Be prepared for anything:

Emergency response planning

The Boy Scouts had it right. It's important to be prepared. But even the best-prepared person can't anticipate everything. That's where emergency response plans come in.

In a workplace, you need to be prepared for the things that could cause a problem. You try your best to anticipate what these things may be—such as storage racks collapsing in a warehouse or losing power to tools and lighting on a construction project—and put controls in place to eliminate or reduce the risk. This works well for the obvious problems that you can foresee, but what about the things you never expected?

A well-documented emergency response plan helps minimize the confusion when something unexpected takes place so that you can respond quickly and efficiently. It provides a pre-established framework for workers and employers, allowing them to take action right away and keep things under control. Having a plan also demonstrates your company's commitment to everyone's safety and can be evidence of due diligence.

What should the plan cover?

The purpose of an emergency response plan is to reduce the effects of an unexpected event, especially to make sure no one gets hurt. To accomplish this, the plan must

- address everyone in the workplace and provide instructions for them
- clearly assign specific duties to certain people.

In addition to owners, supervisors, and employees, other internal parties to include in the plan are the health and safety representative or committee and all subcontractors and independent operators. Some of the external parties to consider are suppliers (especially those delivering hazardous materials), enforcement agencies (i.e., MOL, MTO, and HRSDC), emergency and disaster services, and community services (e.g., counsellors and health-care professionals).

Once you've got the different workplace parties covered, you need to decide who will be responsible for what. Here are some of the key responsibilities that you must assign to someone.

- activating the emergency response plan
- reporting the incident to the proper authorities
- managing communications during the emergency response
- contacting emergency services
- meeting emergency services at an entrance and leading them to the incident area
- ensuring there is a clear and direct route from the entrance to the incident area
- co-ordinating public safety
- documenting the incident and filing the necessary reports.

How you develop your emergency response plan and exactly what it will include depend on the type of work you do and where you do it. You'll find an Emergency Response Planning Checklist on pages 15 and 16 to guide you in creating your company's own emergency response plan. The Infrastructure Health & Safety Association also has sample plans and templates at **ihsa.ca** to help you get started. Look under Tools & Resources.

Emergency response planning checklist

Use this checklist as a guide to help you develop the emergency response plan for your workplace. Remember that the plan must be specific to the location where you are working. When the plan is complete, make sure that everyone involved knows their role. For more resources related to emergency response planning, visit **ihsa.ca**.

	In Progress	Completed Date
Program Administration (Who is responsible for implementing the plan?)	❏	
Develop an Emergency Response Standard.	❏	
Develop a Site Emergency Plan.	❏	
• Identify emergency access routes.	❏	
• Indicate location of first aid stations/boxes and fire extinguishers.	❏	
• Indicate job office(s) and storage facilities (storage for blankets and special rescue equipment).	❏	
• Ensure specialized PPE equipment is on site. (Indicate location.)	❏	
• Ensure sufficient medical aid supplies are available on site (splints, stretchers, etc.) and indicate location.	❏	
• Locate other firefighting equipment (standpipes, Siamese connections, and hydrants).	❏	
• Locate main power supply to project.	❏	
• Identify the location of emergency phones. (Post emergency list.)	❏	
• Identify nearest hospital or medical centre.	❏	
• Identify worker evacuation route(s) and assembly area(s).	❏	
• Contact local fire, police, and ambulance and provide them with your site plan and list of potential emergencies.	❏	
• Locate services to the project (both above ground and underground).	❏	
• Develop on-site traffic routes.	❏	
• Locate outside materials storage and fabricating areas.	❏	
• Locate cranes man/material hoists and unloading docks.	❏	

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• Locate flammable/combustible materials and cylinder storage.	❑	
• Locate garbage dumpsters and recycling bins.	❑	
• Complete Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Form*.	❑	
• Determine if "high-level" rescue is a possibility.	❑	
• Develop Emergency Response procedures for items identified in your hazard assessment.	❑	
• Ensure that all trades on site keep daily personnel lists. (In the event of a major emergency, check names against personnel gathered in the assembly area.)	❑	
• Include requirements for written notices. (What's required? When? Completed by whom? Who does it go to?) See legal obligations.	❑	
• Identify the emergency response (ER) team and alternates. (Post names.)	❑	
• Provide specialized training for ER team members.	❑	
• Designate a contact person to call necessary emergency services and MOL, MOEE, etc.	❑	
• Select member of ER team to meet and direct emergency services vehicles to incident scene.	❑	
• Select team member to deal with media, MOL, MOEE, etc.	❑	
• Ensure all required rescue equipment/materials are readily available on site.	❑	
• Provide for emergency traffic control person (properly trained).	❑	
• Make provisions for cordoning off the accident scene to protect workers.	❑	
• Ensure someone on the ER team documents where the injured worker has been taken (hospital, medical centre, etc.).	❑	
• Set out method of communicating the plan.	❑	

*Form can be downloaded from ihsa.ca (See Tools & Resources/Policy and Program Resources/Hazard Assessment, Analysis and Control).

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