

HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE NOTE

# EMERGENCY PROCEDURES



**NFU Mutual**  
Risk Management Services

## INTRODUCTION

Arrangements to deal with the unexpected are more likely to be effective and successful when determined in advance rather than hurriedly put together in the heat of the moment. Procedures should be recorded and communicated to relevant personnel for dealing with events such as serious injuries; fire; explosion; flooding; poisoning; electrocution; power failure; gas leak; bomb threat; burst water pipe; escaped livestock; epidemics (e.g. an E.coli outbreak); transport incidents; severe weather; significant spillage of oil or chemicals etc. This guide provides general information regarding emergency procedures – you may need to consider additional specific details depending on your type of business and the hazards involved.

Taking quick and effective action can help to ease emergency situations and limit the consequences - in emergencies people are more likely to respond reliably if they:

- Have clearly agreed, recorded and rehearsed plans, actions and responsibilities;
- Are well trained and competent; and
- Take part in regular and realistic practice.

You don't want to have to think of the plan when you are in the middle of an emergency. There simply won't be enough time for that. You will have to react immediately.

## WHAT ARE MY LEGAL DUTIES?

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 [Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000] require Emergency Procedures to be produced for situations presenting serious and imminent danger. The Dangerous Substances (Notification and Marking of Sites) Regulations 1990 [Dangerous Substances (Notification and Marking of Sites) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1990] cover sites where at least 25 tonnes of dangerous substances are held.

You must record your emergency plan if a major incident at your workplace could involve risks to the public, rescuing employees or co-ordinating the emergency services. Where your workplace is shared with another employer, you must consider the need to co-ordinate your emergency plans and procedures.

Legal requirements for the production of on-site and off-site emergency plans for major hazard sites are laid down in the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 1999 (COMAH) (as amended by the Control of Major Accident Hazards (Amendment) Regulations 2005). This guidance note is not intended to cover the specific nature of COMAH requirements (see the "Further Guidance" at the end of this guidance document).

## WHAT SHOULD I CONSIDER WHEN DRAWING UP MY EMERGENCY PROCEDURES?

When putting together your emergency procedures you should consider:

- What might happen? (e.g. what hazardous activities are involved in your work or that of others using your site);
- Who could be involved? (Ensure you consider all those who may be present including your employees, seasonal or casual workers, contractors, tenants, business visitors and members of the public);
- How will the alarm be raised? (Ensure you consider availability of mobile phone signal, alarm systems including rotary bells or air horns etc.);
- Where will people go to reach a place of safety if necessary? (Ensure you consider the number of people, the availability of sufficient emergency and general lighting, the suitability of assembly points with regards to keeping access roads clear and proximity of additional hazards etc.);
- How will the emergency services find the site? (Ensure sites are well marked from the road and that any statutory signage to warn them of specific dangers such as acetylene is displayed correctly);
- What will happen to livestock? (Ensure a plan is in place to move animals away from danger where safe to do so – where left unplanned people often endanger themselves attempting rescue);
- What needs to be done to limit the consequences of the emergency and who will do it? (e.g. isolation of gas and electricity; shutdown of plant; first aid treatment; using spill kits etc.).

Don't forget to consider the effects of night and shift working, weekends and times when the premises are closed or when key individuals may not be around (e.g. holidays). Vulnerable people or those with disabilities may need special consideration.

## WHAT SHOULD MY EMERGENCY PROCEDURES INCLUDE?

Your emergency procedures should include the contact details (name, address, telephone numbers) for:

- Parties to be notified in the event of any emergency, in order of priority;
- Appropriate emergency services (e.g. Fire and Rescue Service, Ambulance etc.);
- The nearest medical practice or hospital with an accident and emergency department;
- Other interested parties (e.g. the Health and Safety Executive (or NSENI), Local Authority, Gas / Electricity suppliers, Environmental Health Department, Environment Agency (SEPA or NIEA etc.);
- Anyone with relevant responsibilities or special expertise within the business (e.g. senior management, supervisors, persons responsible for chemical stores, etc.);
- Downstream businesses, landowners or water users (e.g. neighbours, nearby schools etc.), as appropriate to the incident and your location;
- Out of hours contacts (e.g. people with relevant responsibilities as above).

### You should also include:

- Details to be provided to emergency services (e.g. company name, site address, telephone number / contact name, a summary of the incident etc.);
- The Ordnance Survey Map references of the business to be passed to the emergency services as required and speed access if the business is in an isolated location;
- A site plan showing the location of drainage, mains services, fire fighting equipment, absorbent materials and personal protective equipment etc. which are available for use in an emergency;
- Warnings as to the hazardous nature of certain materials and their location (e.g. fuel oils, compressed gases, poisons, corrosive materials, pesticides, fertiliser etc.) - if you have 25 tonnes or more of dangerous substances, you must also notify the Fire and Rescue Service and put up warning signs;

- Details of essential actions such as emergency plant shutdown, isolation or making processes safe and who is responsible for carrying these out - clear identification of important items like shut-off valves and electrical isolators etc. will aid this;
- The locations of first aid equipment and the names of trained first aiders;
- The location of washing facilities;
- Details of how the alarm is to be raised (include the methods of signaling, who is responsible and consider variations relating to night shifts, weekends and holidays etc.);
- The evacuation procedure(s) - how to reach the place of safety.

A simple emergency procedure template is included at the end of this guidance document. Such a procedure should be amended as necessary with further details to include any risks specific to your work activities. More detailed procedures would be required for medium to large businesses.

## FURTHER GUIDANCE

- HSE Website 'Emergency Procedures'  
[www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/managing/emergency.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/managing/emergency.htm)
- L111 A guide to the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations (COMAH) 2015 (Third edition)  
[www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l111.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l111.pdf)

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

In the event of an emergency:

**DO NOT** put yourself at risk;

- Raise the alarm;
- Inform management of the incident;
- Summon immediate and appropriate assistance.

Fire or emergency, dial 999 and give the following information:

- Address:.....
- Contact name(s):.....
- Telephone number:.....
- Ordnance Survey grid reference:.....
- Drainage board phone number:.....

When calling for emergency support, describe the nature of the incident and provide clear directions to the site.

Always agree a suitable meeting point with the Emergency Services.

Move any staff, machinery or livestock etc. away from danger area WITHOUT endangering anyone.

Provide the Fire and Rescue Service with details of the location of any hazardous materials and any other information which will assist them in dealing with the incident (see below). If possible, provide a copy of the site plan:

- Fuel (diesel, petrol, paraffin, etc.) located:.....
- Compressed gas located:.....
- Chemicals / pesticides located:.....
- Asbestos materials location .....
- Fertiliser located:..... quantity:.....
- Fire extinguishers located:..... type:.....
- ..... type:.....
- ..... type:.....
- Electricity isolation point(s) located:.....
- Gas isolation point(s) located:.....
- Mains water located:.....
- Further water supplies located:.....

If you believe there is a pollution risk as a result of a spillage then the following procedure should be followed:

- Stop any further spillage and contain spillages whenever possible;
- Call the relevant Environment Agency (EA/ NIEA/ SEPA) Emergency Helpline on 0800 80 70 60 and pass on information regarding type of spillage. They will require the same contact information as previously recorded.

In the event of a severe accident dial 999 and request an ambulance. Again, they will require the same contact information as previously recorded.

- For other accidents on site, the following persons have attended a first aid course :

.....  
 .....  
 .....

- First-aid facilities are located:

.....  
 .....  
 .....

The nearest doctor / medical centre is located:.....

Telephone:.....

The nearest casualty department is located:.....

Telephone:.....

Other important telephone numbers include:

Contact	Location	Telephone Number
Manager		
Manager (out of hours)		
Local Police		
Electrician		
Plumber		

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