

Basic Fire Alarm Procedures for the Workplace

Fires can be frightening. In addition to the intense heat, the fire alarm will probably be very loud, water may be pouring out of sprinkler heads, the smoke may make your eyes water, and you may be coughing. Here are the steps to take to prepare for a fire:

Activating a Fire Alarm

- In all cases of fire, activate the nearest manual pull stations (red fire alarm boxes) to warn other occupants of fires. Make sure everyone in your area knows the locations of manual pull stations. If your area or building does not have a manual pull station...shout fire and evacuate the area.
- To activate a Fire Alarm, pull the handle on one of the red fire alarm boxes.
- In all cases of fire, call 911 immediately. Someone must report the fire. Do not assume someone else is making this call, make the call yourself!!

If a Fire Alarm has been Activated

- Know the nearest emergency egress/exit routes and evacuation actions for your area. All areas must be evacuated during a fire alarm. Evacuation actions include, but are not limited to, leaving lights on, and closing doors.
- Fire doors (door to stairwells, and doors separating one area from another) prevent the spread of fire and smoke; doors that are shut may help to smother the fire.
- Emergency exits are clearly marked with an exit sign and are posted throughout a building in high traffic areas. ***All County personnel should be familiar with emergency exits and routes especially in their assigned work areas.***
- In an emergency, you may need to travel through areas that are not familiar to you. The hallways may be dark and full of smoke. Know where every door is, and learn how to open the windows. You should know at least two ways (doors, windows) out of every room.
- Keep emergency exits clear. If you see an obstacle (e.g., trash can, chair) in the way of an emergency exit, move it! If you have to crawl out through that doorway in the dark, you'll be glad you did.
- Do not use an elevator during a fire emergency.
- Assist people with disabilities to the nearest stairwell in the building. Have them wait on the landing if they cannot make it down the stairs. Stairwells are checked first by the fire department and are constructed to give a higher degree of protection. Immediately notify the fire or police department if a disabled individual is waiting on a stairwell landing.
- Fire extinguishers are located throughout County buildings and vehicles. Training is required to use them, contact Public Safety to schedule training classes.

- Proceed to the designated refuge/meeting area for your Department (generally 150 feet from the building), which needs to be determined by the Department and all employees must be informed.
- If your vehicle is parked nearby the building, do NOT go to it. Go directly to your refuge/meeting place so others can know you are safe.
- Report any missing personnel to the responding fire or police department.
- Wait at your department's refuge/meeting area until emergency personnel inform you it is "all clear" to reenter.
- Do not go back into the building for any reason! If you have a problem or concern, please inform the responding fire or police department.

Treat EVERY fire alarm as if it were real. Your help and cooperation is greatly appreciated. Please share this information with everyone in your department.