

Sample Fire Safety Plan

Fires are the most common emergency situation and, hence, serve as a good starting point for emergency planning efforts. During a serious fire or similar emergency, firefighters will probably take command of the facility. Therefore, it is important to develop the fire prevention and safety plan in coordination with the local fire department and emergency responders. The plan should assign responsibility for the following measures, among others:

Before:

- **Implementing and enforcing proper disposal procedures** for flammable materials.
- **Regularly inspecting the electrical system** for safety and capacity.
- **Ensuring that evacuation routes are well marked** and clear of obstructions.
- **Checking and maintaining fire protection equipment** – including extinguishers, smoke detectors, sprinklers, fire doors and alarm systems – in accordance with manufacturer recommendations.
- **Conducting fire drills** at regular intervals, followed by evaluation and recommendations.

During:

- **Declaring an emergency** and initiating the response plan.
- **Notifying the fire department** of the existence, intensity and exact location of the fire.
- **Implementing initial safety steps**, such as ensuring that fire doors have closed properly.
- **Evacuating staff, patients and visitors**, if necessary.
- **Ensuring that fire protection valves are open** and fire pumps are operating, if applicable.
- **Providing clear access for fire trucks** and other emergency vehicles.
- **Meeting arriving firefighters** and providing them with necessary information.
- **Removing or covering combustibles**, such as oxygen tanks, when possible.

After:

- **Securing the fire area** as possible.
- **Accounting for all staff and patients** by name.
- **Notifying authorities if arson is a possibility**, noting any suspicious circumstances.
- **Informing insurers as soon as possible**, and following their recovery suggestions.
- **Cleaning up excess water quickly** to reduce staining, mold and other post-fire damage.
- **Beginning salvage operations**, while taking care not to disrupt ongoing insurance or criminal investigations.
- **Debriefing staff** and evaluating emergency response protocols and plan execution.

This basic format can be followed for other types of emergencies, including tornadoes, floods, utility outages, hazardous chemical releases, wildfires, intrusions and disease outbreaks.