Emergency Action Plan Quiz



QUESTION

What are the four principal protective actions to take in the face of a workplace emergency’

ANSWER

1. Evacuation.
2. Sheltering.
3. Shelter ‘ in ‘ Place.
4. Lockdown.

WHY IS IT RIGHT

MAN MADE / NATURAL DISASTERS / HEALTH ‘ RELATED

It is critical for every worker affected or subjected to any ’emergency’ to understand the procedure for helping themselves and others to act quickly and correctly.

- Natural emergencies are disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards and tornados.
- Man-made and health related emergencies include fires, chemicals, spills, active shooters, heart attacks and seizures.
- Health related emergencies like heart attacks, seizures and general injury are a potential danger to all workplaces.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

The actions taken in the initial minutes of an emergency are critical. A prompt warning to employees to evacuate, shelter or lockdown can save lives.

1st Step:

The first step when developing an emergency response plan is to conduct a risk assessment to identify potential emergency scenarios. An understanding of what can happen will enable you to determine resource requirements and to develop plans and procedures to prepare your business.

2nd Step:

When an emergency occurs, the first priority is always life safety.

3rd Step:

The second priority is the stabilization of the incident. There are many actions that can be taken to stabilize an incident and minimize potential damage. First aid and CPR by trained employees can save lives. Use of fire extinguishers by trained employees can extinguish a small fire. Containment of a small chemical spill and supervision of building utilities and systems can minimize damage to a building and help prevent environmental damage.

4th Step:

The plan should also include a process for damage assessment, salvage, protection of undamaged property and cleanup following an incident. These actions to minimize further damage and business disruption are examples of property conservation.

PROTECTIVE ACTIONS

Your emergency plan should include the following protective actions.

- **Evacuation**

Prompt evacuation of employees requires a warning system that can be heard throughout the building. Test your fire alarm system to determine if it can be heard by all employees. If there is no fire alarm system, use a public address system, air horns or other means to warn everyone to evacuate. Sound the evacuation signal during planned drills so employees are familiar with the sound.

Make sure that there are sufficient exits available at all times.

- Check to see that there are at least two exits from hazardous areas on every floor of every building. Building or fire codes may require more exits for larger buildings.
- Walk around the building and verify that exits are marked with exit signs and there is sufficient lighting so people can safely travel to an exit. If you find anything that blocks an exit, have it removed.
- Enter every stairwell, walk down the stairs, and open the exit door to the outside. Continue walking until you reach a safe place away from the building. Consider using this safe area as an assembly area for evacuees.

Appoint an evacuation team leader and assign employees to direct evacuation of the building. Assign at least one person to each floor to act as a ‘floor warden’ to direct employees to the nearest safe exit. Assign a backup in case the floor warden is not available or if the size of the floor is very large. Ask employees if they would need any special assistance evacuating or moving to shelter. Assign a ‘buddy’ or aide to assist persons with disabilities during an emergency. Contact the fire department to develop a plan to evacuate persons with disabilities.

Have a list of employees and maintain a visitor log at the

front desk, reception area or main office area. Assign someone to take the lists to the assembly area when the building is evacuated. Use the lists to account for everyone and inform the fire department whether everyone has been accounted for. When employees are evacuated from a building, OSHA regulations require an accounting to ensure that everyone has gotten out safely. A fire, chemical spill or other hazard may block an exit, so make sure the evacuation team can direct employees to an alternate safe exit.

- **Sheltering**

If a tornado warning is broadcast, a distinct warning signal should be sounded and everyone should move to shelter in the strongest part of the building. Shelters may include basements or interior rooms with reinforced masonry construction. Evaluate potential shelters and conduct a drill to see whether shelter space can hold all employees. Since there may be little time to shelter when a tornado is approaching, early warning is important. If there is a severe thunderstorm, monitor news sources in case a tornado warning is broadcast. Consider purchasing an Emergency Alert System radio – available at many electronic stores. Tune in to weather warnings broadcast by local radio and television stations. Subscribe to free text and email warnings, which are available from multiple news and weather resources on the Internet.

- **Shelter-In-Place**

A tanker truck crashes on a nearby highway releasing a chemical cloud. A large column of black smoke billows into the air from a fire in a nearby manufacturing plant. If, as part of this event, an explosion, or act of terrorism has occurred, public emergency officials may order people in the vicinity to ‘shelter-in-place.’ You should develop a shelter-in-place plan. The plan should include a means to warn everyone to move away from windows and move to the core of the building. Warn anyone working outside to enter the building immediately. Move

everyone to the second and higher floors in a multistory building. Avoid occupying the basement. Close exterior doors and windows and shut down the building's air handling system. Have everyone remain sheltered until public officials broadcast that it is safe to evacuate the building.

- **Lockdown**

An act of violence in the workplace could occur without warning. If loud 'pops' are heard and gunfire is suspected, every employee should know to hide and remain silent. They should seek refuge in a room, close and lock the door, and barricade the door if it can be done quickly. They should be trained to hide under a desk, in the corner of a room and away from the door or windows. Multiple people should be trained to broadcast a lockdown warning from a safe location.

WHY IS EVERYTHING ELSE WRONG

PREVENTION

Conduct Hazard Assessment

The primary hazards in an emergency such as a fire, chemical release, serious machine malfunction, workplace violence, or natural disaster are often only the beginning of the damage and destruction. A hazard assessment will shed light on all these possible hazards.

An Emergency Action Plan is basically a **'How Do We Get Out of Here Safely'** plan. A good plan should anticipate all possible emergencies as well as all natural and manmade disasters that could occur.

Employees should regularly practice and review emergency response. Practice will expose errors in the plan which could result in lost lives.

Use the findings of the **Hazards Assessment** to develop a **Written Emergency Action Plan.**

The plan must include:

1. All possible emergencies, consequences, required actions, written procedures, and available resources.
2. A detailed list of personnel to contact in an emergency and their role in an emergency.
3. A list of external organizations to contact such as fire, rescue, and ambulance services; hospitals, police department and any government agencies; utility companies; and any industries in nearby that should be informed because of a potential safety risk to their workers and their operations.
4. Floor plans and large-scale maps showing excavation routes, emergency equipment, hazardous areas (i.e. chemical storage), as well as gas and water lines and other information as required by applicable safety regulations.

An EAP should include the following:

1. **Personnel Assignments: The EAP should establish a clear chain of command in which all personnel have clearly assigned roles in the event of an evacuation. The EAP should designate:**
   - A leader with authority to order an evacuation or shutdown.
   - An appropriate number of evacuation wardens to help with the evacuation and ensure that everybody is accounted for before evacuating themselves.
   - Individuals to remain behind to carry out or close-down vital plant operations before evacuating themselves.
   - Individuals authorized to perform rescue or medical duties in the event of an evacuation.
2. **At a minimum, the EAP must incorporate the following procedures:**
   - Procedures for reporting fires and other emergencies.

- Emergency evacuation procedures, including evacuation type and identification of exit routes.
- Procedures to help disabled employees that require assistance to evacuate.
- Procedures for the employees who remain behind to operate critical plant operations before evacuating themselves.
- Procedures to account for all employees after evacuation.
- Procedures for the employees performing rescue or medical duties.

3. **Alarm & Notification Systems including:**

- An alarm system that uses a distinctive signal that all employees recognize to communicate orders to evacuate or perform other actions under the EAP.
- A public address or other emergency communications system that's available to use to notify employees of the emergency and contact local fire, police and other emergency respondents.
- An auxiliary power supply in case electricity is shut off.

4. **PPE & Protective Clothing: Workers counted on to extinguish fires or who are otherwise exposed to risk of fire and explosion must be equipped with and use appropriate PPE and protective clothing.**

- Foot and leg protection;
- Protective footwear;
- Body protection;
- Gloves or glove systems;
- Head, eye and face protection; and
- Respiratory protective equipment.

Training and Education

Workers must receive training and education needed to carry

out their roles under the EAP.

Other items to educate workers on include:

- Threats, hazards and protective actions.
- Notification, communication and warning procedures.
- Means of locating family members in an emergency.
- Emergency response procedures.
- Evacuation, shelter and accountability procedures.
- Location and use of emergency equipment.
- Procedures for emergency shutdown.

Ensure workers understand and can apply their training on the job by:

- Quizzing workers on the lesson after you deliver it.
- Making workers demonstrate the procedures covered during the training.
- Making workers demonstrate proper use of the PPE covered during the training.
- Staging evacuation drills to verify that workers can carry out the EAP and evacuate safely in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Inspect, Monitor, Reinforce, and Improve

You must review the EAP with each worker the plan covers when:

- The EAP is first developed or the worker is first assigned to carry out a responsibility under the plan;
- The worker’s responsibilities under the EAP change; and
- Changes are made to the EAP itself.

Monitoring must be carried out on an ongoing and continuous basis. The monitoring process never ends.