

Preparing to Shelter at Work

Issues for Everyone in the Work Place to Consider

Sheltering in place means:

- Staying inside whatever building I am in at the time of an emergency
- If I'm outside, going into an undamaged building nearby for shelter
- Staying sheltered for a period that may last hours to days

I. My Need to Shelter at Work

1. What kinds of emergencies would make me need, or want, to protect myself by staying inside my work place?
 - a. A toxic explosion (like a dirty bomb) or chemical spill?
 - b. A tornado?
 - c. A shooter in the building?
 - d. A snowstorm?
 - e. An electrical blackout?
 - f. Something else?

II. Communication

1. How will I know whether to stay inside the building or evacuate in an emergency?
2. If cell or other phones will not work during the emergency, how will I receive information and communicate with others?

III. Basic and Medical Needs

1. Have I stored emergency supplies at work? Do they need to include:
 - a. A several-day supply of all of my medications and medical supplies?
 - b. Water?
 - c. Non-perishable food?
 - d. Eyeglasses or contact lens supplies?
 - e. Flashlight?
 - f. Other items?
2. Do any of these supplies need to be replaced on a regular basis? How often?
3. Are there other supplies I will need that I can't store on my own?

IV. Care for Dependents

1. Have I arranged alternate providers of care for the children, adults, and animals that depend on me – with multiple back-ups so I can be sure that my own caretaker responsibilities will be fulfilled if I have to shelter at work?
 - a. Have I given my children’s school, day care, or youth program a list of all of the people who are authorized to pick them up?
 - b. Does my neighborhood have a “safe house” where children who are home alone can go during an emergency?
 - c. Has my neighborhood organized a buddy system or teams to check on dependents that may be home alone during an emergency?
 - d. Do my children and other dependents know about these alternate care plans?
 - e. If neither I nor any of my authorized back-ups can pick up my children or meet them at home during the emergency, what will the school, day care, bus driver, or sitter do to assure my children’s supervision and safety?
2. Have I provided the people I employ to care for my children or other dependents with any incentives to continue caring for them in this kind of situation? If so, what will happen to their dependents?

V. Protection from Toxic Substances Outside

1. Have I discussed this type of emergency in advance to make sure that everyone in my household will take shelter wherever they happen to be (in other words, not endanger themselves by trying to find each other or by going to a pre-arranged meeting place)?
2. What actions will be taken to prevent toxic substances from coming into my work place during the emergency?
 - a. Do I need to know how to close or seal windows, doors, and vents; disable automatic doors; turn off air conditioners?
 - b. Does it matter if people are allowed to enter or leave the building?

Appreciation and credit for the issue set concepts go to the Redefining Readiness project (www.redefiningreadiness.net).