

**General Emergency   
Response Procedures**

**Questions?**

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# Emergency Procedures

The following information is intended to provide **general guidance** in responding to emergencies and not intended to replace the development and implementation of, site specific, emergency response plans.

**\* EMS =** Emergency Management Services

## Office Evacuation Procedures (Fire or other)

A fire or other reason for your fire to evacuate is cause for concern and prompt response, but not for panic. Never attempt to fight a fire alone.

**It is important that all staff and members know:**

* At least two ways out of the building
* Are familiar with evacuation procedures and meeting locations
* How to use the fire alarm pull station(s)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **WHEN AN ALARM SOUNDS:** | |
|  | 1. **Stop work and activities! Terminate phone call!** |
|  | 1. **Go immediately to your nearest exit or stairwell and exit building.**  * Prior to opening any doors, feel the door for heat. If the door is hot, do not open, use an alternate exit. |
|  | 1. **If smoke or heat is detected, stay low.** |
|  | 1. **Exit the building via stairwells / fire exits: DON’T USE THE ELEVATORS!**  * In the case of a blocked stairwell, please move swiftly and smoothly to the opposite stairwell. * IMPORTANT! **If trapped**, find a safe location, call 911 and tell them your location. Proceed to a window to be seen. If possible, look for a location with an easily accessible window (for EMS) door (to be closed) and a phone. |
|  | 1. **Move swiftly to your designated emergency evacuation area (check-in if applicable).**  * This is EXTREMELY important as it lets the EMS know if everyone has exited the building and allows them to focus their rescue efforts without undue risk to emergency workers. |
| **Emergency Evacuation Area:** | |
| **Alternate Emergency Evacuation Area:** | |
|  | 1. **Account for all staff and members.**  * Report anyone missing and injured to EMS. |
|  | 1. **If weather is poor, move to a safe, covered location and advise EMS of your new location.** |

## Bomb Threat / Suspicious Object

If you find a suspicious object: DO NOT MOVE, TOUCH or JAR the object or anything attached to it.   
Staying a safe distance away from the item, block off the area with chairs etcetera and report to police.

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| **Time permitting, all the following steps should be taken:** | | | |
|  | 1. **Identify the Decision Maker**  * Management; most senior immediately available. | | |
|  | 1. **Contact Police and inform them of the threat.** | | |
|  | 1. **Establish a Command Centre**  * Have the recipient of the call / notice attend the meeting. | | |
|  | 1. **Assess threat**  * Gather all information and access the legitimacy of the threat. | | |
|  | 1. **Search** | | |
|  | * Will a search be conducted? | * Yes | * No |
|  | * If yes, will the search be cover or overt: * Covert:   + Conduct search of the specific area (if identified)   + Conduct a search of public areas, evacuation routes and meeting areas * Overt: * Conduct a search of public areas, evacuation routes and meeting areas * Inform staff of threat * Ask staff to search their personal work space and report anything suspicious. | | |
|  | 1. **Will you be evacuating?** | * Yes | * No |
|  | * If yes, ensure that; * Evacuation route has been searched and is safe. * Emergency evacuation area(s) have been searched and are safe. * The evacuation team (if applicable) is in place to assist employees / members in safely evacuating the building. * An individual to speak to the media, if they arrive, has been identified. * Staff take their personal belongings and follow emergency office evacuation procedures. | | |
|  | 1. **Termination:**  * The decision to terminate the incident response and re-enter the building once the threat has been dealt with satisfactorily can only be made by the Decision Maker. | | |
|  | 1. **Ensure that:**  * Staff and members receive assistance as necessary (HR, EMS) * A media spokesperson has been identified. | | |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **If a Bomb Threat is phoned in, use and complete this checklist.** | | | | | | |
| **Date:** | | **Call Start Time:** | | | **Call End Time:** | |
| 1. **Signal Co-worker**  * Signal a co-worker with the caller on the line. * Co-worker is to call 911 and advice that a bomb threat has been received and by who. * If no co-worker is present, call 911 once you are off the call. | | | | | | |
| 1. **Listen to Call**  * Listen. Be calm and courteous. Do not panic. * Do not interrupt the caller. * Obtain as much information as possible. * Listen closely for any voice or speech peculiarities. Is the voice young, male, female, with accent, background noises…etc. Pay attention to how the caller talks. * Be alert for repeated use of certain words / phrases. | | | | | | |
| 1. **Ask the following questions and record his / her answers.** | | | | | | |
| What time will the Bomb explode? | | |  | | | |
| Where is it? | | |  | | | |
| What does it look like? | | |  | | | |
| What kind of bomb is it? | | |  | | | |
| Why was the bomb planted? | | |  | | | |
| What is your name? | | |  | | | |
| 1. **What were his exact words. Document what he / she said as accurately as possible.** | | |  | | | |
| 1. **Note any identifying characteristics:** | | | Approximate Age: | | |  |
| Sex | * Male | | * Female | * Unsure | | |
| Accent | * English | | * French | * Other: | | |
| Voice | * Loud | | * Soft | * Other | | |
| Speech | * Fast | | * Slow | * Other | | |
| Diction | * Good | | * Nasal | * Lisp | | * Other: |
| Manner | * Emotional | | * Calm | * Vulgar | | * Other: |
| Background Noises |  | | | | | |
| 1. **Was voice familiar? If yes, specify.** | | |  | | | |
| 1. **Did the caller appear to be familiar with the area? If yes, specify.** | | |  | | | |

## Environmental Emergency / Chemical Spills

Environmental emergencies can include water contamination, chemical and fuel spills.

1. Instructions will be given – follow them.
2. Remember, remaining calm and orderly will set an example for others and avert panic.
3. If you are aware of a chemical spill, notify you manager / Property Management and / or other emergency services as required and control access to the area if possible.

## Intrusion

If you see someone who you feel may be an intruder do not approach alone. Contact a manager or supervisor for assistance. If you feel threatened contact police and provide your location and description of the individual.

## Medical Emergencies / First Aid

1. Provide emergency first aid.
2. If required call 911, remain on the line and be prepared to describe the emergency.
3. Arrange for someone to meet with first responders at the main entrance.

## Media Calls!

It is conceivable that you may be contacted for comment by the news media.

If possible, contact a Public Relations (or equivalent) company ASAP and provide as much detail as possible.

If it is impossible to do so, follow the **Media Do’s and Don’ts** below:

## Media Do’s and Don’ts

**DO**

* **Document the conversation**
  + Date / time of call, their name, what news outlet do they represent, what questions did they ask, how can they be reached.
* **Treat reporters with respect**, even when they may not offer it in return. Otherwise, you become part of the story.
* **Take control.** Don’t let a reporter take control by not letting you finish your answers or forcing you into hasty statements.
* **Begin interviews when you are ready**; if you’re not, say you are still gathering information and will get   
  right back to them.

**DO NOT**

* **Do not speculate**. Avoid speculative statements about the cause of the incident, extent of damage, resumption time, or possible outcome. If you don’t know the answer, say so, and tell them that additional details will be released as they become available.
* **Do not say ‘no comment’** or flatly refuse information. Give a good reason why the information is not available; e.g. want to be sure of the facts, next of kin must be notified, proprietary information, official investigation has not yet been completed, etc.
* **Do not disclose the location of the recovery center**.
* **Do not** try to **mislead** or cover up facts or **lay blame** on anyone or anything.
* **Do not make ‘off the record’ comments** to the news media – there is no such thing!
* **Do not repeat negative** or inflammatory words used by a reporter. It might end up as part of your quote.

## Power Failure

1. Stay calm. Follow instructions from management and or Property Management.
2. In most office locations emergency power will provide lighting.
3. If you are trapped in an elevator, press the call button for assistance.

## Threat to Staff (Staff Safety)

**If there is immediate concern for staff safety:**

* Call 911. Seek their assistance and direction.

**Establish heightened awareness:**

For the office:

* + Obtain permission (if required) to advise others that need to know (i.e. reception) of the situation in general.
  + Develop a communication system to obtain assistance for the receptionist and employee that includes a recognizable “help” signal. Silent alarm may be appropriate for reception? If so, an alarm install/monitoring company can often discuss options of this nature
  + Receptionist should be made aware if employee is expecting any visitors.
  + Develop and / or review procedures to follow. These would include access, threatening members procedures etc.
  + Review appropriate questions the receptionist should ask visitors and what to do if they are not satisfied with the answers.
  + Evaluate the physical design of office area. Increase natural surveillance of reception and staff member’s work area if possible.
  + Remind employees not to give out any personal information about staff.
  + Provided counselling to the employees (HR, EAP program, etc.).
  + Provide a description / picture of person(s) if possible.
  + If police are aware of posing threat / person(s), seek their assistance.

For the threatened employee

* Generally, employee needs to have a greater awareness of their surroundings.
* Are other work options available for the employee (work from home, other office location etc.)?
* Provided counselling to the employee (HR, EAP program, etc.)
* Employee may wish to alter work and day to day patterns. Park in different locations, take different routes to work, change start and finish times.
* Employee may wish to change and un-list their phone number(s).
* Employee should have their cell phone with them always. If they do not have one, they should consider obtaining one.
* Employee may wish to call into the office when leaving for work and provide an expected time of arrival. Arrangement with family may also be made for when they leave work and return home.
* It is recommended that the employee not work late at night, (to avoid leaving in the dark or when there are less people in the area).
* Use a buddy system when walking to and from the office parking lot if possible.

**Other considerations**

* Is there a safety concern for other members, co-operatives, neighbouring businesses / homes?

## Weather Related Emergencies

**Earthquake**

1. Stay indoors - do NOT evacuate unless instructed to do so.
2. Duck and cover your head to protect yourself from falling items.
3. Wait until shaking stops. Be prepared for aftershocks

**Lightning and / or Thunderstorms**

1. Stay calm. Avoid using elevators.
2. Stay away from all doors and windows.
3. Do NOT evacuate unless instructed to do so.

**Storms**

1. Severe weather may necessitate office closure.
2. Office closures should be discussed with supervisor (if applicable).
3. If during business hours, advise staff and take precaution**.**
4. If outside of business hours, or in preparation for the next business day, advise staff of decision and make arrangements for remote work (work from home) if necessary.

**Tornado**

1. Stay away from windows, doors and exterior walls.
2. Take shelter in small, interior areas such as washrooms and stairwells.
3. If immediate action is required – take shelter under your desk.
4. Avoid using elevators.