



Safety Tip of the Week

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.



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.

KNOW THE PLAN...FOR A QUICK EXIT!