

Seattle Permits

—part of a multi-departmental series on City services & permitting

Fire Safety and Evacuation Plans

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Chapter 4 of the 2009 Seattle Fire Code requires that fire safety and evacuation plans be developed for a variety of occupancies. This bulletin outlines the general requirements of these plans. Additionally provisions are also required for some occupancies.

Occupancies Requiring Plans

Group A..... Assemblies with more than 100 persons.

Group B..... Business occupancies having an occupant load of 500 or more persons or more than 100 persons above or below the lowest level of exit discharge.

Group E..... Educational.

Group F..... Factory/industrial buildings having an occupant load of 500 or more persons or more than 100 persons above or below the lowest level of exit discharge.

Group H..... Hazardous processes.

Group I..... Institutions such as hospitals, care facilities, corrections facilities.

Group M..... Retail stores & markets having an occupant load of 500 or more persons or more than 100 persons above or below the lowest level of exit discharge.

Group R-1 ... Residential (transient) such as hotels, boarding houses.

Group R-2 ... College and university buildings and boarding homes, group homes, and residential treatment facilities licensed by the State of Washington.

Additional occupancies which require plans are:

- high rise buildings,
- covered malls exceeding 50,000 square feet in aggregate floor area,
- underground buildings,
- buildings with an atrium and having an occupancy in group A, E or M.

Fire Safety & Evacuation Plans

Fire evacuation plans shall include the following:

1. Emergency egress or escape routes and whether evacuation of the building is to be complete or, where approved, by selected floors or areas only.
2. Procedures for employees who must remain to operate critical equipment before evacuating.
3. Procedures for assisted rescue for persons unable to use the general means of egress unassisted.
4. Procedures for accounting for employees and occupants after evacuation has been completed.
5. Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for rescue or emergency medical aid.
6. The preferred and any alternative means of notifying occupants of a fire or emergency.
7. The preferred and any alternative means of reporting fires and other emergencies to the fire department or designated emergency response organization.
8. Identification and assignment of personnel who can be contacted for further information or explanation of duties under the plan.
9. A description of the emergency voice/alarm communication system alert tone and preprogrammed voice messages, where provided.

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www.seattle.gov/fire



Fire safety plans shall include the following:

1. The procedure for reporting a fire or emergency.
2. The life safety strategy and procedures for notifying, relocating or evacuating occupants, including occupants who need assistance.
3. Site plans indicating the following:
 - The occupancy assembly point.
 - The locations of fire hydrants.
 - The normal routes of fire department vehicle access.
4. Floor plans identifying the locations of the following:
 - Exits.
 - Primary evacuation routes.
 - Secondary evacuation routes.
 - Accessible egress routes.
 - Areas of refuge.
 - Exterior areas for assisted rescue.
 - Manual fire alarm boxes.
 - Portable fire extinguishers.
 - Occupant-use hose stations.
 - Fire alarm annunciators and controls.
5. A list of major fire hazards associated with the normal use and occupancy of the premises, including maintenance and housekeeping procedures.
6. Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for maintenance of systems and equipment installed to prevent or control fires.
7. Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for maintenance, housekeeping and controlling fuel hazard sources.

Plan Maintenance

Fire safety and evacuation plans should be reviewed or updated annually or as necessitated by changes in staff assignments, occupancy, or the physical arrangement of the building.

Make the Plan Available

Fire safety and evacuation plans should be kept available in the workplace for reference and review by employees, and copies should be furnished to the fire department upon request.

The fire safety and evacuation plans should be dis-

tributed to building tenants by the building owner. Tenants should distribute to their employees those parts of the fire safety plan that affect the employees' actions in the event of a fire emergency.

Emergency Evacuation Drills

Occupancies that are required to complete a fire safety and evacuation plan are also required to conduct emergency evacuation drills to practice the plan. The schedule on which these drills should be conducted is:

Group	Frequency	Participation
A	Quarterly	Employees
B	Annually	Employees
Note: Occ. load >500, or >100 persons above or below the lowest level of exit discharge.		
E	Monthly	All occupants
Note: Daycares collocated on Group E campuses participate in emergency drills.		
F	Annually	Employees
I	Quarterly/shift	Employees
R-1	Quarterly/shift	Employees
R-2	Quarterly/shift	Employees
Note: Group R-2 college and university buildings.		
High Rise	Annually	All occupants
Note: Jail inmates, hospital patients, hotel guests and occupants of apartment or residential condominium are not required to participate unless they are also a member of the high rise building staff.		

Record Keeping

Records of emergency evacuation drills should be maintained 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 participating.
6. Special conditions simulated.
7. Problems encountered and corrective actions taken.
8. Weather conditions when occupants were evacuated.
9. Time required to accomplish complete evacuation.

In buildings that have a fire alarm system, emergency evacuation drills should be initiated by activating the fire alarm system. For buildings whose alarm systems are monitored by an offsite monitoring

company, the person in charge of the drill should notify the monitoring company in advance of the drill in order to prevent a fire department response when the alarm activation. There is no need to notify the fire department.

As building occupants arrive at the assembly point, efforts should be made to determine if all occupants have been successfully evacuated or accounted for.

Employee Training

Employees should be trained in the fire emergency procedures described in their fire evacuation plan. Employees should receive training in the contents of the fire evacuation plan and their duties as part of their new employee orientation and at least annually thereafter. Records should be kept which document this training.

Employee training should include the following:

- ❑ Fire prevention training—information on the fire hazards to which they are exposed and instruction in how to prevent fires.
- ❑ Becoming familiar with the fire alarm and evacuation signals, their duties in the event of an alarm, evacuation routes, areas of refuge, assembly areas, and procedures for evacuation.
- ❑ Any employees assigned fire fighting duties should be trained to know the locations and proper use of portable fire extinguishers, and the protective clothing or equipment required for its safe and proper use. Additional requirements may apply from other regulating agencies.

Additional information on developing fire safety and evacuation plans is available from the Seattle Fire Department online at www.seattle.gov/fire.

Related Information

Client Assistance Memos

#5963High Rise Emergency Evacuation Drills

#5982High Rise Fire Emergency Planning Requirements

#5072.....Fire Emergency Plans for Marinas, Piers & Floats