

# A Snapshot in Safety and Risk

## EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS: KEY COMPONENTS

Each year, emergencies and storms injure or claim employees' lives. According to Climate.gov, in 2022, the United States experienced 18 separate weather or climate disasters each resulting in at least \$1 billion in damages. These 18 events caused at least 474 direct or indirect fatalities—the 8<sup>th</sup> highest total for disaster-related fatalities in the United States since 1980.

Bureau of Labor Statics reports:

- Fatalities due to violence and injuries by other persons or animals increased from 705 fatalities in 2020 to 761 fatalities in 2021, a rise of 7.9%
- The largest subcategory, intentional injuries by person, increased 10.3% to 718 in 2021
- In 2021 there were 76 employee fatalities related to fires or explosions

**Having a written emergency action plan (EAP) in place is not only a regulatory requirement, but it's also a best practice for protecting employees and the general public who may visit your facilities.**

### Early Warning Systems

Early warning systems can provide timely information to enable communities and organizations to act appropriately and in sufficient time to potentially reduce the possibility of injuries and deaths. Advancements in early warning systems continue to be made, using smartphone applications to provide emergency warnings and applications for computers and landlines; some programs send alerts to all three and allow for persons to check in as safe or off property. Many local county emergency management departments have an early warning program available for your use. There are also a few national phone applications such as FEMA, weather alerts, and more.

### Emergency Action Plan Key Components

Key components of an emergency plan and employee training can result in fewer and less severe injuries and damage. A poorly prepared plan and lack of training and drills increase the likelihood of a disorganized evacuation or emergency response, confusion, injury, and property damage.

### Written EAP Plan minimum requirements:

- Designate responsibilities (responsible official(s), coordinators, monitors)
- Means of reporting fires, workplace violence, natural disasters, and other emergencies
- Evacuation procedures and emergency escape routes (including posted maps)
- Procedures for employees who stay to run or shut down critical operations before they evacuate

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- Accounting for all employees after an evacuation has been completed
- Assigned rescue and medical duties for employees that perform them
- Easy to access the contact information of both internal and external staff
- Recordkeeping and employee training
- Practice drills should be exercised annually with all employees
- Post-event operations (business continuity)

## Key Employee EAP Instructions

Key employee instructions in an EAP should cover at a minimum, actions, procedures, and/or reporting requirements for:

- When, how, and where to report, following an emergency evacuation
- When, how, and where to, shelter in place
- When, how, where, and reporting requirements, during a lockdown or secure in place

## Prepare your Emergency Action Plan

Most emergency actions fall into one of the categories below. However, safety procedures may differ depending on the event. Supporting maps or diagrams in the plan help aid employees to find or remember emergency escape routes, fire extinguisher locations, emergency pull station locations, first-aid kits, or emergency staging areas and safe harbors. Running employee emergency drills lead to better results and outcomes for employees' safety.

Develop a list of emergencies your property may encounter, listing both manmade and natural emergencies

### Types of Natural Emergencies

Earthquake	Wildfire	Tsunami	Tornado	Hurricane
Blizzard	Flood	Landslide	Mudslide	Severe weather Storms
Lightning	Hailstorm	Straight wind/ wind shear	Volcanic Eruption	Avalanche

### Types of Man-Made Emergencies

Poisoning	Violence	Robbery	Accidents
Chemical Spills	Bomb Threat	Gas/Fuel Leak	Fire/explosion

- Develop employee procedures for each emergency or exposure for your operation. Employees must understand how they will keep safe during an emergency. Procedures should include safe zones, forms, pictures, diagrams, and/or any visual aid that increase or improve employee understanding and ability to react safely to an emergency.
- Draft the plan in clear, easy to understand language for the employees (end-user).

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- Supply copies or make plans available, and/or accessible to all employees.
- Review the Emergency Action Plan annually and/or after each emergency to enhance practices based on the success or gaps in responses.
- Notify employees whenever there is a change in your EAP. Added training and communication need to be considered to ensure roles and responsibilities continue to be understood.

## Plan for an Emergency

Planning for emergencies does not need to be overly complex. Below are suggestions and simple steps to consider as you plan for emergencies.

- Train your staff in your emergency action plans. They should understand their roles and responsibilities and be comfortable with leadership's expectations.
- Training should include:
  - When, how, and where to evacuate if necessary
  - When, how, and where to shelter in place if necessary
  - When, how, and where to lockdown or secure in place if necessary
  - What to do to remain safe and possibly reduce or eliminate the threat or emergency
  - Who, where, and when to report to, and how to report

## PRACTICE!

One important step in planning for an emergency is to practice for emergencies.

Following employee training, practicing the training is very important. This can be in the form of drills, tabletop drills, and/or other coaching sessions. Employees are likely to forget what they learned in their training program, but they are less likely to forget what they learned when they participate in a practice drill.

You may experience operational limitations and be unable to run drills for the whole team. Consider splitting shifts into multiple teams to run practice drills. Tabletop drills are acceptable and an excellent way to run through scenarios, evaluate employee response, and adjust without interrupting normal business operations. It is very important to run training and drills for every shift, often third shifts are not supplied the opportunity to run drills.

Tribal First has a library of resources available to aid you with the development and/or enhancement of your EAP. Contact your Tribal First Risk Consultant directly for immediate help, or Tribal First Risk Control ([riskcontrol@tribalfirst.com](mailto:riskcontrol@tribalfirst.com)) to ensure you achieve the assistance you need.

## OSHA Requirements

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standard [29 CFR 1910.38\(a\)](#), specifies Emergency Action Plans (EAP) requirements for all employers having more than 10 employees. Under the regulation employers with 10 or fewer employees do not have to have a

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written plan but should be aware and implement practical emergency procedures to protect the health and safety of their employees and help minimize business interruption should an emergency occur.

## References

- FEMA Mobile Products - <https://www.fema.gov/about/news-multimedia/mobile-products>
- [OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.38](#)
- [OSHA Evacuation Plans and Procedures eTool](#)
- Tribal First Website (Resource Center//Resource Library) - <https://www.tribalfirst.com/risk-management-solutions/resource-center/resource-library/>

For additional information contact:

Tribal First Risk Control Solution Center at [riskcontrol@tribalfirst.com](mailto:riskcontrol@tribalfirst.com)