



Being Prepared is Being Aware

Being prepared for emergencies is more than just having a muster point and a first aid kit. There is simply no price that can be put on saving a life, your own or that of someone else, should an emergency arise.

The first step in being prepared is being aware, so ask:

- Do you know first aid and/or CPR?
- Do you know who around you is trained in first aid and CPR?
- Do you know where the nearest AED is located?
- Do you understand the potential emergencies that could take place and have you been trained to deal with potential emergencies at your workplace?

Everyone on a work site needs to know, and has the right to know, not only the potential hazards but the severity of those hazards and how to react when something goes wrong. When there is a plan for unseen emergencies the risk and severity of the negative impact on the health and safety of those on site is reduced.

Emergency Response Plan

An emergency response plan is a course of action developed to mitigate the damage of potential events that could endanger a business's ability to function. An ERP must be specific to every work site, shop and office as every location has unique features. Such a plan should include measures that provide for the safety of personnel and, if possible, property and facilities.

Your response should:

- **identify emergency plans** appropriate to work activities (example, working at heights)

- **set out the requirement for training** in emergency procedures, roles, and responsibilities (example, who has first aid training on site?)
- **be tested regularly** and deficiencies corrected (example, perform and record a fire drill)
- **include a written fire response plan;** ensure extinguishers are marked and visible and inspected
- **set out the communication system** available (phone on site? fire alarm? working alone policy/procedures?)
- **identify the location of first aid supplies** and facilities; qualified first aid personnel on site and a means to transport injured individuals to a medical facility

Effective emergency response is needed for many topics - materials, chemicals, structures, machines, tools, and confined spaces found on construction sites are just a few.

Other Things to Think About

- Creation and practice of emergency response procedures **at least once per year** and document how to make improvements
- **Weather must be considered** in an ERP. For example, how will strong winds affect the structure, materials, and people on site? Extreme heat and cold, heavy snowfall, freezing conditions and summer storms and lightning can cause or affect emergency situations.
- **Have a plan and a backup plan.** Have a muster point and a backup muster point. Have a general ERP and a site-specific ERP.
- **Workers contribute to emergency preparedness.** Know the plan, be part of the plan and make sure that everyone on site knows what to do in case of an emergency. Proactive prevention is the best emergency preparedness.