

REPORTING EMERGENCIES

In the event of an emergency of any kind, the rapid notification of that emergency to the proper authority is vital to minimizing damage to facilities and injuries to both City employees and residents of the City. Reporting of emergencies can be done in many different ways. Some of the most common are:

- Dialing – 911
- Building Intercom
- Bells, whistles and horns
- Activating fire alarm
- Hidden push button
- Telephone
- Verbal notice

The size and nature of the emergency will usually dictate the method used to report the emergency. In the event of an emergency that is going to require that an entire facility be evacuated, a fire alarm or building intercom would be the recommended method in conjunction with dialing 911. Smaller scale emergencies such as an injured coworker can be limited to using the telephone. For employees who are not in an office or near a phone, a portable radio is recommended. Keep in mind that when you are reporting an emergency, the location and type of hazard will need to be relayed to emergency responders. Example: "There is a fire in the employee lounge area of the City Hall building." That tells the responders the exact location of the fire.

EXITING CRITERIA

A wide variety of emergencies both man-made and natural, may require a workplace to be evacuated. These emergencies include - fires, explosions, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, toxic material releases, radiological and biological accidents, civil disturbances and workplace violence.

Employers will want their employees to respond differently to these different threats. For example, employers may want to have employees assemble in one area inside the workplace if threatened by a tornado or perhaps a chemical spill on an adjacent highway, but evacuate to an exterior location during a fire. Your plan must identify when and how employees are to respond to different types of emergencies. Ask yourself questions and brainstorm worst-case scenarios. What would happen if the storeroom caught fire, the river flooded, or a chemical release occurred in the shop?

- The type of building you work in may be a factor in your decision. Most buildings are vulnerable to the effects of disasters such as tornadoes, earthquakes, floods, or explosions. The extent of the damage depends on the type of emergency and the building's construction. Modern factories and office buildings, for example, are framed in steel and are structurally more sound than neighborhood business premises may be. In a disaster such as a major earthquake or explosion, however, nearly every type of structure will be affected. Some buildings will collapse and others will be left with weakened floors and walls. Most employers create maps from floor diagrams with arrows that designate the exit route assignments. These maps should include locations of exits, assembly points, and equipment (such as fire extinguishers, first aid kits, spill kits) that may be needed in an emergency. Exit routes should be:

- Clearly marked and well lit,
- Wide enough to accommodate the number of evacuating personnel,
- Unobstructed and clear of debris at all times, and
- Unlikely to expose evacuating personnel to additional hazards.

Certain equipment and processes must be shut down in stages or over time. In other instances it is not possible or practical for equipment or certain process to be shut down under certain emergency situations. This condition, which is not unusual for certain large manufacturers operating complex processes, is not typical of small enterprises that normally can turn off equipment or utilities if necessary and evacuate. However some small enterprises may require designated employees remain behind briefly to operate fire extinguishers or shut down gas and/or electrical systems and other special equipment that could be damaged if left operating or create additional hazards to emergency responders (such as releasing hazardous materials).

Each employer must review their operation and determine whether total and immediate evacuation is possible for various types of emergencies. The preferred approach, and the one most often taken by small enterprises, is immediate evacuation of all their employees when the evacuation alarm is sounded.

If any employees will stay behind, the plan must describe in detail the procedures to be followed by these employees. All employees remaining behind must be capable of recognizing when to abandon the operation or task and evacuate themselves before their egress path is blocked. In small establishments it is common to include in your plan locations where utilities (such as electrical and gas) can be shut down for all or part of the facility either by your own employees or by emergency response personnel.

To ensure the fastest, most accurate accountability of your employees, you may want to consider including these steps in your emergency action plan:

- Designate assembly areas where employees should gather after evacuating;
- Take a head count after the evacuation. Identify the names and last known locations of anyone not accounted for and pass them to the official in charge;
- Establish a method for accounting for non-employees such as suppliers and customers; and
- 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 offsite location.

EVACUATION OPTIONS

Should employees evacuate or be prepared to fight a small fire?

Choosing to evacuate the workplace rather than providing fire extinguishers for employee use in fighting fires will most effectively minimize the potential for fire-related injuries to employees. In addition, training employees to use fire extinguishers and maintaining them requires considerable resources. However, other factors, such as the availability of a public fire department or the vulnerability of egress routes, will enter into this decision.

Option 1

Total evacuation of employees from the workplace immediately when alarm sounds. No one is authorized to use available portable fire extinguishers.

Requirement

Establish an emergency action and fire prevention plan and train employees accordingly. If fire extinguishers are left in the workplace, they must be inspected, tested, and maintained.

Option 2

Designated employees are authorized to use portable fire extinguishers to fight fires. All other employees must evacuate workplace immediately when alarm sounds.

Requirement

Establish an emergency action and fire prevention plan and train employees accordingly. Meet all general fire extinguisher requirements plus annually train designated employees to use fire extinguishers. Fire extinguishers in the workplace must be inspected, tested, and maintained.

Option 3

All employees are authorized to use portable fire extinguishers to fight fires.

Requirement

If any employees will be evacuating, establish an emergency action and fire prevention plan and train employees accordingly. Meet all general fire extinguisher requirements plus annually train all employees to use fire extinguishers. Fire extinguishers in the workplace must be inspected, tested, and maintained.

EMERGENCY ESCAPE PROCEDURES

A wide variety of emergencies both man-made and natural may require a workplace to be evacuated. These emergencies include – fires, explosions, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, toxic material releases, radiological and biological accidents, civil disturbances and workplace violence.

Employers will want their employees to respond differently to these different threats. For example, employers may want to have employees assemble in one area inside the workplace if threatened by a tornado or perhaps a chemical spill on an adjacent highway, but evacuate to an exterior location during a fire. Ask yourself questions and brainstorm worst-case scenarios. What would happen if the storeroom caught fire, the river flooded, or a chemical release occurred in the shop?

The type of building you work in may be a factor in your decision. Most buildings are vulnerable to the effects of disasters such as tornados, earthquakes, floods, or explosions. The extent of the damage depends on the type of emergency and the builder's construction. Modern factories and office buildings, for example, are framed in steel and are structurally sounder than neighborhood business premises may be. In a disaster such as a major earthquake or explosion, however, nearly every type of structure will be affected. Some buildings will collapse and others will be left with weakened floors and walls. A wall map is in your designated work station with arrows that designate the exit route assignments. These maps include locations of exits, assembly points, and equipment (such as fire extinguishers, first aid kits, spill kits) that may be needed in an emergency. Exit routes should be:

- Clearly marked and well lit,
- Wide enough to accommodate the number of evacuating personnel,
- Unobstructed and clear of debris at all times and
- Unlikely to expose evacuating personnel to additional hazards.

It is recommended that all employees be aware of the location and status of all exits and emergency equipment. Being familiar with exits and exit routes will help save precious seconds and avoid large scale confusion in the event of an emergency.

Escape route assignments are an important factor in safely exiting a building. Not only will following your pre-designated escape routes provide for an organized evacuation and prevent one exit from becoming overloaded, but provide for a means of employee accountability. The following is a process for safely exiting and evacuating a building.

- Step 1 Become familiar with your building and designated exit routes.
- Step 2 Once notified of an emergency, proceed to your exit location and established meeting place.
- Step 3 Locate your supervisor and notify him or her that you are safely outside of the building. Each supervisor shall report the status of his or her departments' employees to their respective supervisor as quickly as possible.
- Step 4 Do not return into the building for any reason.

Once the information regarding the buildings' evacuation has reached the department head or person responsible for that particular facility, that information must be relayed to the emergency responder that has assumed responsibility for the incident "incident commander". This is usually a fire chief or a police sergeant. Information regarding injured or missing employees should also be relayed.

For City facilities where the public has access during business hours, the employee that is normally responsible for assisting those persons shall ensure that the public access areas have been evacuated prior to evacuating themselves. An exception would be if the employee is unable to reach the public area due to the emergency itself.

Due to the size and complexities of some City facilities, an immediate evacuation may not be possible, i.e., the police dispatch center. Supervisors are going to be forced to assess the emergency and determine the best way to evacuate the building. In situations where an employee must stay behind, the names and exact location of the employee should be relayed to the incident commander and every attempt be made to evacuate as soon as possible. The preferred approach to any emergency where an alarm or notification has sounded is a total and immediate evacuation regardless of the operations in progress.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND PROCEDURE APPROVALS

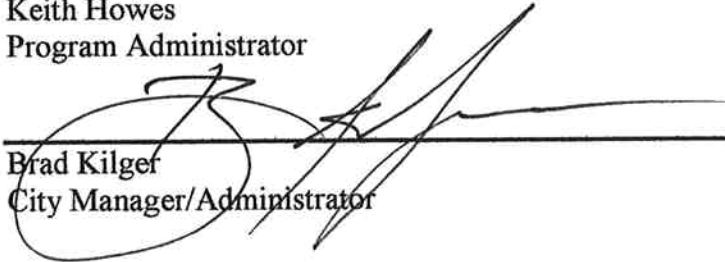
This Emergency Preparedness and Procedures Program, as a component of the City's Injury and Illness Prevention Program, was prepared for the following location:

CITY OF CERES
2720 SECOND STREET
CERES, CA 95307

This Emergency Preparedness and Procedure Program has been prepared, reviewed, and approved by the following personnel:



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