

Emergency Action Plan



Whether it's a tornado on the horizon or the fire alarms sounding within your facility, your organization must be prepared for the worst. Employees need to understand the alarm signals when a crisis occurs. They must know quickly what to do and where to go for each situation. If you're prepared, your chances for a quick and successful evacuation or sheltering in place greatly increase.

An emergency action plan (EAP) is a written document required by OSHA standard 29 CFR 1910.38(a). The purpose of an emergency action plan is to facilitate and organize employers' and employees' actions during workplace emergencies.



Minimum Plan Requirements

At a minimum, the plan must include (but is not be limited to):

1. A means of reporting fires and other emergencies, such as a tornado, to all employees quickly;
2. Documented evacuation/shelter in place procedures and emergency escape route assignments;
3. Procedures for employees who must remain to operate or shut down critical equipment before they evacuate;
4. Procedures to account for all employees after the emergency evacuation has been completed;
5. Identification of rescue and medical services/duties; and
6. Communication to employees of the names and/or job titles of people who can be contacted for more information.

Local fire departments will often provide assistance in determining your tornado shelter, evacuation routes, and exterior assembly points.

It's a good practice to train employees on:

- A. The alarm systems used for evacuations and other actions. The alarms used for different actions should be distinctive.
- B. The evacuation plans at least annually.
- C. The communication plans in multiple languages. If there are employees with non-written languages in your workforce, you must make sure they understand.
- D. The location of an alternative communications center if there's a fire or explosion.

