



Fire Drill Plan

Fire/emergency drills should be conducted on the first day that a project commences. The drill should include assignment of who handles the fire extinguisher, who is the first-aid provider, and who is responsible for making a 9-1-1 call.

DID YOU KNOW? Did you know that OSHA requires that you have a “written fire safety plan” on each jobsite indicating who’s in charge, who makes the 9-1-1 call, who activates on-site fire-suppression (fire extinguishers) equipment, and who directs all on-site personnel to the nearest exit?

Here’s some guidelines to consider when writing your fire emergency plan:

Prioritize...

- At first glance, many emergencies appear minor, so why call for the fire department, or a rescue vehicle or place a 9-1-1 call? Well, that minor fire could very easily erupt into an inferno if scrap lumber or other combustibles on the jobsite are exposed to flying sparks or cinders. And the worker with a gash in his leg could go into shock from uncontrollable bleeding.

Act immediately...

- Once again, the question arises: When is an emergency really an emergency that can’t be controlled by personnel on the jobsite? It’s a judgement call. When in doubt, make that emergency phone call to the proper agency. A fire truck can be dispatched and probably be on the jobsite within ten to fifteen minutes. If you delay calling the fire could get out of control.

Injuries:

- What about the injured employee? It is best to call the nearest rescue squad and get the emergency vehicle rolling to the jobsite as soon as possible. Minor cuts and bruises are one thing. But bone breaks, major bleeding, fainting, and eye injuries all demand prompt and timely attention by emergency professionals such as EMTs and gas company technicians.

First Aid...

- Only trained first-aid providers can administer first-aid to injured victims. Often times, macho employees say, “I’m alright, just give me a few minutes and I’ll be O.K.” But, will they be O.K.? Make the 9-1-1 call immediately. Get professional help rolling.

Emergency Phone Numbers...

- In metropolitan areas, by going to the nearest phone and dialing 9-1-1, you can get appropriate emergency personnel at your jobsite within minutes. If you have emergency phone numbers posted on the jobsite, it is relatively easy to call a particular agency direct and describe the nature of the jobsite emergency.

No Phone?...

- But sometimes the emergency is compounded because there is no telephone adjacent to the jobsite and the cellular phone is ten miles down the road. When a telephone is readily available, making a call is easy. But when there is no phone, what do you do?

Action Plan...

- When mobilizing for the jobsite, emergency communications should be planned and steps should be taken to assure they are accessible and in working order. If employees can't make timely phone calls to the proper agency within a minute or two after the emergency arises, the employer has not provided a safe worksite.

Mobilization...

- If no communications are available, a jobsite employee must drive to the nearest phone to make the emergency call. This means that jobsite personnel must know, in advance, where the nearest phone is so they can find it quickly. Jobsite foremen should post the nearest phone location on the jobsite bulletin board, along with the emergency phone number.

Rural areas...

- In some rural areas, there may not be a 9-1-1 network, so you must call the operator.

Haz-Mat...

- If the jobsite emergency involves toxic fumes, explosions, or possible explosions due to leaking gas or fuel, the 9-1-1 dispatcher should be provided these details so that emergency fire equipment can be dispatched.

9-1-1 Protocol...

- The person making the call must always remain at the same phone until the rescue personnel reach the jobsite. Many jobsites are difficult to locate if the caller does not provide detailed information. If the caller waits by the phone, the dispatcher can always call back for more information.
- When emergency rescue personnel and equipment arrive on the jobsite, they are often not prepared to cope with catastrophic situations such as major gas leaks, airborne toxic fumes, explosions, fires, trench collapses, buckling walls, falling scaffolding, and toxic waste exposure. This means that the person who made the 9-1-1 call did not properly inform the dispatcher of the emergency's full nature and magnitude.
- Before making that 9-1-1 call, be sure you have all the facts. It might be smart for two people to go to the phone in case one needs to return to the jobsite for more information.
- Many rescue units are not equipped to rescue personnel from collapsed trenches or to retrieve an injured worker from the bottom of a manhole or vault or from scaffolding attached to a highrise building. Any of these conditions should be relayed to the 9-1-1 dispatcher when the initial call is made.
- Emergency procedures must be developed when the jobsite is being mobilized. Most superintendents plan for delivery to the jobsite of materials, equipment, manpower, etc. But far too often, no thought is given to jobsite signage that provides the worker with emergency phone numbers.