

SEATTLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Information Bulletin #2003-4



Fire Emergency Procedures for Public Assemblies

This bulletin describes fire emergency planning requirements for public assembly occupancies with an occupant load of over 100 persons, in accordance with Chapter 4 of the 2003 Seattle Fire Code.

Public Assemblies

Public assembly occupancies with an occupant load of over 100 people are required to develop a fire safety and evacuation plan, train staff members in fire response procedures and conduct employee fire drills.

Plan Development

A fire safety and evacuation plan should be developed that considers any special characteristics of your building and the people who work or visit there. Each plan should be reviewed and updated annually by facility management. The fire safety and evacuation plan for public assemblies should include the following information:

1. Emergency egress or escape routes.
2. The preferred and any alternative means of notifying occupants of a fire or emergency.
3. Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for carrying out duties in response to a fire emergency.
4. Procedures for personnel carrying out duties in response to a fire emergency.
5. The procedure for reporting a fire or other emergency to the fire department.
6. Procedures for accounting for employees and occupants after evacuation has been completed.
7. Floor plans indicating the following:
 - Detailed seating plan, occupant load, and occupant load limit.
 - Occupancy assembly point.
 - Exits.

- Primary and secondary evacuation routes.
- Areas of refuge.
- Location of manual fire alarm boxes.
- Location of portable fire extinguishers.
- Location of occupant-use hose cabinets.
- Location of fire alarm controls.

Staff Training

Well-trained employees are critical to the successful evacuation of a public assembly. Employees must receive emergency evacuation training as part of new employee orientation, and annual training thereafter. Employees should be familiar with fire alarm signals, and safe use of portable fire extinguishers.

Employees must understand that it is their responsibility to initiate and guide an emergency evacuation of the facility when a fire emergency occurs. Upon hearing the fire alarm, employees should turn off all music and turn on the lights. This will make it easier for guests to hear the fire alarm and the evacuation instructions being given by staff. These directions should guide guests to the exits via the stairs, not elevators. Once outside it is important to move guests away from the building.

Emergency Evacuation Drills

Quarterly fire drills (every 120 days) are required for employees of public assemblies with occupancies over 100.

Records shall be maintained of required emergency evacuation drills and include the following information:

1. Identity of the person conducting the drill.
2. Date and time of the drill.
3. Notification method used.
4. Staff members on duty and participating.
5. Number of occupants evacuated.
6. Special conditions simulated.
7. Problems encountered.
8. Time required to accomplish evacuation.

False Alarms

In the event the fire alarm sounds and staff are able to verify that is a false alarm or malicious prank, call 911 immediately to report these findings to the fire department dispatcher. Do not silence the alarm without dispatcher permission. Do not reset the fire alarm panel until after receiving permission from the arriving fire department personnel.

Additional Resources

The Seattle Fire Department Public Education Office provides the following free assistance:

- Courtesy review of fire emergency plans.
- Information bulletins, fire fact sheets and staff training materials. Call the Public Education Office at 206-386-1337 or visiting on-line at www.seattle.gov/fire