

EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY CARBONDALE

Introduction

The purpose of a **comprehensive emergency management plan** is to provide all affected individuals with a planned response to emergency situations that will protect lives, the environment and property. Emergencies can arise from natural disasters or from human activities that are intentional or unintentional and have the potential for creating devastating destruction.

Development of **emergency action plans** can be fairly simple if the facility is small, has few occupants, consists of only ground floors and has easy access to exits and safe areas. However, complex facilities where communication and egress are complicated by other factors may require expert advice or help in designing and implementing a plan. Each facility should have its own specific plan that incorporates design factors expressed in the Southern Illinois University Carbondale comprehensive emergency management plan. **The University Department of Public Safety (SIUC Police Dept.) or the Center for Environmental Health and Safety (CEHS)** can provide assistance with identifying general guidelines to insure campus wide adherence to these design factors. CEHS and the SIUC Police Dept. can also assist with developing a comprehensive emergency management plan for more complex facilities.

The Center for Environmental Health and Safety has developed guidelines (following page) for assisting individual departments in developing a simple emergency action plan. Ideally, all University buildings should have a comprehensive emergency management plan that covers all departments within that facility. At a minimum, all buildings should have a **posted emergency fire exit plan**. In addition to meeting our moral obligations for protecting human life, state and federal regulations require the University to have these emergency action plans.

Departments having hazardous chemicals, radiological or biological agents or other specific potential hazards should address these issues in their emergency action plan. All departments should designate individuals to develop appropriate emergency plans and coordinate this development with other departments within their building. Plans should be posted in conspicuous places and all personnel informed of these postings. Training and emergency action drills should be performed wherever practical. The following departments can provide assistance with developing plans and conducting exercises:

Southern Illinois University Department of Public Safety (453-2381)
Center for Environmental Health and Safety (453-7180)

Guidelines for Emergency Plan Development

Fundamental Components of Emergency Plans

Emergency Plans must be written and must include, at a minimum, the following components:

- How to report fires and other emergencies.
- Emergency evacuation procedures and route assignments.
- Procedures to be followed by employees (if any) who remain to conduct some critical functions before they evacuate.
- Procedures to account for all employees after emergency evacuation.
- Rescue and medical duties for those employees (if any) who are designated to perform them.
- Names and phone numbers of persons who can be contacted for further information on the emergency plan.

These fundamental concepts are discussed in more detail below.

Reporting fires and other emergencies -- The plan must tell how to report fires and other emergencies. For fires this will generally be by pulling the fire alarm. For some types of emergencies (e.g., medical or personal), it will be by calling 911. It may be helpful to state that the person reporting the incident should remain available in a safe location to relay relevant information to Fire Department or other emergency personnel. If a department wishes to incorporate the use of fire extinguishers into their emergency procedures, the plan should state that any employee who uses a fire extinguisher must be properly trained and that they should only use a fire extinguisher if they feel it is safe to do so (training is available from the Center for Environmental Health and Safety). The plan should also state that the fire alarm should always be pulled first.

Emergency evacuation procedures -- Every building must have emergency escape procedures and route assignments developed and displayed. In most cases, it is acceptable to state that upon activation of the fire alarm system the emergency escape procedure is simply to evacuate the building by the nearest exit and to assemble at the predesignated safe location outside the building. The plan should state that when the alarm sounds everyone must evacuate the building (except for designated personnel for whom specific procedures have been developed, see below). Special consideration must be given for evacuation of handicapped individuals.

Employees conducting critical functions before evacuating -- If there are any critical processes or operations that need to be shut down before total evacuation, then these processes must be identified by the units. Specific written emergency procedures must then be developed; employees must be designated and properly trained.

Accounting for all persons after emergency evacuation -- At a minimum, the plan should designate a safe area(s) outside the building. For small buildings with fewer than 20 occupants there should be a roll call at the designated safe area following an emergency evacuation. For larger buildings, including most academic buildings, such a roll call system is impractical. For these buildings, all staff and students should assemble at the designated safe zones outside the building. The plan should direct individuals who have knowledge of any person(s) still inside the building due to injury or other cause to inform the emergency responders (e.g., Fire Department or Police Department).

Rescue and medical functions for those employees who are to perform them -- If there are situations that may require employees to perform rescue or medical functions in

an emergency, then these situations must be identified by the units. Specific written emergency procedures must be developed; employees must be designated and properly trained.

The plan may indicate that other personnel may perform these functions only if they consider it safe to do so. For example, if an incident occurs in an area, the occupants may attempt to pull an injured person out of the area in an effort to literally save a co-worker's life, if they personally consider it safe.

Person(s) to contact for information about the emergency plan -- The plan should list the name, title, department, and phone number of any individuals who may be contacted for information about the plan.

Tornado/Severe Weather

Procedures should be developed for dealing with severe weather conditions. This should include the identification of severe weather "shelter areas" within buildings and procedures for notifying occupants of an emergency. The fire alarm system should not be used to warn occupants. For additional information contact the Center for Environmental Health and Safety.

Extreme Hazards

Potential emergency conditions of each building need to be identified, especially those where special emergency procedures need to be developed for extreme hazards. These are hazards that could result in conditions immediately dangerous to life or health, such as extremely toxic compressed gases, Level 3 biohazards, or curie quantities of radioactive materials.

Signage

Building occupants are encouraged to develop a list of persons who may need to be contacted in the event of emergencies. All departments are strongly encouraged to provide signage listing emergency contacts that will facilitate prompt emergency notification of appropriate faculty and staff. Quick notification can help protect facilities, equipment and research data. This list may also be provided to the University Department of Public Safety.

Preparing an Emergency Evacuation Plan

An essential component of emergency planning is preparing an evacuation plan for a facility. The plan is basically a schematic of the building layout showing escape routes and a brief narrative of the emergency procedures. It is the familiar plaque found on all hotel room doors. A different plan is needed for each level of the building. Copies of the plan should be prominently posted throughout the facility.

To prepare the evacuation plan for a facility, first obtain copies of the floor plan. These should be available from the architectural office of Plant and Service Operations. Mark the escape routes and exits (preferably in red). Mark safe shelter areas in the building and travel routes to them (preferably in yellow) for weather related emergencies. CEHS can assist you in designing the escape routes.

Next, the building's emergency procedures should be added below the floor plans. Plans should then be posted. In general, more complex facilities and facilities with a large number of occupants will need more plans posted. Whenever possible, the posted floor plans should align with the actual directions of travel.

PERSON DISCOVERING A FIRE

- **ACTIVATE THE FIRE ALARM.** If possible, rescue and/or assist anyone in immediate danger; if not possible, report their location to fire officials. Close the doors in the fire area.
- **EVACUATE TO A SAFE LOCATION USING THE NEAREST EXIT AND CALL 911** to report the fire. Give the building's name, room, number, and any special conditions.
- **MEET THE EMERGENCY RESPONDERS** upon their arrival and advise them of the conditions, as you know they exist.

WHEN THE FIRE ALARM SOUNDS

- **FEEL THE DOOR.** a "too hot to touch door" means the fire is outside the door.
- **IMMEDIATELY EVACUATE** the building. Take personal items with you, (i.e., purses, briefcases, etc.). Treat all alarms as a real emergency. Always use the exit stairs. Never use an elevator. Close the door as you leave the room.
- **CRAWL** should you get caught in smoke. If necessary, go to the window and signal for help.
- **ASSIST A PHYSICALLY IMPAIRED PERSON TO THE CLOSEST EXIT STAIRWELL** and advise emergency personnel of this condition.
- **PROCEED TO PREARRANGED MEETING PLACE** outside the building.
- **SUPERVISORS ACCOUNT FOR YOUR PERSONNEL.** Faculty should maintain attendance roster and take attendance outside.
- **NEVER RE-ENTER THE BUILDING** until fire officials give the approval.
- **REPORT** anyone causing a false alarm to the emergency responding personnel.

TORNADO/SEVERE WEATHER

- If a **TORNADO WARNING** is sounded or notice to seek shelter is given by an identifiable emergency representative, **immediately proceed to designated inside safe zone or shelter.**
- The Inside safe location for this building is _____.
- **DO NOT ACTIVATE THE FIRE ALARM.**

EARTHQUAKE

Earthquakes strike without warning.

- **REMAIN INSIDE** the building.
- **Seek shelter** immediately under a heavy desk/table, or brace yourself inside a doorframe or against an inside wall.
- **After the earthquake help others**
- **Report** to the building emergency coordinator.

FOR ANY EMERGENCY DIAL 911