



Weekly Safety Meeting

Emergency Exits

Knowing which route to take during an emergency is important. So is talking to employees about possible situations in which they might need to escape and muster in a planned location. Everyone should be prepared for an evacuation emergency, even if it does not seem likely to happen. Fire drills are not just for school children; employees should also have drills to practice evacuating the building. Exits should be checked periodically to make sure doors that are open remain open when the building is occupied, and that those routes remain clear.

Evacuation Drills

Flammable materials in the facility are a primary reason for an evacuation, but a chemical spill or bomb threat are also potential reasons to get employees out of the building until the issue can be resolved. While OSHA regulations do not specify a frequency for fire drills, the employer's EAP (Emergency Action Plan) often does. For some companies, once a year might be fine, while for others that process or use flammable materials or harmful chemicals, it makes sense to perform drills quarterly.

Exit Routes

Exit routes are permanent paths of egress away from the inside of a building that lead to the outside of the building. Travel paths are often lined with yellow reflective tape. The route from the work area to the exit should be unobstructed. In many instances, companies receive OSHA fines for blocking these. Dollar General is one company that has received multiple OSHA violations for exit route obstruction. Normally, a building needs at least two exit routes, in case one is blocked by fire, smoke, or another reason. However, the number of exits required increases based on the size of the building and the number of employees. The exit discharge must be large enough to accommodate all employees at a safe distance from the building.

Maintenance of Exit Routes

OSHA has several standards regarding exit routes to ensure that they are kept as safe as possible.

Per OSHA, exit routes must:

- Be kept free of flammable materials;
- Be shielded from high-hazard areas;
- Remain unobstructed by materials, equipment and decorations;
- Have doors that remain unlocked;

- Egress into an exit discharge (outside), not a dead-end;
- Have appropriate lighting;
- Remain in good working order during an emergency;
- Be clearly labeled “EXIT”; and
- Incorporate an emergency alarm system to alert employees.

Minimum Requirements of an EAP

Employers with more than 10 employees must have a written EAP. This document must communicate elements like employer policies and procedures, evacuation plans, and methods or accounting for employees during an emergency. This plan must detail which employees are assigned various responsibilities, and if they must turn off critical equipment in the event of an emergency.

Per OSHA, some minimum elements of an EAP also include:

- Procedures for reporting fires, spills, or threats;
- Procedures for evacuation, with details on exit routes and mustering locations;
- Visual and auditory alarm systems to alert workers;
- Contacts for reporting emergencies and names of employees responsible for calling them;
- Procedures to account for employees; and
- Instructions for workers who must stay behind to continue critical plant operations.

In addition to an EAP, a fire prevention plan can address hazards and controls specifically related to flammable materials and fire hazards. Employees who are part of the plan must know their roles and responsibilities, just like for an EAP.

KNOW THE PLAN...FOR A QUICK EXIT!

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Supervisor:	Subject:
Location:	Date:
Conducted By:	Trainer Signature:

[illegible]