

## **BUILDING EVACUATION**

Many situations may require a building evacuation. It is always helpful to be aware of the fastest available exit routes from any structure that you enter. Knowing where the secondary exits are located should be a priority activity for buildings that you enter regularly. In the event that a fire alarm sounds, a building evacuation notification is disseminated, or a building evacuation is otherwise needed, take the following steps:

- Safely stop your work.
- Remain calm and orderly.
- Gather your personal belongings quickly and move towards the exit immediately.
- Close doors and windows as you exit if time allows. Never prop stairwell doors open, as this can allow fire to spread or intruders to gain access to other parts of the building.
- If time permits, turn off the power to all electrical equipment.
- Walk quickly – but do not run – to the nearest safe exit.
- Never use an elevator. Use the stairways as directed by emergency personnel.
- If you have access and functional needs, make sure that your employer or the people around you are aware so your evacuation needs can be addressed.
- Follow instructions from County police or properly identified emergency personnel.
- Go to your predetermined meeting location to report your safety status to your coworkers or family.
- Account for all occupants and notify emergency personnel of missing persons.
- Do not re-enter the building unless directed by emergency personnel.

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## FIRE

### Before a Fire:

- Identify two escape routes in the event that one exit is blocked.
- Identify the location of and check the service dates on all fire extinguishers on your floor. Make sure you know how to properly use them.
- Install smoke alarms on every level of the building. Test them monthly and replace the batteries at least once a year (change when you change your clocks on Daylight Savings Time).
- If you have access and functional needs, make sure that your employer or the people around you are aware so your evacuation needs can be addressed before an emergency occurs.
- Have an evacuation plan for all occupants and know where to meet. Pick a location away from the building and away from the street or where emergency personnel might stage their equipment.

### During a Fire:

- Immediately pull the nearest fire alarm, or upon hearing the fire alarm, immediately evacuate.
- Assist any person in immediate danger to safety, if it can be accomplished without risk to yourself.
- If you see smoke, try another escape route. If you have to escape through smoke, crawl. Keep your head one to two feet above the floor where the air is the cleanest.
- If properly trained and the fire is small enough, use a nearby extinguisher to control and extinguish the fire. Evacuate immediately if:
  - The fire is too large or out of control (larger than the size of a small trash can);
  - The atmosphere is smoky or it is difficult to breathe;
  - The first attempt to put out the fire does not succeed.
- Do not use elevators—use the stairwells.

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- Check the door with the back of your hand for excessive heat before opening. The presence of heat may indicate that a fire is present on the other side.
- If heavy smoke conditions exist, crawl on hands and feet. Smoke rises to the top of a room allowing better quality air and visibility towards the floor. Follow walls if visibility is limited.
- If you are unable to safely evacuate the building, try to position yourself in a room near the exterior of the building. Shut the door, and if possible open or break the window for improved ventilation. Attract the attention of people outside the building by placing an article of clothing or sign on the window. Call 911 to inform them of your location inside the building.
- Once successfully outside, call 911 from a safe location if emergency personnel are not on scene.
- Stay out of the building. Do not re-enter unless directed by emergency personnel.
- Account for all the people who were in the building by writing a list of everybody's name if an existing personnel list is not available. If anyone is missing, inform emergency personnel immediately.

