



Factors to Consider When Developing an Evacuation Plan

The following should be viewed only as suggestions:

1. You must identify your document with a specific title and explanation.

Example:

“Evacuation Plan” or “Evacuation Procedures”

This plan is for use in case of a major incident such as fire, earthquake, bomb threat or medical emergency.

2. You must state the intent of your document, i.e.,

The intent of this document is to acquaint the occupants (employees) of the building with procedures to be followed should an evacuation become necessary.

3. You must state the procedures to be followed:

***** DO NOT PANIC! REMAIN CALM! THINK! *****

- I. If you discover a fire:

- A. **RESCUE** Get everyone out of fire area/room.
- B. **CONFINE** Close all doors as you exit. Close windows, if possible.
- C. **ALERT** Pull manual alarm to alert others.
- D. **ALARM** Call 911 from a safe area.
- E. **EVACUATE** Proceed to nearest “safe” exit.

IMPORTANT: DO NOT REENTER THE DANGEROUS AREA UNTIL THE ALL-CLEAR SIGNAL IS ISSUED.

- II. If you hear a fire alarm:

- A. **CONFINE** Close all doors and windows in the room
- B. **EVACUATE** Go to the nearest “safe” exit.

- III. If someone requires assistance (cannot walk, see, or hear):

- A. Assure that they are responding.
- B. Assist them to an area of refuge. (Either beyond one or more smoke doors on the same floor or into a safe area in a stairwell)
- C. Be sure to inform fire crews as to the location of residents (employees) requiring help to evacuate.

IV. IMPORTANT NOTES:

Dial 911, giving name, address, telephone number, location of the fire, and if there are any fire victims.

- Never delay sounding manual alarm.
- Do not prop hallway doors open.
- Know where all exits are.
- Do not attempt to extinguish the fire unless manual alarm has been sounded first.
- Visitors must be signed in and out, so that in times of emergencies, they can be accounted for.
- Confine! Isolate! Keep fire and smoke from spreading!
- Under no circumstances should you use elevators!

TORNADO TIPS

Tornadoes are frightening realities. We cannot prevent them or even predict where or when they will strike. Many of us are not sure what we should do during a tornado. However, we can take some precautions to minimize danger to people and property. When tornado season approaches, the watchwords are be informed and prepared.

TORNADO WATCH

A tornado watch simply means that conditions are favorable for tornadoes to develop. In this case, you should take precautions to protect yourself and your property and listen to the radio to keep informed.

TORNADO WARNING

A tornado warning means that a tornado has actually been sighted. If a warning is issued for your area, you should seek shelter immediately! There is little time for closing windows or hunting for flashlights. It is a good idea to know where things are and have an emergency storm kit already prepared.

WHEN A TORNADO APPROACHES, YOUR IMMEDIATE ACTION MAY MEAN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.

Seek indoor shelter, preferably in a tornado cellar, underground excavation, or steel framed or reinforced concrete building of substantial construction. ***Avoid windows!***

IN OFFICE BUILDINGS: Stand in an interior hallway on a lower floor, preferably in the basement.

COMMON MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT TORNADOES

MYTH: THE BEST PLACE TO BE DURING A TORNADO IS IN THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF A BUILDING.

FACT: The southwest corner is no safer than any other part of the building. The safest place is in a basement under something sturdy, like a workbench. If there is not a basement, seek shelter in a small interior room in the middle of the building, like a closet or a bathroom. **ALWAYS STAY AWAY FROM OUTSIDE WALLS AND WINDOWS.**

MYTH: WINDOWS SHOULD ALWAYS BE OPENED TO EQUALIZE PRESSURE.

FACT: Opening windows to equalize pressure during a tornado is ineffective in reducing damage. Do not worry about the windows; think about protecting yourself. Also, flying glass is a **real** hazard.

MYTH: YOU CAN OUTFRAN A TORNADO IN A CAR.

FACT: Don't bet your life on it. A tornado is unpredictable; you cannot know which way it is going to go, or how fast. If you are in a car and a tornado is near, get away from the car and lie in a ditch or low area, protecting your head with your hands.

MYTH: MOBILE HOMES ARE SAFE IF THEY ARE TIED DOWN.

FACT: A mobile home is never safe in a violent windstorm such as a tornado. If you are in a mobile home when a tornado watch is announced, leave and go immediately to a safe structure, or be prepared to take cover in a low area, covering your head and the back of your neck.

REMEMBER: If you are in a ditch or ravine, be alert for flash floods that often accompany tornadoes.

AFTER A TORNADO: Keep calm. Stay in your shelter until after the storm is over. Check people around you for injuries. Begin first aid and/or seek help as needed.

BEFORE AN EARTHQUAKE

Put together an earthquake preparedness plan for your business. By planning ahead, you can reduce employee injuries and diminish chances for panic after the earthquake. The plan should address at least four major areas:

1. Employees' response to the earthquake.
2. Emergency communications procedures.

3. Hazard reduction in the work place.
4. Immediate post quake survival measures.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSE

The plan should have instructions for immediate response when an earthquake occurs; take cover under a desk or heavy table, cover your head, and turn your face away from windows. Do not attempt to leave the building during the quake.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Lists of emergency telephone numbers should be readily available. Included should be numbers (other than 911) for police, fire, medical aid, and utility companies. Consider how you would communicate if your business telephone is not working. Does your business have two-way radio, cellular telephones, employees with ham radios and/or amateur licenses, or CB radios? Are you close enough to have a mutual agreement with other businesses for pooling communications resources to handle emergency communications?

HAZARD REDUCTION

One of the best ways to reduce employee or customer injury is to eliminate potential causes of earthquake injury. Inspect all areas of your business for earthquake hazards. Secure or brace tall or top heavy shelves or equipment that could fall over. Secure equipment on desks and tables so it will not shake and slide off, injuring someone or damaging the equipment. Anchor all gas appliances to prevent broken gas lines and connections, which can lead to fire or explosions. Consider using flexible gas connection pipes. Educate employees on several alternate routes of evacuation from various parts of your business, in case there area becomes unsafe after the quake.

Appoint a “leader” and at least one alternate “leader” for each floor of your business to be trained on proper procedures for action during and after an earthquake. The Red Cross offers several courses appropriate for such training.

POST EARTHQUAKE SURVIVAL

Studies have shown that people may be “on their own” for as much as 72 hours after a significant earthquake. Community emergency services may be stretched to their limits handling extremely serious situations. Those with problems less severe will have to care for themselves. Employees should know where first aid supplies and fire extinguishers are and how to use them. They should know where the main gas valve is and how to turn off the gas, if necessary. Keep adequate supplies in case people cannot leave your premises for as much as two to three days. Included should be first aid supplies, battery powered radios with extra batteries, at least a three-day supply of food and water for each employee, and blankets. Employees should be encouraged to keep their own survival kits handy with any regularly needed prescription drugs and personal toiletries, such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, etc. If you run a sizable retail establishment, consider that most customers may be confined with your employees and make provisions for additional

supplies. Needs of physically disabled employees or customers should be included in your plan. Determine which areas of your business could be used for temporary shelter if employees (and customers) must stay after the quake. If your building has no windows that can be opened, consider how ventilation will be accomplished if the power is off. If there is no running water, how will toilet and sanitation needs be handled? Plans should include how the dead will be immediately disposed of after the quake. Develop plans for how your business will continue operations in case of major failures caused by the quake. Consider how you would operate with total or partial shut down of your facilities due to major failures of your building's communications, utilities, transportation systems, or loss of key employees. Finally, be sure your earthquake plan is not only published, but each employee understands the plan and their role in it.

AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE

Employees should check immediately for injured people and fires. Give first aid, but do not move seriously injured persons unless threats of further injury require such moves. Check for fire hazards, damaged electrical wiring, and gas leaks. If gas leaks are detected, shut off gas at a main valve, but only if leaks are detected. Do not shut off gas on general principle; you may need it. Check for building damage and move to safe areas. Be ready for aftershocks. Do not use elevators. Keep employees from running into the street where falling debris may injure them. Use flashlights, not matches, to avoid explosions from gas leaks. Immediately clean up spills of any dangerous materials and limit telephone use to emergency calls. Turn on battery-powered radios and listen to public instructions. Your "leaders" should account for their people and ensure that the emergency plan is properly implemented.