



Emergency Action Plan—An Overview

Emergencies are always a potential exposure at your facility, job site or and other location you may house employees. Emergencies can take the form of severe weather, fire, life threatening injury and or violence in the workplace. When an emergency situation occurs, it is often times very chaotic and stressful which increases the chance of injury or poor results. In order to reduce exposure to these situations and conditions - to lessen impact on your employees and business - it is a best practice to have a written Emergency Action Plan.

Emergency action plans are developed to provide guidelines on what actions to take if and when an emergency occurs.

Guidelines for your plan:

In 29 CFR 1910.38(a), OSHA lists the minimum elements that should be included in an emergency action plan. These elements include:

- Emergency escape procedures and emergency escape routes.
- Procedures to be followed by employees who remain to operate critical plant operations before they evacuate.
- Procedures to account for workers after emergency evacuation has been completed.
- Rescue and medical duties for those employees who are to perform them.
- The preferred means of reporting fires, hazardous chemical spills, and other emergencies.
- Names or regular job titles of persons or departments who can be contacted for further information or explanation of duties under the plan.

In addition to the required training elements listed in the OSHA regulation outlined above, information should also be provided to the employees on:

- Procedures for sounding emergency alarms. If more than one alarm is used, distinguish between signals and indicate what action is required when each sounds.
- Who to notify in the event of an emergency.
- What phones to use and what number(s) to call to report emergencies.
- Location and use of emergency fire alarms.