



5-minute safety talk

Disaster Drills

Natural and man-made threats

The type of threat will determine your response, whether it is a full or partial evacuation or shelter-in-place. These threats require full or partial evacuation:

- Fire
- Bomb threat
- Internal hazardous materials spill
- Workplace violence incident
- Gas leak
- Utility outage

Threats that call for sheltering in place include:

- Tornado
- High wind
- External hazardous materials incident

A few exercises that can help you improve your procedures include:

Training activities

Your employee training should cover:

- Threats, hazards, and proper responses
- Individual roles and responsibilities

- Notification, warning, and communications procedures
- Emergency response procedures
- Evacuation, shelter, and accountability procedures

A **tabletop exercise** is a training tool in which members of the emergency management team gather in a conference room to discuss their responsibilities and appropriate responses to various scenarios. A tabletop exercise is a cost-effective and efficient tool to identify areas of overlap and confusion before conducting more demanding training activities. You should also consider deviations from the normal response, such as the primary exit being blocked by fire or the normal assembly area being unusable due to a water main break.

A **walk-through drill** requires the emergency management and response teams to perform a dry run of their emergency response functions. This is more thorough than the tabletop exercise.

A **functional drill** tests specific functions such as medical response, emergency notification, warning, and communications procedures and equipment. Emergency management team

members evaluate the systems and identify potential problem areas.

An **evacuation and shelter-in-place drill** requires all employees to walk the evacuation or shelter-in-place routes to the designated assembly areas so all personnel can be accounted for. The response is evaluated by the emergency management team and the action plan is modified as necessary.

A **full-scale exercise** simulates a real-life emergency situation as closely as possible. This exercise involves all personnel as well as outside community emergency responders.

Disaster drill evaluation

For each of the drills and exercises listed here, you should perform a prompt and thorough evaluation that includes the following elements:

- Were key personnel notified and did each act appropriately?
- Was the need to take action communicated properly?
- Did employees respond appropriately and promptly?
- Were resources made available and used?
- Were problem areas identified?

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