



RISK BULLETIN

Employee Tips for Handling Workplace Emergencies



Workplace emergencies can take many forms: physical perils, such as fires, floods, or earthquakes; work accidents; or deliberate acts of terrorism or sabotage. In addition to following a company's emergency action plan; employees can use these simple tips to enhance their emergency preparedness.

BEFORE THE EMERGENCY

- Know your preplanned evacuation routes, including the alternate evacuation route from your work area.
- When visiting other work areas, check the evacuation maps so you can be prepared to escape during an emergency.
- Keep a flash light at your workstation. Even a small pen light can be enough to help you find exits and avoid tripping hazards in the dark.

- Keep the emergency numbers for your facility on an index card in your work area and a copy in your wallet or purse.
- Know the location of first aid kits, eye wash stations, fire extinguishers, and fire alarm boxes.
- Make sure your co-workers know where you are. During an emergency, employees must be accounted for. If you leave your work area, let someone know where you are going, so they can find you if an emergency should occur.
- Back up your computer files often. While life safety is foremost, preventing lost data is critical for company survival.

DURING THE EMERGENCY

- Don't panic. While the emergency may be life threatening, nothing ensures survival more than a clear mind and sound pre-planning. Try to remain calm, and remember the training your employer provided for handling emergencies.
- Don't take risks you are not trained for. During an emergency, employees are often injured trying to assist others. If you do not have the equipment or training to rescue or provide medical care to others, your best action is to summon help.

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- Never re-enter a dangerous area to retrieve equipment, records, or personal items. Nothing is worth you risking your life.
- Don't leave the property. When employees leave during an emergency without being accounted for, rescue personnel may be sent to find them, which places the rescuers in danger.

AFTER THE EMERGENCY

- Talk with your supervisor about what happened and what you did. Your perspective is invaluable in helping to prepare for future emergencies.
- Don't be afraid to talk with your supervisor or health care provider about how you feel. Emergencies place a great deal of stress on employees. It is natural to feel nervous or scared about what happened.
- Plan for the next time. Once in a lifetime emergencies actually can happen more than once. Learn from the past emergencies to better prepare for future ones.

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