

Emergency – an unforeseen combination of circumstances or the resulting state that calls for immediate action.

## HAVING A PLAN

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Unfortunately emergencies occur on a daily basis in the workplace, and they are completely unpredictable for the most part. Emergencies can be man-made such as a forklift wreck, or natural such as a blizzard. So how do you respond to an emergency?

Employers should have emergency plans ready at all times for any emergencies that can take place in a given day. It may seem overboard, but when a situation arises and the adrenaline kicks in, a well-organized response plan will pay dividends.

## WHAT SHOULD THE PLAN CONSIST OF?

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Below are some things that are typically included in an emergency response plan.

- Evacuation routes and location of mustering points and first aid stations
  - Mustering Point – a designated place where all employees assemble in the event of an emergency.
- Emergency contacts
  - There should be a list of emergency contacts such as the local fire, police, and EMT service that will be contacted if necessary
- Designated roles
  - Designate tasks to certain people to avoid chaos
- Chain of command
  - Identifying a chain of command will help keep order during emergency
- Reporting procedures
  - Proper reporting helps first responders prepare for the situation
- System for accounting
  - Develop a system to account for all employees to guarantee nobody is left behind

## TRAINING AND DRILLS

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Training: Employees should be made aware of the possible emergencies that they can be exposed to in the workplace. Training should be provided to all employees and refresher training should be done periodically to ensure employees remain adequately trained.

Drills: Drills are a good way to keep employees fresh on emergency plans, some good drills to consider are fire and severe weather drills.

