Take 6 Steps for Emergency Preparedness Week

May 4-10, 2014 is Emergency Preparedness Week, a national awareness initiative by provincial and territorial emergency management organizations in concert with Public Safety Canada and partners. The initiative encourages Canadians to take three simple steps to become better prepared to face a range of emergencies:

- Know the risks
- Make a plan
- Get an emergency kit.

Yes, the focus of this week isn't on workplace safety'but it's still an appropriate time to review and reinforce your workplace emergency preparedness efforts. You can do so by taking these six steps:

1. Conduct a risk assessment to identify the kinds of emergencies your workplace is likely to face
2. Develop appropriate safety practices and procedures to respond to the identified emergencies (here are eight tips and a model emergency response plan you can adapt)
3. If you have disabled workers, make sure your emergency procedures take their needs and limitations into account
4. Train workers on your emergency preparedness procedures
5. Ensure that emergency exits aren't blocked or locked
6. Have a sufficient number of fire extinguishers available and make sure that they're accessible to workers and functioning properly.

The Emergency Preparedness Week website has some useful tools, but they're geared toward home and family safety. (You might want to share them with workers for use off-duty.)