



Workplace Emergencies Safety Training Program



Goal

The goal of this training program is to introduce planning and preparation procedures for workplace emergencies.

Objectives

Employees will demonstrate a knowledge of emergency response procedures.

Planning

The effectiveness of emergency response depends on the amount of planning and training performed. It must include:

- **Management commitment.**
The key factor in determining the successful implementation of an Emergency Response Plan is management commitment.
- **Employee involvement.**
A locally developed and comprehensive plan seeks employee input to deal

with all types of emergencies possibly encountered in the workplace.

- **Written plan.**
When an Emergency Response Plan is required by an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standard, the plan must be in writing. However, employers with 10 or fewer employees may communicate the plan orally to workers.

An Emergency Response Plan must include, as a minimum, the following:

- Emergency escape procedures and route assignments.
- Procedures for employees who remain after an emergency evacuation to perform critical plant operations.
- Procedures to account for all employees after an emergency evacuation.

- Rescue and medical duties for assigned employees.
- Preferred means for reporting fires and other emergencies.
- Contact names, job titles, or departments to reach for further information or explanation of duties under the plan.

Chain of command

Establish a chain of command to avoid confusion. Detail who has the authority to make decisions during an emergency. The chain of command should include an Emergency Response Team. An Emergency Response Team is the first line of defense in emergencies.

An Emergency Response Team Coordinator should assume the following duties:

The Emergency Action Plan must:

- List all potential emergencies in the workplace.
- List procedures for employees who must provide essential plant operations until last-minute evacuation becomes necessary.
- Show emergency evacuation escape routes and refuge or safe areas on floor plans or workplace maps. Post these plans in visible locations throughout the workplace.
- Inform all employees of their required actions in an emergency.

Include a presentation to employees when it is developed, when an employee's responsibilities change, or whenever the plan is changed. It is also recommended to set up an annual review as a refresher for employees. Keep a copy accessible to employees for reference.



- Assess the situation and determine whether an emergency exists that requires activating the emergency procedures.

- Direct all response efforts, including evacuating personnel.
- Ensure outside emergency responders, such as fire departments and medical care, are requested.
- Direct the shutdown of plant operations if needed.

Communications

Communication is critical during an emergency. The emergency plan should:

- Specify how employees are alerted to evacuation requirements or other actions as outlined in the emergency plan.
- Ensure that an alternate method of communication is set up for members

of the Emergency Response Team. If the primary communications link becomes lost, this alternate link will become the focal point for incoming and outgoing communications.

- Alarms are audible and visible to all people in the facility.
- An auxiliary power supply is available.
- Emergency phone numbers are posted on or near phones, bulletin boards, and other visible locations.
- A list of key personnel to notify during off-duty hours is available and updated regularly.



- Search and emergency rescue procedures.
- Firefighting techniques.
- Trauma counseling.

Accounting for personnel

Identify a responsible individual in the control center to account for personnel and inform police or Emergency Response Team members of persons believed missing.

Emergency Response Team

Depending on the size of the facility, train one or several Emergency Response Teams in the following:

- Fire extinguisher use.
- First aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- Shutdown procedures.
- Evacuation procedures.
- Chemical spill control procedures.
- Self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) use.

Training

Training is a key element of an effective Emergency Response Plan. Train all employees in the following:

- Evacuation plans.
- Alarm systems.
- Reporting procedures for personnel.
- Shutdown procedures.
- Types of potential emergencies.

Provide training to employees:

- Initially when the plan is developed.
- At new-hire orientations.
- When new equipment, materials, or processes are introduced.
- When procedures are updated or revised.

- When exercises show that employee performance needs improvement.
- At least annually.

The Emergency Response Plan should include random drills and a program review at least every 12 months. Update it as needed to maintain the program's efficiency.

Personal protection

Personal protection is essential for any employee exposed to potentially hazardous situations or conditions. During an emergency, response personnel may be exposed to a wide variety of hazardous situations including:

- Chemical splashes or contact with toxic materials.
- Falling objects and flying particles.
- Unknown atmospheres that possibly contain toxic gases, vapors, mists, or inadequate oxygen.
- Fires.
- Electrical hazards.
- Workplace violence.

Examples of personal protective equipment (PPE) for response personnel may include:

- **Eye protection.**
Safety glasses, goggles, or face shields.



- **Head and foot protection.**
Hard hats and safety shoes.
- **Hand protection.**
Gloves.
- **Breathing protection.**
Proper respirators.
- **Hearing protection.**
Earplugs and earmuffs.
- **Whole body protection.**
Chemical suits including gloves, hoods, boots, belts, harnesses, and lifelines

All equipment selected must meet OSHA standards.

Medical assistance

If covered by [OSHA reporting standards](#), an employer is required to have the following medical and first aid services:

- Train a person or persons to render first aid if an infirmary, clinic, or hospital is not nearby.
- Provide and train employees to use eye washes or suitable equipment for quick drenching or flushing if they are exposed to corrosive materials.
- Ensure medical personnel are readily available for advice and consultation. (This means that medical assistance is available, not that healthcare is provided.)
- The above guidelines are only recommended if the employer is covered by OSHA.

Security

Security is suggested to guard against unauthorized access to a hazardous situation and to protect vital records and equipment.

Review Questions

1. What is the key factor in determining the successful implementation of an emergency plan?
2. How many employees must an employer have to communicate the Emergency Response Plan only orally?
3. How often should all personnel participate in random drills?
4. Is trauma counseling a potential task of the Emergency Response Team?
5. How often should employers provide training to all employees?

Answers: 1. Management support; 2. 10 or fewer; 3. Annually; 4. Yes; 5. Annually.



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