

# THE SAFETY OBSERVER

Safety Information for Employees

## EMERGENCY PLANNING

Most emergencies come without warning, and usually result in some type of loss. A well thought out strategy will allow you to respond quickly and efficiently, thus minimizing the extent of loss. An effective Emergency Action Plan requires the efforts of more than just the property's staff. Support from regional management, local law enforcement and emergency response teams, vendors and contractors, and even the residents are essential.

### Know Your Property's Emergency Exposure

In order to plan ahead effectively, history and geographical factors are all you need to determine the emergency exposures of your property. While all locations must consider the very real threats of fire or serious crime, the Midwest does not need to be concerned with hurricanes, nor does Florida need to prepare for a winter storm. What is your property likely to face? What have they experienced in the past?

### Emergency Contacts

Once you have determined what emergencies have potential of occurring at your location, a list of emergency contacts need to be established. Of course, all employees must know to call 911, but if the emergency affects the surrounding area, i.e. hurricane, then emergency personnel may have their hands full. A list of direct numbers may be more resourceful in these situations.

### Employee Training

When there is an emergency, you must know in advance what to do and where to go without thinking twice. In order to be prepared, specific duties must be assigned in advance, so everyone knows what roll they are to play. Each associate must have pre-designated response duties and trained how to carry out those duties. Consider backup plans for unavailable associates, and train accordingly.

### Emergency Site Map

The maintenance manager should produce an Emergency Site Map to show the locations of all emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers, first aid kits, fire hydrants, alarm boxes, electrical shut-off switches, water cutoffs, gas line cutoffs, emergency exit routes, and any other relevant systems. The emergency site map should be clear and as accurate as possible, made a part of all employees' orientation training, and copies readily available for First Responders. Any revisions or changes to the Map are to be discussed and documented with all associates.

### Resident Emergency Awareness

Residents' safety is an important consideration when preparing for any type of unexpected emergency. They should be provided with a list of local emergency contacts and a Property Site Map showing the location of fire alarm boxes (or pull-stations), building evacuation route, property evacuation route, and locations of fire extinguishers.