

## 1. Training Points

### A. Introduction



**Note:** Display overhead **Emergency Preparedness Meeting Outline** at this point in your meeting. Use it as a guide to cover the key points of your presentation. You may also copy the outline and give it to your employees to follow along with the session and add their own notes.

The purpose of all our safety meetings and training programs is to alert you to the risks you may encounter on the job and to prepare you to avoid those risks when possible.

Sometimes, however, accidents happen, so you also have to be prepared to deal with emergencies that arise.

There are two old sayings that apply to emergencies:

1. Murphy's Law: Whatever can go wrong will go wrong.
2. The Boy Scout motto: Be prepared.

We have a contingency plan here that covers all different types of emergencies: fires, spills, the works. But the best-laid plans count for nothing if people don't know about them and don't follow them.

In most emergencies, your role is limited. One of the keys to handling these situations is to turn them over to people who have received special training and who have the proper equipment for the job.

But even if you're not part of a special emergency crew, you still have two important roles to play: getting yourself away safely and doing what you can to expedite and clear the way for the people handling the problem.

### B. Identifying Hazards



**Note:** Give handout **Identifying Hazards Requiring Emergency Preparedness** to your trainees at this point.

There are some emergency situations which may arise from factors beyond our direct control. Natural hazards like floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes are prime examples. So are incidents of violence or bomb threats.

Other emergencies may occur because of hazards in the work area itself. The first step in emergency preparedness is being familiar with these:

- ▶ Flammable liquids and the circumstances in which they could catch fire
- ▶ Reactive chemicals and the types of reactions they could cause
- ▶ Explosive agents and what could cause them to explode

- ▶ Electrical hazards that could cause fires
- ▶ Vapors and dusts that could burn or explode
- ▶ Chemical vapors that could be toxic in the air

In other words, work on the premise that anything that can go wrong will go wrong. Pay attention to what you're working with and where you're using it. Know what problems could arise so that you can take steps to prevent them and so you'll know what to do if the worst happens.

### **C. Protection Against Hazards**

Chemical labels and material safety data sheets (MSDSs) are two of the best protective measures against accidents that could lead to real emergencies. Study the information they provide whenever you're working with or around a hazardous chemical. They'll tell you what could go wrong, as well as what procedures to follow to prevent accidents from occurring.

If you get in the habit of always referring to labels and MSDSs, and always following their instructions as well as what you learn in safety training, you'll be doing your part to prevent incidents that become what we consider emergencies.

### **D. Safety Procedures**

**Note:** Distribute handout **Emergency Preparedness Checklist** now.



But accidents do happen, whether someone is at fault or not. So it's important to be totally familiar with the procedures to follow in an emergency. In a real emergency, there's not much time to think and to look things up. You have to act fast and do it right. Here's what to keep in mind:

**Note:** The following is a general description of emergency plan components. You may want to insert specific instructions from your company's contingency plan here.

- ▶ Know how to report a fire, spill, or other incident. The names and numbers of people to contact are posted next to each phone. Keep in mind that you must act quickly. If people have to be evacuated or if the problem has to be contained, there is no time to lose. There could be lives at stake.
- ▶ Recognize the sound of the emergency alarm.
- ▶ Alert other people around you to evacuate.
- ▶ Know your responsibilities for shutting down operations or systems.
- ▶ Follow your assigned evacuation route and meet at your assigned assembly point. Don't wander around. We have to be able to find you to make sure you're safe.
- ▶ If you have emergency response duties, follow your instructions on where to go and what to do.

- ▶ Know where to find first-aid supplies and fire extinguishers.

These procedures are vitally important. There is no time to waste when people's safety and even lives are at risk. In some of these emergencies, outside people such as fire departments and chemical response emergency teams also have to be involved.

To keep an emergency from becoming a disaster, everyone has to play his or her own role perfectly. Your role is critical even if you aren't assigned to put out fires or clean up spills. If you don't fulfill your responsibilities quickly and properly, those people won't be able to fulfill theirs.

## **2. Practical Exercises and Discussion Points**

**Note:** Tailor exercises and discussion points to meet the needs of your facility.

1. Ask employees to name some of the types of emergencies that might occur in their workplace.
2. Name a couple of materials employees work with that could create accidents; ask employees to name others.
3. Explain where employees can get information on hazards and protective measures.
4. Ask employees what they should do if they spot a fire or a spill.
5. Identify an incorrect escape route and ask employees if it is correct.
6. Review where employees assemble after evacuating.
7. Discuss where first-aid supplies and fire extinguishers are kept.
8. Ask employees why it is important to act quickly in an emergency.

## **3. Wrap-Up**

Emergency preparedness is everyone's responsibility. The company has worked hard to prepare a detailed plan to handle emergencies, and has trained and equipped people to deal with specific types of accidents. But everyone in the company has emergency responsibilities:

- ▶ To be informed about hazards
- ▶ To take steps to prevent accidents
- ▶ To respond quickly in an emergency
- ▶ To follow emergency procedures quickly and properly

We want a safe workplace, and even if some unforeseen accident occurs, we want everyone to get out of it in good condition. So know exactly what to do in an emergency—and do it.