Emergency Management Fact Sheet

Emergency management is the process of preparing for, responding to, and recovering from an emergency or disaster. At the company level, emergency management is a vital part of an organization's ability to **mitigate** risks, **prepare** for disasters, **respond** to events quickly and effectively, and **recover** from disruption.

The Four Phases of Emergency Management

DISASTER MANAGEMENT CYCLE

PREPAREDNESS · RESPONSE · RECOVERY · MITIGATION · DISASTER · BEFORE THE EVENT · AFTER THE EVENT

1. **Mitigation**
   Mitigation involves taking **steps to reduce or eliminate dangers and risks** related to an emergency. It includes conducting risk assessments, creating emergency plans, providing safety training programs, and installing security measures. Mitigation aims to make people, property, and processes more resilient in the face of an emergency and reduce the cost and severity of any impacts.

2. **Preparedness**
   Preparedness involves **taking steps to plan for, respond to, and recover from a disaster before it occurs**. This includes developing plans, training, workers, assigning emergency personnel, increasing awareness, and providing necessary supplies.

3. **Response**
   The response involves **taking immediate steps to lessen the effects of the disaster**, including the possibility of evacuating or sheltering affected workers and providing any needed medical care, or other services or goods.

4. **Recovery**
   Recovery refers to r**epairing, rebuilding, and returning to normal operations after a disaster**. This includes restoring services, rebuilding infrastructure, assisting in return-to-work activities, and providing for any long-term needs of affected workers, visitors, or community members.

Types of Disasters Requiring Emergency Management

Examples of disasters that require companies to create an emergency management plan include:

- **Natural Disasters** - Floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, wildfires, and tsunamis.

- **Man-made Disasters** - Hazardous spills, nuclear accidents, infrastructure failure, fire, contamination of food or water supplies, and transportation accidents or disruptions.

- **Biological Disasters** – Pandemics, disease outbreaks, foodborne illnesses, oil spills, and the destruction of ecosystems.

- **Technological Disasters** - Power outages, data breaches, network outages, cyberattacks, and physical security breaches.

- **Terrorist Attacks and Other Forms of Violence** - Bomb threats, active shooters, armed assaults, hostage situations, kidnappings, riots and civil unrest, cyber espionage, intellectual property theft, extremist and hate crimes, arson, sabotage, and violence against personnel or facilities.

Protective Actions During an Emergency

The actions taken in the initial minutes of an emergency are critical to saving lives. In emergency management, this is called "**protective actions for life safety**." It includes procedures to:

- **Evacuate** - leave an area where there is or is likely to be a hazard, such as in a building fire.

- **Shelter** - immediately find a protected place to stay until an emergency has ended, such as during a tornado.

- **Shelter in place** - take immediate shelter within the building or area you already occupy and stay there until you are given an "all clear" or told to evacuate. You may be asked to shelter in place because of an active shooter or an exterior airborne hazard such as a chemical release.

- **Lockdown** - a building's exterior doors and entrances are locked to prevent an unauthorized person(s) from entering the location. You may be asked to shelter in place during a lockdown in situations such as the presence of a hostile or armed intruder.

Your emergency management planning efforts should include detailed steps for each of these protective actions for life safety.

Evacuation

Evacuations require a **warning system** that can be heard throughout the building.

- **Test your alarm systems** to determine if they can be heard by all employees. If there is no alarm system, use a public address system, air horns, or other means to warn everyone to evacuate. Sound the evacuation signal during planned drills so employees are familiar with the sound.

- **Check to see that there are at least two exits** from hazardous areas on every floor of every building.

- **Verify that exits are marked with exit signs.**

- **Check to see if there is sufficient lighting** so people can safely travel to an exit.

- **Keep all exits clear.** Regularly enter

every stairwell to ensure they remain unblocked so evacuees can exit to the outside.

- **Find a safe place away from the building to assemble.**

- **Appoint an evacuation team leader and assign employees to direct evacuation of the building on each floor.** Assign a "buddy" or aide to assist persons with disabilities during an emergency.

- **Have an assigned person take a list of employees and the visitor log to the assembly area.** Use the lists to account for everyone and inform the fire department if anyone is missing. (When employees are evacuated from a building, OSHA regulations require an accounting to ensure that everyone has gotten out safely.)

- **Have an alternative exit.** A fire, chemical spill, or other hazards may block an exit, so make sure the evacuation team can direct employees to another safe exit.

Shelter

If a severe weather warning is broadcast, a distinct warning signal should be sounded, and everyone should **move to a shelter in the strongest part of the building**. Shelters may include basements or interior rooms with reinforced masonry construction.

- **Evaluate potential shelters.** Conduct a drill to see if the shelter space can hold all employees. Since there may be little time to shelter when a tornado is approaching, early warning is important.

- **Monitor news sources.** Tune in to weather warnings broadcast by local radio and television stations. Subscribe to free text and email warnings, which are available from multiple news and weather resources on the Internet.

- **Consider purchasing an emergency alert system radio** - available at many electronic stores.

Shelter In Place

Public emergency officials may order people in the vicinity to shelter in place during disasters such as a tanker truck crashing on a nearby highway and releasing a chemical cloud; a fire in a nearby manufacturing plant that releases a black tower of smoke; or an explosion or act of terrorism.

If disasters such as these occur, you should have a shelter-in-place plan to warn workers and visitors to:

- **Enter the building** if they are working outside.

- **Move away from windows** and into the core of the building, or to the second and higher floors in a multistory building.

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- **Close exterior doors and windows.**

- **Shut down the building's air ventilation system.**

- **Remain sheltered until public officials broadcast that it is safe to evacuate the building.**

Lockdown

Acts of violence in the workplace can occur without warning. Train multiple people to broadcast a lockdown warning from a safe location. If loud "pops" are heard and gunfire is suspected, every employee should know to:

- **Run, Hide. Fight.** (See FEMA's "Be Prepared for an Active Shooter.") If hiding:

  » **remain silent;**

  » **seek refuge** in a room;

  » **close and lock the door;**

  » **barricade the door** if it can be done quickly;

  » **turn off the lights;**

  » **move away from the door or windows**; and

  » **hide** under a desk or in the corner of a room.

Creating an Emergency Management Plan

Emergency management helps to:

- maintain operational stability;

- minimize the loss of life, property, and materials; and

- ensure a quicker return to normal operations or business activities after the event.

The first step in effective emergency management is always to conduct a risk assessment. It should:

- identify the potential types of emergencies that could affect your business;

- the likelihood of the disaster occurring due to your business's location, environment, facilities, and products; and

- estimate the potential impact of the disaster on workers, productivity, and the community.

After a risk assessment, each emergency management plan must be customized based on your business. These resources can help:

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American Red Cross

- **Terrorism Preparedness**
  How to Prepare for Emergencies

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):

- **Design Guidance for Safe Rooms and Shelters**
  FEMA 453

- **Incident Management**
  FEMA Disasters and Emergencies

Federal Trade Commission:

- **Data Breach Response: A Guide for Business**
  FTC Business Guidance Resources

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA):

- **Life Safety Code**
  NFPA101

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA):

- **Emergency Action Plans**
  29 CFR 1910.38

- **Employee Alarm Systems**
  29 CFR 1910.165

- **Exit Routes and Emergency Planning**
  29 CFR 1910 Subpart E

- **Fire Prevention Plans**
  29 CFR 1910.39

- **Hazardous Waste and Emergency Response**
  29 CFR 1910.120

- **OSHA Directorate of Technical Support and Emergency Management**
  Emergency Preparedness and Response Webpage

- **OSHA Evacuation Planning Matrix**
  Emergency Preparedness Webpage

- **OSHA Evacuation Plans and Procedures**
  Evacuation Plans and Procedures eTool

- **OSHA Workplace Violence Prevention Programs**
  Workplace Violence Webpage

Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC)-Workplace Safety:

- **Bomb Threats Safety Training Program**
  English / Spanish

- **Emergency Action Plan**
  Sample Written Program
  English

- **Emergency Management**
  Fact Sheet
  English / Spanish

- **Emergency Evacuation Planning Guide for People with Disabilities**
  English / Spanish

- **Emergency Response Planning for Hazardous Materials**
  Safety Training Program
  English / Spanish

- **Fire Prevention Plan**
  Sample Written Program
  English / Spanish

- **Fire Prevention Fact Sheet**
  English / Spanish

- **Fire Safety Workplace Program**
  English / Spanish

- **First Aid Kits-Take 5 for Safety**
  English / Spanish

- **Flash Flood Alert-Take 5 for Safety**
  English / Spanish

- **Health Care Facilities and Workplace Violence Prevention**
  Safety Training Program
  English / Spanish

- **High-Rise Building Evacuations Checklist**
  English / Spanish

- **House and Building Fires Fact Sheet**
  English / Spanish

- **Hurricane Preparation Fact Sheet**
  English / Spanish

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- **Hurricane, Flood, and Tornado Recovery and Clean-Up Safety Fact Sheet**
  English / Spanish

- **Lightning Safety Training Program**
  English / Spanish

- **Power Line Safety Fact Sheet**
  English / Spanish

- **Small Business Crime Prevention Guide**
  English / Spanish

- **Terrorism Fact Sheet**
  English / Spanish

- **Thunderstorm, Hail, and Lightning Safety Fact Sheet**
  English / Spanish

- **Tornado Safety Take 5 for Safety**
  English / Spanish

- **Workplace Emergencies Safety Training Program**
  English / Spanish

- **Workplace Violence: Preventing Attacks from Known Assailants Workplace Program**
  English / Spanish

- **Workplace Violence: Protecting Employees from External Threats Fact Sheet**
  English / Spanish

For more information on emergency management, contact a DWC safety training specialist at **SafetyTraining@tdi.texas.gov** or **1-800-252-7031. Option 2**.

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