Printing Industries Alliance

Serving Graphic Communications Firms in New York State, Northern New Jersey and Northwestern Pennsylvania

PIA HEADQUARTERS
636 North French Road
Suite 1
Amherst, NY 14228
tel: 716-691-3211 or
800-777-4742
fax: 716-691-4249

NY/NJ METRO OFFICE
195 Prospect Park West
Suite 1A
Brooklyn, NY 11215
cell: 203-912-0804

LI OFFICE
3951 New York Avenue
Seaford, NY 11783
cell: 516-528-4747

www.PIAlliance.org
info@PIAlliance.org

Emergency Action Plan and Fire Protection Plan Summary

Scope

Covers emergency action plan procedures an employer must implement as required by OSHA to ensure employee safety during evacuations caused by fires, severe weather, and other emergencies. Before implementing the emergency action plan, the employer must designate and train enough people to assist in the safe and orderly emergency evacuation of employees. Employers should review the plan with each employee when the initial plan is developed and when each employee is initially assigned to the job. Employers should review the plan with each employee when his/her actions or responsibilities under the plan change or when the plan changes. Effective plans often call for retraining employees annually and include drills in which employees can practice evacuating their workplace and gathering in the assembly area.

Educate your employees about the types of emergencies that may occur and train them in the proper course of action. The size of your workplace and workforce, processes used, materials handled, and the availability of onsite or outside resources will determine your training requirements. Be sure all employees understand the function and elements of your emergency action plan, including types of potential emergencies, reporting procedures, alarm systems, evacuation plans, and shutdown procedures. Discuss any special hazards you may have onsite such as flammable materials, toxic chemicals, radioactive sources, or water-reactive substances. An employer must inform employees of the fire hazards to which they are exposed and review with each employee those parts of the fire prevention plan necessary for self-protection.

Clearly communicate to your employees who will be in charge during an emergency to minimize confusion.

Emergency Action Plan General Training Guidelines

To be in compliance, an Emergency Action Plan must contain:

- Individual roles and responsibilities.
- Threats, hazards, and protective actions.
- Notification, warning, and communications procedures.
- Means for locating family members in an emergency.
- Emergency response procedures.
- Evacuation, shelter, and accountability procedures.
- Location and use of common emergency equipment.
- Emergency shutdown procedures.

And remember, if training is not reinforced it will be forgotten. Consider retraining employees annually.

Once you have reviewed your emergency action plan with your employees and everyone has had the proper training, it is a good idea to hold practice drills as often as necessary to keep employees prepared. Include outside resources such as fire and police departments when possible. After each drill, gather management and employees to evaluate the effectiveness of the drill. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of your plan and work to improve it.

ENGAGE | EXPLORE | ENERGIZE | EXCEL

Minimum Requirements

At a minimum, the plan must include but is not limited to the following elements

- Means of reporting fires and other emergencies
- Evacuation procedures and emergency escape route assignments
- Procedures for employees who remain to operate critical plant operations before they evacuate
- Accounting for all employees after an emergency evacuation has been completed
- Rescue and Medical Duties, if any, for employees performing them
- Names or job titles of persons who can be contacted in an emergency

Although they are not specifically required by OSHA, you may find it helpful to include the following in your plan:

- A description of the alarm system to be used to notify employees (including disabled employees) to evacuate and/or take other actions. The alarms used for different actions should be distinctive and might include horn blasts, sirens, or even public address systems.
- The site of an alternative communications center to be used in the event of a fire or explosion.
- A secure on- or offsite location to store originals or duplicate copies of accounting records, legal documents, your employees' emergency contact lists, and other essential records.

The Printing Industries Emergency Evacuation Plan training covers general information required for your company to be in compliance with the OSHA standard including:

- Elements and reasons for the standard
- Exit Signs
- Exit Routes
- Evacuation Drills
- Evacuation Maps and Floor Plans
- Evacuation Alarms
- Accounting for Employees and Visitors
- Elements of Fire Prevention
- Components of a Fire
- Eliminating Fire Components
- Storing Flammable Chemicals
- Fire Extinguishers
- Fire Prevention Assessments

In addition, to be fully in compliance with the OSHA Standard the company must also perform activities specific to the actual conditions present at your facility including:

- Conducting an assessment of the specific hazards present in the workplace.
- Document a written Emergency Action and Fire Prevention plan that is communicated and available to all employees.
- Designate and train appropriate staff to act as Emergency Coordinator and assistants to facilitate plan execution during an emergency.
- Review with employees the company's Emergency Action and Fire Prevention program and information on the specific evacuation and fire hazards at the workplace.
- Conduct retraining when changes are made to employee responsibilities or to the plan. Train all new employees immediately.
- Be sure employees understand all elements of the emergency plan including potential emergencies, reporting procedures, alarm systems, evacuation plans, location of onsite hazards and shutdown procedures.
- Post evacuation routes and maps that identify exits, alternate exits and assembly areas.
- Ensure fire extinguishers are mounted, inspected, and serviced properly.
- A special note on this topic: In the event of a fire if the company elects to have employees use fire extinguishers the company must select a voluntary group of employees who to fight a fire will be responsible for using the fire extinguishers. Those employees must participate in a fire extinguisher training program. Their participation in the training need to be documented and included in the company's EAP. If the company chooses not to have employees participate in fire-fighting activity and simply evacuate the building, in that case, no fire extinguisher training is required. That too must be in writing and is to be included in the EAP.
- Review company fire protection plan

Fire Prevention Plan Guidelines

A fire prevention plan must be in writing, be kept in the workplace, and be made available to employees for review. However, an employer with 10 or fewer employees may communicate the plan orally to employees.

At a minimum, your fire prevention plan must include:

- A list of all major fire hazards, proper handling and storage procedures for hazardous materials, potential ignition sources and their control, and the type of fire protection equipment necessary to control each major hazard.
- Procedures to control accumulations of flammable and combustible waste materials.
- Procedures for regular maintenance of safeguards installed on heat-producing equipment to prevent the accidental ignition of combustible materials.
- The name or job title of employees responsible for the control of fuel source hazards.

- The name or job title of employees responsible for maintaining equipment to prevent or control sources of ignition or fires.
- The name or job title of employees responsible for the control of fuel source hazards.

An employer must inform employees upon initial assignment to a job of the fire hazards to which they are exposed. An employer must also review with each employee those parts of the fire prevention plan necessary for self-protection.

Employee Alarm Systems

The purpose of the employee alarm systems standard is to reduce the severity of workplace accidents and injuries by ensuring that alarm systems operate properly and procedures are in place to alert employees to workplace emergencies.

This section will help you to understand alarm system requirements for warning employees when a hazardous condition or event occurs.

OSHA's employee alarm systems standard applies to all employers that use an alarm system to satisfy any OSHA standard that requires employers to provide an early warning for emergency action, or reaction time for employees to safely escape the work place, the immediate work area, or both. This standard also applies to you if an OSHA standard specifically states that you must install an employee alarm system. This includes all companies who are required to have an Emergency Action Plan.

The employee alarm system shall provide warning for necessary emergency action as called for in the emergency action plan, or for reaction time for safe escape of employees from the workplace or the immediate work area, or both. An employee alarm system can be any piece of equipment and/or device designed to inform employees that an emergency exists or to signal the presence of a hazard requiring urgent attention. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 72, National Fire Alarm Code, requires a fire alarm signal to be distinctive in sound from other signals and cannot be used for any other purpose.

The employee alarm shall be capable of being perceived above ambient noise or light levels by all employees in the affected portions of the workplace. Tactile devices may be used to alert those employees who would not otherwise be able to recognize the audible or visual alarm.