place to include them. Also, discuss the location of fire extinguishers, emergency exit doors, etc.

- **Follow-up.** Once the immediate steps have been taken to deal with the emergency, what should the supervisor do? Are there forms that must be completed, people that must be notified, or other follow-up measures that should be taken?

- **Authorized action.** Your policy will need to state who has the authority to make decisions during the particular emergency. For example, if there is a bomb threat, who has the authority to order an evacuation of the building?

- **Drills and Meeting Places.** Your policy can state whether, when, and how often you will conduct drills. As an example, if you are in a high-rise building, you may want to have a fire drill several times a year. Also, this is a good time to discuss evacuation meeting places.

- **Media contact.** Your policy should indicate what is to occur if there is any media coverage as a result of the emergency.

- **Continuing service.** Your policy should describe how you will seek to continue to serve the public in the event of an emergency.



Every city employee must begin to embrace emergency response and disaster preparedness as a primary job duty. When employees comply with the following steps, cities become safer places to work and live:

1. Be informed about risks;
2. Take steps to prevent accidents;
3. Respond quickly in an emergency;
4. Follow emergency procedures quickly and properly;

Suggested Discussion Questions:

1. What types of emergencies might be experienced in your city?
2. Where can you get information on risks and protections?
3. What is your evacuation route?
4. Where do you assemble after evacuating?
5. Where do we keep first-aid supplies and fire extinguishers?
6. Why is it important to act quickly in an emergency?



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