

Practical Tips For Evacuation Planning

Protecting the health and safety of people is the first priority during an emergency. *Evacuation planning* is essential for every business. Evacuation plans will vary depending on the facility and the nature of the emergency. In the case of a fire, an immediate evacuation to a predetermined area away from the facility may be necessary. In the event of a hurricane, evacuation could involve the entire community and might take place over a period of days. When you develop evacuation plans, consider the needs of employees, emergency responders, visitors, and others. Consider these general requirements for Evacuation Planning:

Designate Roles and Responsibilities

- Establish a clear chain of command. Identify who has the authority to order and direct an evacuation.
- Designate wardens to assist others in an evacuation and to account for personnel and visitors.
- Designate personnel to continue or shut down critical operations while an evacuation is underway.

Establish Evacuation Routes

- Designate primary and secondary evacuation routes and exits.
- Install emergency lighting in case of a power outage during an emergency.
- Ensure that evacuation routes and emergency exits are:
 - clearly marked and well lit.
 - wide enough and unobstructed at all times, and safe for everyone who must use them.

Provide Evacuation Information

- Establish, document, post, and distribute evacuation policies and procedures.
- Provide emergency information, such as checklists and evacuation maps. Post the maps in strategic locations.
- Consider the information needs of vendors, customers, and visitors.

Provide Evacuation Training

Train employees in evacuation procedures. Hold sessions at least annually, or whenever:

- Employees are hired.
- Wardens and other special assignments are designated.
- New equipment, materials or processes are introduced.
- Procedures are updated or revised.
- Exercises show that employees performance must be improved.

LOSS CONTROL CFFLC

Consider Special Situations

- Establish procedures for helping persons with disabilities. Consider elevators, evac chairs, buddy systems, areas of refuge, signs, alarms, and communication. Know the relevant aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Be sure that you can communicate essential information to people who do not speak English.

Consider Community Needs

- Coordinate your plan with the local emergency management office and outside agencies such as fire and police.
- Consider employees' transportation needs for community-wide evacuations.

Know What to Do After an Evacuation

- Designate assembly areas where personnel should gather after an evacuation.
- Plan to take a head count after the evacuation. Determine the names and last known locations of personnel not accounted for.
- Establish a method of accounting for non-employees (customers, vendors, visitors).
- Establish procedures for further evacuation in case the incident expands.

For more information, contact your local Hartford agent or your Hartford Loss Control Consultant. Visit The Hartford's Loss Control web site at <http://www.thehartford.com/corporate/losscontrol/>

The information provided in these materials is intended to be general and advisory in nature. It shall not be considered legal advice. The Hartford does not warrant that the implementation of any view or recommendation contained herein will: (i) result in the elimination of any unsafe conditions at your business locations or with respect to your business operations; or (ii) will be an appropriate legal or business practice. The Hartford assumes no responsibility for the control or correction of hazards or legal compliance with respect to your business practices, and the views and recommendations contained herein shall not constitute our undertaking, on your behalf or for the benefit of others, to determine or warrant that your business premises, locations or operations are safe or healthful, or are in compliance with any law, rule or regulation. Readers seeking to resolve specific safety, legal or business issues or concerns related to the information provided in these materials should consult their safety consultant, attorney or business advisors. All information and representations herein are as of March 2009.