

Guide to Creating an Emergency Response Plan (ERP)

Purpose

Emergency procedures ensure that responses to emergencies are prompt, organized and effective.

Your company's Emergency Response Plan must cover off these **five key elements**:

1. Emergency responsibilities
2. Emergency procedures
3. Communications
4. Investigation
5. Plan verification

Read and answer the questions (where indicated) in each of these five elements to help build your Emergency Response Plan.

1. Emergency Responsibilities

During emergencies, emotions can run high – it is critical that emergency procedures are distributed to all employees and reviewed frequently, so that everyone knows what their role is.

Responsibility requirements include defining:

- Who is responsible for regular site inspections, including identifying potential hazards and corrective action?
- Who is responsible for First-Aid, including making sure trained personnel are on site, and First-Aid Kits and equipment are properly maintained?
- Who is responsible for emergency and evacuation training of all personnel?
- Who is responsible for developing, reviewing and updating emergency and evacuation procedures?
- Who is responsible for creating and updating the Emergency Contact List (see Communications below)?
- Who is identified as Emergency Response Team Leader?
- Who is responsible for contacting external emergency responders?
- Who is responsible for initiating the emergency response process (stop-work order, site containment, search-and-rescue, and First-Aid procedures)?
- Who is responsible for external communications (communities, families, head office, media, etc.)?
- Who is the internal investigation team leader?

2. Emergency Procedures

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation requires written rescue and evacuation procedures for a number of different emergency situations, including working in confined/remote spaces, at high angles, near or over water, etc.

Based on the work site conditions identified in your site inspection, you must develop the appropriate procedures. These procedures should include, but not be limited to:

- Listing all potential hazards and their possible consequences.
- Preparing an inventory of resources needed for emergency response (medical supplies, rescue equipment, etc.)
- Identifying evacuation routes for the work site and surrounding area.
- Contacting on-site First-Aid providers and the Emergency Response Team Leader.
- Contacting external emergency responders, government and company representatives.
- On-site fire-fighting, rescue and medical evacuation.
- Containment of the hazard and/or location to protect people and the environment.
- Briefing and training workers on emergency response, and conducting periodic drills.
- Shut down and start up.
- Protection of vital records.
- Clean-up, investigation and return to work.

3. Communications

Clear procedures and lines of communication must be put in place to enable emergency personnel to notify others on the work site, company management and outside emergency responders. They're also essential in helping the company provide information to families, communities and the media in a timely manner. Communications requirements include:

- Defining your internal, on-site emergency communications process.
- Ensuring all personnel is trained in that process.
- Identifying who is responsible for contacting external emergency responders.
- Identifying who is responsible for external communications with the community, company, government, media, etc.
- Identifying who is responsible for developing and maintaining the emergency contact list. This list should include at least:
 - Fire services, including Forest Fire services
 - Police & Ambulance Services
 - Medivac and hospital services
 - Municipal and company representatives
 - Utility providers
 - Government ministries (Forests, Environment, Solicitor General)
 - BC Forest Safety Council and WorkSafeBC
 - Coroner's Office

4. Investigation

An internal investigation team leader must be appointed. Their job is to act as liaison with police, the BC Forest Safety Council, WorkSafeBC and other government agencies to assist in the full investigation of any incident.

This individual is also responsible for the following:

- Overall control of the investigation team activities, from inception to completion.
- Reviewing the final report and making a presentation to senior management personnel on the investigators findings and recommendations.
- As applicable, meet with the family of any seriously injured worker(s) to discuss the incident and convey the company's sympathy regarding the incident.

5. Plan Verification

All work sites must be visited by the site supervisor and at least one member of the safety team. Their job is to make sure the Emergency Response Plan will work on each site – that means adjusting the plan to the site's logistics as required. Included in the items to be examined are:

- Communications – where in the site is there a danger of communication blackout? How far do workers have to go to get back into communications range?
- Emergency access – what is the fastest, safest route in for outside emergency responders?
- Evacuation procedures – identify the safest routes out of the work site in the event of an environmental emergency?

Company Representative

Worker Safety Representative

Date

Date