



Utica National Risk Management Alert

Help Keep Your Team and Property Safe During an Emergency: Develop a Fire Department Pre-Plan

A pre-plan is a document developed with the local fire department to assist in emergency response. It provides detailed information on the operation and layout of your building for use by emergency responders during an emergency situation.

The benefit of a pre-plan is that it allows emergency responders to anticipate the resources and procedures needed to meet specific demands during an emergency – and it can be used to help protect first responders, personnel in the building, and the building and environment.

How to Start

Begin by gathering information – including details on the building, whether there are any tenants, and emergency contact information. Provide a detailed diagram of the building to the local fire department and note exits, fire doors, and special hazards. Identify the location(s) of the fire protection equipment.

This detailed information should include, but not be limited to:

✓ EXPOSURES TO THE BUILDING
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Construction, stories, fire walls• Environmental exposures to the building – like railways, power lines, water, etc.
✓ WATER SOURCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public or private, include fire hydrant location
✓ FIRE PROTECTION EQUIPMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify type of equipment and location with zones
✓ ACCESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there access around the entire building? Identify fences, vegetation, obstructions, etc.
✓ SPECIAL HAZARDS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Storage of flammable/combustible liquids• Special hazards relevant to this specific building and operations
✓ SHUT-OFFS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note shut-offs for power, gas, and/or the operational system
✓ HVAC SYSTEMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Type and location of HVAC

Continued

What Else to Do

- **Document changes and update the plan.** A plan is only as good as the information provided and documented. With changes in the building, operations, responsibilities or the fire department, a pre-plan is imperative to the risk management controls. Review it annually, at a minimum. If updates are not included, precious time can be wasted and losses of life and property could occur during an emergency. Review the plan periodically.
- **Ask the local fire department to come onsite.** Review the plan with the department and invite them to tour the building to ensure familiarity with it.
- **Designate individuals with responsibilities.** Identify who will oversee the plan and act as the liaison with the fire department.
- **Practice, Practice, Practice.** Make sure your staff is familiar with the plan and that you practice it (*annually, at a minimum*). New hires should be made aware of the plan and be trained.

Resources: NFPA, Firehouse Magazine, OSHA

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