

Life Safety Information

Life Safety- Protecting the health and safety of everyone in the facility is the first priority during an emergency.

Evacuation Planning:

One common means of protection is evacuation. In the case of fire, an immediate evacuation to a predetermined area away from the facility may be necessary. In a hurricane, evacuation could involve the entire community and take place over a period of days.

To develop an evacuation policy and procedure:

- Determine the conditions under which an evacuation would be necessary.
- Establish a clear chain of command. Identify personnel with authority to order an evacuation. Designate people to assist others in an evacuation and to account for personnel.
- Establish specific evacuation procedures. Establish a system for accounting for personnel. Consider employees' transportation needs for community-wide evacuations.
- Establish procedures for assisting persons with disabilities and those who do not speak English.
- Post evacuation procedures.
- Designate personnel to continue or shut down critical operations while an evacuation is under way. They must be capable of recognizing when to abandon the operation and evacuate themselves.
- Coordinate plans with the local emergency management office.

Evacuation Routes and Exits

Designate primary and secondary evacuation routes and exits. Have them clearly marked and well lit. Post signs.

Install emergency lighting in case a power outage occurs during evacuation.

Ensure that evacuation routes and emergency exits are:

- Wide enough to accommodate the number of evacuating personnel.
- Clear and unobstructed at all times.

- Unlikely to expose evacuating personnel to additional hazards.
- Have evacuation routes evaluated by someone not in your organization.

Assembly Areas and Accountability

Obtaining an accurate account of personnel after site evacuation requires planning and practice.

- Designate assembly areas where personnel should gather after evacuating.
- Take a head count after the evacuation. The names and last known locations of personnel not accounted for should be determined and given to the EOC. (Confusion in the assembly areas can lead to unnecessary and dangerous search and rescue operations.)
- Establish a method for accounting for non-employees such as suppliers and customers.
- Establish procedures for further evacuation in case the incident expands. This may consist of sending employees home by normal means or providing them with transportation to an off-site location.

Shelter

In some emergencies, the best means of protection is to take shelter either within the facility or away from the facility in a public building.

- Consider the conditions for taking shelter, e.g., tornado warning.
- Identify shelter space in the facility and in the community. Establish procedures for sending personnel to shelter.
- Determine needs for emergency supplies such as water, food, and medical supplies.
- Designate shelter managers, if appropriate.
- Coordinate plans with local authorities.

Training Information

Train employees in evacuation, shelter, and other safety procedures. Conduct sessions at least annually or when:

- Employees are hired.
- When special assignments are designated.

- New equipment, materials, or processes are introduced.
- Procedures are updated or revised.
- Exercises show that employee performance must be improved.

Provide emergency information such as checklists and evacuation maps. Post evacuation maps in strategic locations. Consider the information needs of customers and others who visit the facility.

Family Preparedness

Consider ways to help employees prepare their families for emergencies. This will increase their personal safety and help the facility get back up and running. Those who are prepared at home will be better able to carry out their responsibilities at work.