

Fire & Other Emergencies



FIRE & OTHER EMERGENCIES

A.R.C.E. Plan

One helpful technique that is used to teach proper fire response is the A.R.C.E Plan.



Alert

Rescue

Confine

Extinguish

FIRE EMERGENCIES

Despite our most conscientious efforts, fire and other emergency situations may occur. Therefore we must have appropriate planning, training and skills to be ready and able to react effectively.

This information is designed to help prepare you so that if or when an incident does occur, your response will be immediate, intelligent and most importantly, effective.

The following general instructions elaborate on these fundamental steps and provide guidance in the event of an emergency. ***It must be understood and stressed that each emergency will present itself in a unique way and with a different set of circumstances each time.*** Therefore, staff must be creative and confident to implement these steps in various situations.

In addition it is important to note that, although these “steps” are presented in an organized manner in order to provide guidance on the importance and general sequence of these events, in the case of a true emergency it is probable that many of the functions of this guideline will be conducted simultaneously or in a sequence appropriate to that specific circumstance. In all cases sound practical judgment, experience and training will prevail.

Pending the arrival of the fire department or other back up and responding personnel, ***YOU are the first line of defense. The lives of those entrusted to your care, and possibly your very own, may well depend upon your reactions.***



**TO SUMMON HELP
IN ANY EMERGENCY
SITUATION . . .**

Immediately Call 911

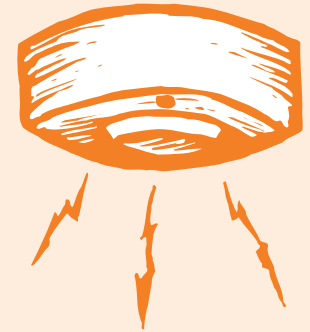


Dealing with Fire Emergencies

The following protocol is operative throughout the Department of Mental Retardation for all Fire Emergencies (e.g., fire, smoke, odor of smoke or burning, crackling noises, unusual heat conditions, and any automatic detector activation). Although specifically geared to “fire” type emergencies much of it would apply in any generalized emergency situation. In addition, following this section on dealing with fire emergencies, there is some specific guidance for dealing with other potential emergencies.

Alert

- **DO NOT PANIC** – remain calm. Do not shout or yell.
- **YOUR FIRST CONCERN IS FOR LIFE SAFETY** – the safety of the people you support, yourself and others is of paramount importance.
- **ALERT EVERYONE NEARBY.**
- **PULL THE NEAREST ALARM BOX IF AVAILABLE.** This will automatically notify building occupants, the Fire Department and additional help. In addition this may initiate automatic fire protection features of the building.
- **CALL 911 – IF NO FIRE ALARM IS AVAILABLE, IMMEDIATELY CALL 911.** If there is an alarm system available, make a back-up call to 911, as soon as everyone is in a point of safety. Although redundant, this assures response and provides additional information to the responders. Give the dispatcher the following information:
 - your name
 - location
 - brief description of the incident.Answer all questions. Prepare to follow instructions, and do not hang up until directed by the dispatcher.



Remove

EVACUATE EVERYONE TO A POINT OF SAFETY. All occupants should be evacuated as quickly and as orderly as possible to a pre-designated **Point of Safety**, using the following guidelines:

- **As a general rule, the method that is employed under non-emergency situations is going to be the best method for movement under emergency situations.** (e.g., self-ambulating, assistance, wheelchair, etc..) In addition, consideration should be given to: what is the safest and most efficient method to evacuate this individual in this specific emergency situation?
- **Anyone in immediate danger should utilize the nearest and most immediate exit.** At any time there is evacuation to the outside of the building, the evacuation should be to a pre-determined **Point of Safety**. As soon as all occupants are gathered in a safe place (either within the building, in an area of refuge, or outside), take a roll call. If anyone is missing, immediately report this to the first arriving fire personnel.
- **If you are trapped by smoke or fire: close doors, stay low, block openings to room and open a window to attract attention of rescuers.**

Confine

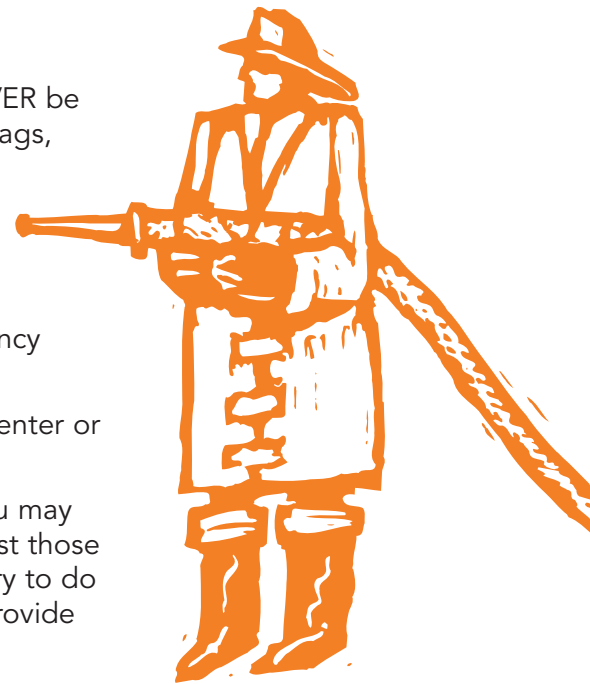
- **CONFINE THE FIRE** by closing any doors, fire doors and other openings into the room or area of origin.
- **CLOSING A DOOR** can be a very simple and effective method of containing the fire, buying time for evacuation.

Extinguish

EXTINGUISH THE FIRE. Attempt to extinguish the fire only after everyone is at a point of safety (unless extinguishment of the fire is needed to evacuate, i.e. fire is between you and the door). Attempt to extinguish the fire only if you are trained, and it is appropriate to the circumstance.

Fire Emergencies General Information

- **ALL AUTOMATIC ALARMS** should be treated as **TRUE EMERGENCIES**. You should immediately begin an evacuation as outlined above, regardless of the cause of the automatic alarm or where you are when it occurs.
- **BEDS, MATTRESSES AND OTHER BULKY EQUIPMENT** should NEVER be used to evacuate anyone unless absolutely necessary. (Use blanket drags, carries, etc...)
- **STAY LOW.** Keep yourself and others low if in a smoke involved area. The fire generated smoke and gases are potentially more dangerous than the actual flames.
- **ELEVATORS SHOULD NEVER BE USED DURING A FIRE** or emergency situation, other than by firefighting personnel.
- **NO ONE, OTHER THAN FIREFIGHTING PERSONNEL,** should ever enter or re-enter a fire or smoke-involved building.
- **BASED ON YOUR TRAINING AND/OR YOUR RESPONSIBILITY,** you may need to re-enter areas that are not involved with fire or smoke to assist those dependent on your support. Use your training and caution if necessary to do this. If re-entry is required, make someone aware of your actions to provide accountability for arriving emergency responders.
- **REPORT ANY FIRE TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT IMMEDIATELY,** even if it appears to be out, or you don't think it's significant.

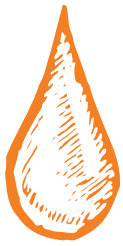


Other Emergencies General Instructions

- **REMAIN CALM** – you are responsible for the people you support, yourself and others.
- **RESPOND TO ALL IMMINENT DANGERS APPROPRIATELY.** Evacuate unsafe or potentially unsafe areas and / or buildings.



- **STAY TUNED TO RADIO AND TELEVISION REPORTS FOR UPDATES AND INFORMATION.** Information will be disseminated as appropriate.
- **WHENEVER NEEDED CALL 9-1-1 TO OBTAIN HELP FOR ANY EMERGENCY.** Appropriate help and assistance will be dispatched immediately to your location.
- **NO PLAN CAN PREPARE FOR ALL POSSIBILITIES** – each emergency will present itself in a unique way and with a different set of circumstances. These guidelines are designed to give guidance for what to do in the event of an emergency and to provide a sound foundation for training.



Hurricanes and Earthquakes

- **KNOW THE TERMS USED TO DESCRIBE SEVERE WEATHER THREATS:** A *Hurricane Watch* means that such a storm is possible, A *Hurricane Warning* means that such a storm is expected in the area.
- **MOVE EVERYONE AWAY FROM GLASS DOORS AND WINDOWS.**
- **MOVE TO AN INTERIOR PORTION OF THE BUILDING**, if possible (i.e., the center halls.)
- **CLOSE ALL BLINDS, DRAPES, ETC.** to prevent flying glass.
- **BE ORDERLY AND REASSURING.** Maintain the normal routine as much as possible.

Tornadoes

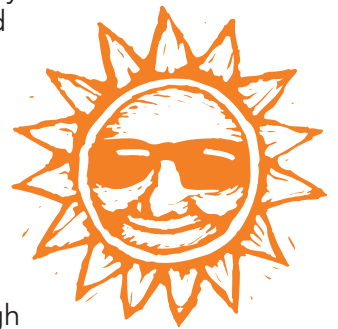
- **KNOW THE TERMS USED TO DESCRIBE SEVERE WEATHER THREATS:** A *Tornado Watch* means that such a storm is possible, A *Tornado Warning* means that such a storm has been sighted or is imminent.
- **THE SAFEST PLACE TO RELOCATE INSIDE A BUILDING IS NEAR WALLS**, in the corners of the basement.
- **IF A WARNING IS RECEIVED**, everyone should immediately move to a central location and be prepared to quickly relocate to the basement if possible.
- **OPEN ALL WINDOWS 2-3" AND CLOSE ALL BLINDS** to prevent flying glass. Windows can be taped if enough warning is given
- **WHEN A WARNING OR CONDITIONS DICTATE**, immediately move everyone to the basement.
- **MOVING NONAMBULATORY PEOPLE** to the basement shall be handled as in any other evacuation process.
- **IF YOU ARE IN A BUILDING WHICH DOES NOT HAVE A BASEMENT**, or the basement is inaccessible, move to an interior room on the lowest level possible.

Flooding

- **THE SAFEST PLACE TO RELOCATE IS HIGHER FLOORS OR LEVELS.**
- **BE AWARE IF YOUR LOCATION** is in a low-lying area or flood plain.
- **IN THE EVENT OF MINOR FLOODING**, stay in your location, unless the building's systems (e.g., furnaces, etc.) are threatened.
- **IN THE EVENT OF WIDESPREAD FLOODING**, prepare for extended evacuation.

Severe Cold Weather

- **WIND CHILL TEMPERATURES BELOW 25 DEGREES** pose increasing danger and precautions should be taken.
- **EVERYONE SHOULD BE DRESSED FOR ADEQUATE WARMTH**, closely monitored and kept in heated locations during all cold weather.



Severe Hot Weather

- **HIGH TEMPERATURE WEATHER THAT IS OVER 85 DEGREES**, especially with high humidity over 70%, poses increasing danger and precautions should be taken.
- **EXTREME HIGH TEMPERATURE WEATHER IS DEFINED AS** any day in which the ambient temperature is over 90 degrees, with high humidity.
- **IN HOT WEATHER**, check to make sure that all drapes are drawn to stop sunlight, all cooling appliances are operating (air conditioning and fans), and that everyone is appropriately dressed.
- **TAKE APPROPRIATE PRECAUTIONS** such as making sure people drink extra fluids to avoid dehydration, move to cooler areas, avoid strenuous activities etc.

Radiological Disasters

- **ANYONE WITHIN THE 10 MILE EMERGENCY PLANNING ZONE (EPZ)** of the *Millstone Nuclear Power Plant* should be aware of their local emergency relocation plans, warning systems and methods of the *Relocation Planning Zone*.
- **CHECK THE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL RETARDATION SPECIAL OPERATIONS PLAN** or contact your *Local Emergency Planning Commission* for details.

Emergency Evacuations

- **CONSIDER PREPARING INDIVIDUAL EVACUATION CHECKLISTS** including unique necessities such as critical medications, glasses, etc., as recommended by the *Federal Emergency Management Agency* or the *American Red Cross*.

Hazardous Material Emergencies

- **IN THE EVENT OF ANY LEAK OR SPILL OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS** that creates an immediate or imminent danger, everyone should be evacuated to a *Point of Safety*. This will usually be an area away from the building and upwind.
- **CALL 9-1-1** and give a brief description of the emergency.
- **YOUR LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENT WILL RESPOND PROMPTLY** and evaluate the emergency and shall implement its plan for dealing with *Hazardous Materials* incidents.

- **FURTHER EVACUATIONS AS DEEMED NECESSARY** by the Fire Officer in charge shall be so ordered and carried out as necessary.
- **IN NO CASE SHOULD ANYONE ENTER OR RE-ENTER AN UNSAFE OR TOXIC ATMOSPHERE** – immediately report to incoming fire personnel anyone who is unaccounted for.

Carbon Monoxide Emergencies

- **IT IS RECOMMENDED**, that all areas where there is a potential source of carbon monoxide (e.g., furnaces) should have carbon monoxide detectors installed.
- **IN ANY CASE WHERE A CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR SOUNDS** or you are concerned that there may be build up of carbon monoxide present due to symptoms (see below), everyone should be evacuated.
- **CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING HAS MANY SYMPTOMS** – some are very similar to flu symptoms. Symptoms may include but are not limited to: – headaches – nausea – vomiting – fatigue
Symptoms can come on in a short period of time or be present for a longer time. Prolonged exposure may result in severe symptoms such as unconsciousness, convulsions and death.
- **EVACUATION TO THE OUTSIDE** is generally the best action to take.
- **FROM A POINT OF SAFETY** – immediately call 9-1-1 to report the problem.

