A quick and efficient response to an emergency will
• prevent the present situation from getting worse
• protect workers and the public from further danger and injury
• provide first aid to injured workers
• protect material and equipment from further damage
• isolate and secure the area to ensure that nothing is disturbed.

Emergency response plan
Every organization needs a practical emergency plan in order to minimize the injuries and property damage that may result from incidents and emergencies such as fires, explosions, toxic chemical spills, gas leaks, and natural disasters. Emergency plans are based on the best available information about possible emergencies and the harm they could cause to people and property.

An emergency response plan should cover all possibilities. It should ensure the safety of individuals and, if possible, the protection of property. The following topics should be included in your plan:
• Hazard identification and assessment
• Emergency resources
• Communication systems
• Administration of the plan
• Emergency response procedures
• Communication of the procedures (training)
• Debriefing and post-traumatic stress procedures

The emergency plan should also identify responsibilities and any specialized training needed by those on site, such as high-angle rescue or containment of hazardous materials.
Tips for emergency planning

- Keep your plan up-to-date and post it in several places on the worksite. When a plan changes or is updated, inform everyone who may be affected.
- Some constructors and contractors hand out emergency response cards to workers after they receive jobsite orientations. The cards generally include:
  - a general overview of the plan
  - emergency contact numbers
  - assembly or muster areas (i.e., where everyone should gather for head counts)
  - instructions, resources, etc., that will help the worker react safely in the event of an emergency.
- Put a review of the emergency response plan in your rotation of safety talks.
- Test the plan—Emergency plan drills will help you evaluate the plan and show where improvements are needed or something has been missed.

How IHSA can help

IHSA is committed to the reduction of injuries and fatalities in the workplace. We have several resources available to help you put together an emergency response plan for your company. The Emergency Response Planning for Construction Projects booklet (B030) can be downloaded from our website. As well, you can order our Emergency Response Poster (P103) and post it on your jobsite.

IHSA also has a Policy and Program Resources section on the website with templates to help you develop or update your company’s health and safety program. Visit the emergency preparedness page to find checklists, guidelines, templates, and links to other emergency planning materials:

ihsa.ca/resources/emergency_preparedness.aspx

Post IHSA’s Emergency Response Poster (P103) on your jobsite