

Emergency Preparedness



Our objectives for this module:

- Identify different types of workplace disasters
- Understand the requirements of our emergency response plan
- Carry out emergency response assignments effectively
- Evacuate quickly and safely in an emergency

During this module you will answer Quick Quizzes to help you review and test your understanding; these are not scored.

This module takes 15 minutes to complete.

1. Types of workplace disasters
2. OSHA requirements
3. Emergency response plan
4. Emergency assignments
5. Evacuation procedures
6. Special procedures for natural disasters
7. Pandemics

We may face a number of different types of workplace emergencies. Many of these disasters strike without much—or any—warning. Effective planning is the key to saving lives and protecting property.

- **Fires** are the most common type of workplace emergency. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that fires cause as many as 10,000 employee injuries and 200 employee deaths every year. In addition, the U.S. Fire Administration says that losses from industrial fires cost U.S. businesses over \$4 billion a year in property losses and more than \$8 billion in business interruption costs.
- **Explosions** resulting from fires, bombs, or other causes can claim many lives, leave many more badly injured, and destroy property.
- **Natural disasters** such as earthquakes and tornadoes can strike with little or no warning. Hurricanes and floods may be forecast, but effective emergency action in these situations may nevertheless be required.



- **Toxic chemical releases** can require emergency response within the workplace and in the surrounding community.
- **Workplace violence** can erupt at any time in any department. We must be prepared to respond quickly and appropriately in these dangerous and sometimes life-threatening situations.
- **Terrorists Attacks** - since September 11th, and subsequent terrorist attacks around the world, we must be prepared to face the possibility of terrorist attacks in the workplace at any time.
- **Pandemics**, though very rare, can cause sickness, death, and a major disruption of business operations.



OSHA regulations require us to prepare for workplace disasters in several key ways:

- **Alarm systems** - The regulations require an alarm system to warn you in the event of a workplace emergency.
- **Reporting systems** - Emergency phone numbers must be posted near phones, on bulletin boards, and in other conspicuous locations around the facility so that you will be able to report emergencies quickly and effectively.
- **Fire-fighting equipment** - The regulations specify location, maintenance, and inspection requirements for fire-fighting equipment used in the facility.
- **Emergency response plans** - OSHA requires a written emergency response plan to help deal effectively with the types of workplace disasters you are likely to face.
- **Team Member training** - The regulations require us to train you to respond to emergencies in ways that will minimize injuries and destruction of property.

An important part of disaster planning is making sure all Team Members receive basic training in emergency response:

- **Review of emergency response plan** - Review the organization's emergency response plan with your Team Members and answer any questions concerning the plan. If there are any questions you can't answer, refer Team Members to the emergency response coordinator.
- **Types of potential emergencies** - Discuss the different types of potential emergencies that could occur in the workplace—for example, fires, natural disasters, or pandemics.
- **Evacuation plans** - Review the company's evacuation plans in detail, using escape route maps and floor plans to help Team Members understand proper evacuation procedures.
- **Alarm systems** - Make sure Team Members know how to sound the alarm in an emergency and that they know what the alarm sounds like.
- **Reporting procedures** - Explain how to and to whom emergencies situations should be reported.
- **Shutdown procedures** - Cover basic shutdown procedures in an emergency, such as shutting off equipment, closing windows and doors.

OSHA regulations specify certain requirements concerning alarm systems:

- **Sound of alarms** - You should be able to recognize the sound of the emergency alarm. This is especially important if you are a new Team Member. Regular fire drills and tests of the alarm will help familiarize you with our system.
- **Location of alarms** - You should know the location of emergency alarm boxes in and around your work area and in other parts of the facility where you frequently go.
- **Activation of alarms** - You must also know how to activate the alarms. If you are not sure how to do this, ask your supervisor to show you.
- **Maintenance and inspection of alarm systems** - OSHA also requires the maintenance and testing of alarm systems on a regular basis to make sure it is functioning properly.

OSHA also requires fire-fighting equipment throughout the facility, which must be accessible at all times. You should never block access to this equipment with stored materials, equipment, or in any other way.

- **There are fire extinguishers in each work area.** The extinguishers are appropriate for the kinds of fires that are likely to occur in each area. They should always be kept in designated locations when not in use.
- **Other fire-fighting equipment is provided** as required by the regulations and the nature of the operations in particular areas of the facility. For example, we have sprinkler systems to help extinguish fires in some parts of the facility.



**Only use if Authorized
and Properly Educated**

Here are some simple but effective steps you can take on a day-to-day basis to minimize the threat of fire.

- **Keep work areas clean and free of clutter** -Take steps now to control flammable and combustible materials in your department and make sure they do not pose a fire or explosion hazard. For example, large accumulations of waste paper or other combustible materials can pose a significant fire hazard.
- **Obey “No Smoking” rules.** Careless disposal of cigarettes and matches can lead to fires and explosions.
- **Store and handle hazardous materials properly**, according to the instructions on the label and on the material safety data sheet.
- **Use and maintain equipment properly.**

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OSHA requires a comprehensive written emergency action plan to deal with all types of disasters that might occur in your facilities.

- **Emergency escape procedures and routes** - The emergency plan outlines emergency escape procedures and escape routes for all departments and all Team Members
- **Emergency response assignments** - The plan spells out the procedures to be followed by Team Members who remain in the facility to perform critical operations or shutdown operations before the plant is completely evacuated.
- **Accounting for personnel** - The plan also details procedures for accounting for you and your co-workers outside the facility after the emergency evacuation has been completed.

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- **Rescue and medical duties** –The emergency plan also outlines rescue and medical duties for those Team Members who are designated to perform these vital emergency response tasks.
- **Emergency reporting procedures** - The plan specifies how to report fires and other emergencies.
- **Information resources** –The plan lists the names and job titles of the people or departments to be contacted for further information or explanation of duties under the plan. Review your organization’s emergency plan with trainees. Make sure they know whom to contact in the event of an emergency.

**TO SUMMON EMERGENCY
RESPONSE TEAM**

If someone needs emergency medical attention

DO THE FOLLOWING!!

1. DIAL 9 FOR OUTSIDE LINE
2. DIAL 555-5555
3. WAIT FOR BEEPING TO STOP
4. DIAL: 1-234-5678
5. HANG UP
6. CALL SECURITY (2277) AND REPORT WHAT IS HAPPENING
7. REMAIN AT PHONE FOR ERT CALL

An Emergency Plan outlines:

- A. Emergency escape procedures and routes
- B. Emergency response assignments
- C. Rescue and medical duties
- D. All of the above

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Some of you will be asked to assume special emergency response duties, such as:

- **Emergency operations assignments** - For example, you may be designated as one of the people who remain behind temporarily in an emergency to handle critical operations.
- **Emergency shutdown duties** - You could be assigned to handle the emergency shutdown of equipment and processes or as a member of a hazardous materials cleanup team or chosen to be on a team assigned to keep certain essential operations going until emergency personnel order a total evacuation.
- **Fire-fighting duties** - You may be tapped for fire-fighting duties as part of a brigade or as department fire marshals.

If you are selected for such responsibilities, you will be thoroughly trained to carry out your assignment effectively.

- **Evacuation facilitation** - You could also be chosen to serve as an evacuation warden or alternate. If so, you will play a vital role in ensuring that the evacuation of the facility runs smoothly and that everyone gets out safely.
- **Assisting disabled co-workers** - You might be asked to assist disabled co-workers during an evacuation.
- **Rescue and medical duties** - Some of you will be trained in emergency rescue and medical response. These are critical duties that can save lives and prevent injuries. If you serve on an emergency response team, you will require very specialized skills and extensive training.

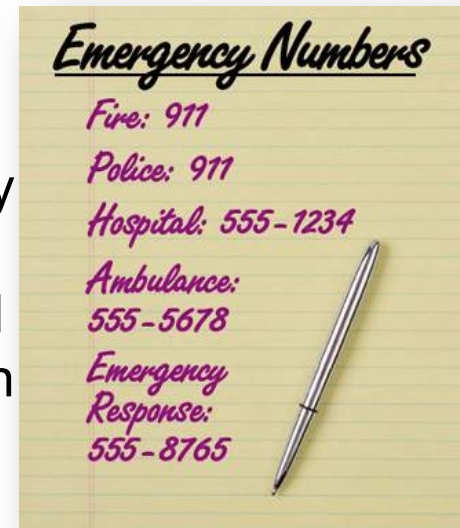
Emergency evacuation procedures are the most important element of any Emergency Preparedness plan.

- **Primary evacuation route** - Each one of you should have a primary evacuation route from your work area. You will have the chance to become thoroughly familiar with your primary evacuation route when you practice evacuation during fire drills.
- **Alternate routes** - In addition to your main evacuation route, you should have at least one alternate evacuation route in case your main route is blocked by fire, smoke, or other obstruction in an actual emergency.
- **Safe behavior** - Safe behavior during an emergency evacuation includes remaining calm, moving quickly without running toward emergency exits, alerting others of the need to evacuate, and helping as directed by emergency response personnel.

- **Evacuation of injured or disabled Team Members** - In an emergency, each one of us is responsible for protecting ourselves. But we also have responsibilities toward co-workers. You may need to help injured or disabled co-workers evacuate in an emergency. You should help in whatever way you can. However, remember that while it is important to help others, you should do so only if you can help without endangering yourself. If you can't, alert a member of the rescue squad to assist.
- **Accounting for personnel** - We have arranged a method of accounting for you and your co-workers once you have escaped from the building. You will be instructed to meet at a designated spot outside, at a safe distance from the building, for a head count so that we can make sure no one has been left behind.

Not all workplace emergencies require evacuation. If an emergency situation is localized or contained, evacuation of the entire facility may not be necessary. The following guidelines can help you respond appropriately in these cases.

- **Know who to call for assistance** in an emergency of this type. Emergency numbers should be posted by each phone.
- **Warn co-workers of the problem.** Without sounding a general alarm, workers outside the immediate area may be unaware of the problem.
- **Assist as directed** by specially trained co-workers and emergency personnel. Help as much as possible, within the limits of your training, authority, and abilities. At the very least, you can help by keeping others away from the area or leading firefighters or EMTs to the area.
- **Don't get in the way.** If you are not assisting, stay clear of the area, and don't interfere with the work of those who are trained to respond to the situation.



Special emergency rules may apply in the event of a natural disaster like a hurricane, tornado, or earthquake. Because some natural disasters can be predicted and others cannot, emergency response will be different depending on the disaster and the extent of the damage caused. Keep an eye on news reports and follow the recommendations of authorities. If a disaster strikes while you are at work, depending on the circumstances, you may be told to:

- Leave for home promptly
- Stay at work until existing dangerous conditions subside and it is safe to travel
- Go to a secure area, such as designated shelters or areas of refuge

During an evacuation, you should:

- A. Stay and help out, even if you don't have a specific assignment
- B. Run as fast as you can to the nearest evacuation route
- C. Evacuate the building immediately, helping co-workers evacuate also, if you can do so safely.

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Whether you are at work or at home when a crisis like a natural disaster or pandemic strikes, you need to be prepared with basic survival supplies, including the following items:

- Emergency food and water
- An adequate supply of medicines and first-aid supplies
- Hygienic supplies such as soap, disinfectants, clean clothes and towels, etc.
- Cell phone and recharger
- Flashlights, battery-powered radio, and extra batteries
- Blankets

You also need to take steps to protect your family during a natural disaster or pandemic.

- Develop a family Emergency Preparedness plan and make sure all family members understand what to do. Have regular drills and practice with everyone in the family participating
- Establish communication methods so that the family can keep in touch during a crisis even if you are separated
- Decide what to take if you have to leave home
- Keep vehicles gassed up and ready to go
- Prepare your home as much as possible to minimize damage

- Determine what supplies you would need if the family were trapped inside your home for several days without power or water.
- Make sure you know your children's school emergency plans.
- Designate an out-of-area contact person to relay messages between family members if necessary.
- Make plans to provide for your pets.
- If you have to go to work, leave a vehicle at home for your family to use if they have to evacuate.



According for the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an influenza, or flu, pandemic is a worldwide outbreak of flu disease that occurs when a new type of influenza virus appears that people have not been exposed to before, or have not been exposed to in a long time.

- **Avian influenza, or “bird flu,”** is a contagious disease of animals caused by viruses that normally infect only birds and, less commonly, pigs. Avian influenza viruses are highly species-specific, but have, on rare occasions, crossed the species barrier to infect humans.
- **No or little immunity to the new virus** - A pandemic virus can cause serious illness because people do not have immunity to the new virus. Pandemics are different from seasonal outbreaks of influenza that we see every year.
- **Seasonal influenza** is caused by influenza virus types to which people have already been exposed. Its impact on society is less severe than a pandemic, and influenza vaccines such as flu shots and nasal-spray vaccine are available to help prevent widespread illness from seasonal flu.

Here are some measures that can help you stay healthy at work:

- **Hand washing** -Hand washing is one of the best preventive measures you can take, because the virus will likely be able to live on surfaces, like doorknobs, for about 2 days. Wash your hands often, for at least 20 seconds at a time, with soap and water, especially after you cough, sneeze, or touch a surface touched by many people. Hand sanitizers that are 60 percent to 95 percent alcohol are also very effective in killing the virus.
- **Cover your mouth** - Avian flu viruses can transmit as droplets in the air created when you cough, sneeze, or laugh. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and throw the tissue away immediately after you use it. Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth, because germs often spread this way.



Here are some measures that can help you stay healthy at work:

- **Stay 3 feet apart** - Avoid close contact with people who are sick; and when you are sick, keep your distance from others. Stay at least 3 feet away from others.
- **Disinfect work surfaces** - The flu virus can live for 48 hours on a surface. Commercial disinfectants and bleach, with dilutions as low as 1 part bleach to 10 parts water, can be used to kill the virus on a workstation.
- **N95 face mask and nitrile gloves** - N95 face masks and nitrile gloves can protect you if you have to come in contact with others.
- **Flu shots** - The seasonal flu shot won't necessarily keep you safe from avian flu, but we encourage you to get vaccinated even after a pandemic virus hits. Exposure to other flu viruses can weaken the body's immune defense against pandemic flu.
- **Don't come to work sick.** - If you get the flu, or feel achy and feverish, stay home from work.

- **Absence due to sickness and death** - Pandemics can cause large surges in the numbers of people requiring or seeking medical or hospital treatment, temporarily overwhelming health services.
- **Caring for sick family members** - If you have to care for sick family members, remember that you may be exposed to the virus and may not show symptoms for up to 48 hours, but may still be contagious. You should not come to work if you have been exposed to the virus until you are sure you have not contracted the avian flu.
- **School closings** would likely happen very early in a pandemic and could occur on short notice. If you are a parent, you may have to stay home to care for your children.
- **Transportation services**, such as subways, buses, and trains, may be disrupted and you may not be able to get to work. The ability to travel, even by car if there are fuel shortages, may be limited.
- **Interruption of essential services** - Pandemics can interrupt business operations and other essential services. In today's closely interrelated and interdependent systems of trade and commerce, the social and economic effects of a pandemic flu could be long term and vast.

Security is also an important emergency planning issue. During an emergency it may be necessary to secure the facility to prevent unauthorized access and to protect vital records and other information. You may be asked to assist in this effort.

- **Help prevent unauthorized access to vital records, information, and equipment** - To prevent unauthorized access to vital records, information, and equipment, you may need to make sure that certain drawers or doors are locked quickly in an emergency. To prevent access to vital digital information, you may need to protect computer networks with passwords. In addition, after an emergency, you may need to help cordon off certain parts of the facility and notify local law enforcement personnel so that they can secure the area and prevent unauthorized people from entering.
- **Protect important records and other documents** - To protect important records and documents from damage during a workplace disaster, you may need to follow special procedures such as storing copies of essential files or documents outside the facility or protecting them in secure locations inside the building such as fireproof storage rooms. Computer files may need to be backed up to secure servers at remote locations

- Workplace disasters can strike any time and with very little warning
- Emergency response planning can save lives, reduce the number of injuries, and prevent loss of property
- You need to know what to do during a workplace emergency as well as how to protect your home and family during natural disasters and pandemics

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