



**EMERGENCY ACTION
&
FIRE PREVENTION PLAN**

For All City Facilities

City Facilities Emergency Action and Fire Prevention Plan

An Emergency Action Plan and a Fire Prevention Plan is required by CCR Title 8 §3220 for each department or facility.

The purpose of an Emergency Action Plan is to outline the procedures and guidelines for employees at the City of Oakley to follow in case of an emergency. An emergency is defined as “any situation where the health and safety of an employee is in danger”.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	General Emergency Procedures.....	3
II.	Evacuation Procedure.....	4
III.	Emergency Equipment Location.....	6
IV.	Types of Emergencies	
	a. Fire & Fire Prevention Plan.....	7
	b. Medical Emergency.....	12
	c. Hazardous Materials Spill.....	13
	d. Blood and Body Fluids Spill.....	15
	e. Earthquakes.....	16
	f. Bomb Threat.....	17
	g. Technological Emergencies.....	18
	h. Utilities Failures and Shutoffs.....	19
V.	Training.....	20
VI.	Acknowledgement of Receipt.....	21

APPENDIX

City Hall Emergency Evacuation Map.....	22
Evacuation of Elderly.....	23
People with Disabilities and Evacuation Challenges.....	24

I. General Emergency Procedures

Reporting Procedures

Any employee who believes an emergency exists will first call 9-1-1 and report the emergency. The employee will then notify his/her supervisor as soon as possible.

Management Notification

In the event of an emergency or a situation that could evolve into an emergency, management (an employee's supervisor) must be informed immediately in order to initiate proper procedures. In the event that the emergency necessitates evacuation or shelter in place procedures, the manager or supervisor on duty will execute the Emergency Action Plan to employees, - and to visitors and citizens, until relieved by an Incident Commander. The Incident Commander will be the City Manager.

The following individuals shall be notified of events concerning the emergency:

- City Manager
- Police Chief and Police Dispatch
- Department/Division Heads

Evacuation Decision

Once notified of a potential emergency, the Incident Commander will determine if an emergency exists requiring an evacuation.

Employees Notification

Employees may be notified of emergencies by the use of the site fire alarm system, telephone, or verbal alert. After initial notification, employees will be provided direction by on-scene supervisors.

Employees of the City of Oakley are considered to be emergency workers by state law and must report to work as soon as safe and practical after an area-wide emergency or disaster has occurred.

Information Requests

Requests for information from the media (TV/Radio/Newspaper) shall be referred to the Assistant to the City Manager in the City Manager's office.

II. Evacuation Procedure

The need for an emergency evacuation can be for many reasons. The keys to a successful evacuation are supervisor coordination and control and predetermined routes and assembly areas.

Note: Refer to Appendix B regarding evacuating the Elderly, Children and the Disabled from public buildings.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

These procedures shall be followed when conditions are created which require building evacuation:

- a. The Department/Division Head or designated personnel will notify all employees of an emergency through the use of the site fire alarm system, telephone, or verbal alert;
- b. All employees will evacuate according to the posted evacuation routes in each area. *Please also see Appendix A;*
- c. After all employees are outside and in no risk of any danger, each supervisor will account for all employees in their area by performing a roll call to determine if employees are present and/or accounted for;
- d. If the head count is short of what is believed to be actually present at work, the supervisor will immediately notify the Emergency Responders (Police/Fire). This will enable proper rescue procedures to take place. **In no case will an employee re-enter any building to perform ANY rescue duties;**
- e. **Employees will stay in their respective groups until told to leave by a member of management or supervisor. AT NO TIME WILL ANY EMPLOYEE LEAVE or GO HOME WITHOUT PERMISSION;**
- f. Once the threat of an emergency is over, management, supervisors, and/or emergency personnel will give permission to re-enter the building.

Response Procedures in Remote Locations

- a. The reporting and evacuation procedures listed in this policy apply.
- b. Employees will notify emergency response by calling 911 to the remote location and notify their supervisor immediately afterwards.
- c. For locations with possible flammable atmospheres, employees will withdraw to a safe distance for safety. Employees will also alert bystanders and clear area to a safe distance.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ASSIGNED ACTIONS

Management Action

1. After the Incident Commander on scene determines the need for an emergency evacuation exists, the evacuation will be activated and announcements and instructions will be issued as noted above.
2. Management will immediately start actions, taking into consideration the nature and extent of the emergency.

Supervisors

At the activation of an alarm, each supervisor shall:

1. Direct employees in their work area to the safe evacuation routes;
2. Provide necessary assistance to any employees with disabilities;
3. Ensure that everyone within the work area has exited the building and close all doors as you leave; if safe and reasonable front desk staff should lock public access doors to prevent re-entry
4. Check all unoccupied areas to include designated restrooms, closets, etc.;
5. Account for employees at the designated assembly area;
6. Notify Emergency Responders (Police/Fire) of any employees that are not accounted for;
7. Provide control of employees at assembly areas.

Employee Responsibilities

At the activation of an alarm, all employees are to:

1. Immediately stop activities;
2. Evacuate the building, using the designated or the shortest, safe exit route to the designated assembly areas. Make sure that all visitors and customers accompany City personnel;
3. Handicapped individuals shall be helped by others, as needed.

III. Emergency Equipment Location

City Hall shall establish and keep readily available emergency equipment.

- a. FIRST AID KITS are located at the following locations:
 - a. Bathrooms
 - b. Break room
 - c. Main lobby front desk
 - d. City of Oakley business vehicles
- b. SOS Survival Kits are located at the following locations:
 - a. Recreation office
 - b. Storage area in administrative building- outside City Manager's Office
 - c. Public Works cubicle where plotter is located
- c. 24 HOUR SUPPORT PACKS - It is advisable, but not required, that all employees maintain an individual emergency support pack either in their offices or personal vehicles. The contents vary, but should include bottled or packaged water, packaged dry foods and an individual first aid kit.

IV. Types of Emergencies

FIRE

The following procedure should be followed when fires or fire conditions develop:

- Alert all persons that a fire condition exists or a fire is in progress;
- Activate the nearest fire alarm station;
- Telephone 911. Advise them of the fire conditions;
- Evacuate the area or building (follow the Building Evacuation Procedure) if so notified;
- Close all doors to confine the fire;
- The Incident Commander will assign someone to wait and assist the emergency personnel who will be responding to the fire. Advise them of anyone not accounted for.

Use of Fire Extinguishers:

- Do not use a fire extinguisher unless you have been trained in its use.
- Do not use an extinguisher unless you think it is safe to do so.
- Never enter a smoke-filled room!
- Never enter a room containing a fire without a backup person being present.
- Feel all doors at the top for heat. Do not open a door if the door is warm to the touch. Even if the door is cool, kneel as low to the floor as possible before entering the room.

When in doubt as to the proper procedures EVACUATE the building and wait for emergency responders.

Note: Refer to Appendix A for the location of AED'S and Fire Extinguishers

FIRE PREVENTION PLAN

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Fire Prevention Plan is to establish procedures for identifying fire hazards and preventing fires. All employees, supervisors, and managers are expected to follow the procedures outlined in this plan to ensure that employees and consumers are protected.

2. Authority

California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 3221

3. Responsibility

The City Manager's Office is responsible for the overall leadership and administration of the Fire Prevention Plan. The Assistant to the City Manager has been delegated by the City Manager to serve as the Fire Safety Manager with the authority and responsibility to implement the Fire Prevention Plan and ensure the maintenance of equipment and systems installed to prevent or control ignitions of fires (Ex. fire extinguishers, sprinklers, alarms etc.). in conjunction with the Health and Safety Committee.

Note: Systems are maintained by contracted vendors. Please find contact information and corresponding systems below.

Vendor Information	Responsibility
Name: Bay Alarm Phone: 800-610-1000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor fire protection system (fire alarm, smoke detectors, & manual pull boxes) on a 24 hour/7 days per week/365 days per year basis• Relay fire alarm conditions to 911
Name: Mazzy's Fire Phone: (888) 462-9997	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspection, testing, and maintenance of fire extinguishers and fire sprinkler system

4. Identification of Fire Hazards

The following is a list of potential fire hazards by work areas.

Work Areas	Fire Hazards
Employee offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper, plastic, electrical
Employee break room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper, plastic, electrical appliances
Janitorial store room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper, plastics, flammable solids
Corp yard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combustible liquids, flammable solids,

5. House Keeping Practices

The following are fire prevention best practices by type of fire hazards.

Type of Fire Hazard	Fire Prevention Practices
Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste paper is removed and recycled regularly per custodial standard • Stored paper is managed to prevent fires by keeping paper away from ignition sources, storing in metal file cabinets etc. • Practice good housekeeping to avoid fire loading
Plastic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste plastic is discarded or recycled regularly per custodial standards
Electrical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular inspections of work areas are conducted to ensure electrical hazards are identified and abated; outlets, multi strips, and extension cords are used properly and in good condition; and access to electrical power boxes are free from obstructions.
Electrical Appliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular inspections and employees will be trained prior to use
Flammable/Combustible liquids and gases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular inspections are conducted to ensure flammable and combustible material storage is within allowable quantities, in approved containers.

6. Maintenance and Inspection Program

The periodic maintenance and inspection frequencies for fire control measures are as follows:

Fire Control Measures	Inspection Frequency	Service Firm
Fire Alarm System (smoke detectors, manual pull boxes, fire alarm)	Annual	Bay Alarm
Sprinkler System	Annual & Certification every 5 years	Mazzy's
Fire Extinguishers	Monthly & Annual	Mazzy's

7. Employee Response to Fire Emergencies

Employees' response to a fire emergency is delineated in the Emergency Action Plan. Designated and trained employees may attempt to extinguish incipient fires with fire extinguishers after sounding the alarm to alert other employees.

8. Safe Code of Work Practices

- a. The City's Health and Safety Committee will inspect all City facilities for fire hazards on an annual schedule as determined by the Committee.
- b. Fire safety information will be distributed to employees regarding how to prevent fires in the workplace, how to contain a fire and use a fire extinguisher and where to report a fire by the Health and Safety Committee via the Safety Communications and Training Program.
- c. Fire extinguishers shall be placed in appropriate locations no further than 75 feet from any employee work station (or 50 feet if working around flammable liquids).
- d. Maintenance of all fire extinguishers, fire alarms, sprinkler systems and other fire protection equipment is the responsibility of the Health and Safety Committee.
- e. Public Works Department and Building Division shall identify and mark all utility shutoffs so that electrical power, gas or water can be shut off quickly by fire personnel.

- f. Employees are encouraged to crawl on their hands and knees when escaping a hot or smoke-filled area.
- g. Aisles and exits are to remain clear and unobstructed at all times.
- h. An evacuation drill will be conducted annually. Maps of evacuation routes are posted in prominent places. Evacuation routes including stairways and doorways are to remain clear.
- i. Fire rated doors shall not be propped open with doorstops, as they serve to contain the fire.
- j. Flammable liquids are to be stored in fireproof storage containers and cabinets. Dispensing and using flammable liquids must be in accordance with established safety standards and with proper training.
- k. Combustible materials shall be disposed of promptly and shall not be stored within 36" of any ignition source.
- l. Nothing shall be stored within 18" of fire sprinkler heads. Do not hang anything from sprinkler heads or piping.
- m. The City's NO SMOKING policy shall be enforced. SMOKING is expressly prohibited around flammable liquids, gasses, oil soaked rags or combustible materials.
- n. In facilities with smoke detectors, they shall be checked routinely for proper operation and battery life.
- o. Extension cords are for temporary use only and not approved for permanent electrical connections.
- p. Portable electric space heaters must have an automatic safety switch that turns off the unit if it is tipped over.
- q. Toasters, toaster ovens, microwave ovens, conventional ovens, hot plates and other appliances used for heating food and beverages shall be confined to employee break areas that are designed per applicable building codes, vented, and wired for such equipment.
- r. Protect cables, cords, and power strips from damage.
- s. Maintain at least 36" clearance around electrical panels.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

Trained Emergency Response Technicians, paramedics, or licensed medical providers, shall provide all emergency medical treatment.

- a.** After a medical emergency has been identified, the Department Head, Senior Management Team Member or area Supervisor should be notified immediately. The area Supervisor has the responsibility to ensure that the Department Head or Senior Management Team Member has been notified.
- b.** The severity of the medical emergency and level of action required will be determined by the onsite medical responders.
- c.** All City personnel assisting with the medical emergency will use the proper personal protective equipment (PPE's) as outlined in the City's *Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Program*.
- d.** All injured or ill employees requiring emergency medical care for life/death medical emergencies will be transported by local emergency medical services to the nearest hospital.
- e.** During any emergency, the Department Head will have the responsibility to setup an emergency medical care (Triage /First Aid) station at a location directed by the Senior Management Team member or the medical professionals on site, depending on the emergency and relevant conditions.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SPILL

Major Spill

Definition: Any chemical spill over 100 ml. (3.4 oz.) is considered a major spill.

Note: A major material spill is characterized as one in which 1) a life threatening condition exists, 2) the condition requires assistance of emergency personnel i.e., fire police, etc., from outside the department, and 3) the condition requires the immediate evacuation of all employees from the area or building.

If a major spill of a highly toxic, bio-hazardous or flammable material occurs and results in a life threatening condition, proceed in the following manner:

1. Alert people in the involved area to the hazardous condition;
2. Evacuate the involved area. Those persons most knowledgeable about the spilled material should be available to provide information to the first responders and participate in the elimination of the hazardous condition;
3. Close the door and/or try to divert traffic away from the spill area;
4. Call 911. Give the location of the spill, the nature of the spill and give as much specific information about the materials as you can to the operator. The Police Department is available to supply area control and to assist the administrative department in obtaining the resources necessary to eliminate or lessen the emergency. They will respond to all requests for assistance.

Entry into Hazardous Areas

- Hazardous Area Defined: Any room or space in which the conditions may cause injury or illness when a person enters without special training and/or equipment.
- Persons having a specialized knowledge of operations in the hazardous area, and who can assist in minimizing the hazards, shall notify the most senior member of management present, or the Incident Commander.
- The Incident Commander, ERT Captain or designated representative with the assistance of the Fire/Police Department or other emergency personnel will determine who will enter the hazardous area.

Minor Spills

Note: a minor material spill is characterized by the confidence and capability of department employees to clean up the spill without the assistance of emergency personnel even though the clean-up procedure may require specialized knowledge and specialized equipment (the emergency number need not be called). A relatively small area of a shop or room is affected and only a relatively small number of personnel may need to leave the area until the spill is cleaned up.

- If a minor spill of toxic, flammable or biohazardous material occurs, the department manager or other supervisors within the department have the responsibility to clean it up.
- Additional information or assistance on minor spill cleanup may be obtained from Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).
- Contact Public Works/Facility Maintenance Division for the nearest location of a spill cleanup kit.

BLOOD AND BODY FLUIDS SPILL

- All spills of blood or body fluids of another shall be handled according to the Blood Borne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan. Employees assigned to clean up the spill shall use Universal Precautions at all times.
- Facilities with reception areas open to the public and field work crews shall be provided with a blood and body fluids spill kit or the appropriate personal protective equipment necessary to implement Universal Precautions.

EARTHQUAKES

Earthquakes can seriously damage buildings and their contents; disrupt gas, electric, and telephone services as well as trigger landslides, avalanches, flash floods, fires, and huge ocean waves called tsunamis. Aftershocks can occur for weeks following an earthquake. **In many buildings, the greatest danger to people in an earthquake is when equipment and nonstructural elements such as ceilings, partitions, windows, and lighting fixtures shake loose.**

Injury Prevention Steps:

- Buildings should be inspected for any item that could fall, spill, break or move during an earthquake. Take steps to reduce these hazards.
- Large and heavy objects should be placed on lower shelves or the floor. Hang heavy items away from where people work.
- Secure shelves, filing cabinets over 48" tall, and other tall furniture,
- Secure fixed equipment and heavy machinery to the floor. Larger equipment can be placed on casters and attached to tethers that attach to the wall.
- Review processes for handling and storing hazardous materials. Have incompatible chemicals stored separately.
- Designate areas in each facility away from exterior walls and windows where occupants should gather after an earthquake if an evacuation is not necessary.
- Employees shall proceed in the following manner in the event of an earthquake:
 - In the event of an earthquake, if indoors, stay there. Take cover under a sturdy piece of furniture or counter, or brace yourself against an inside wall. Protect your head and neck.
 - If outdoors, move into the open, away from buildings, streetlights and utility wires.
 - After an earthquake, stay away from windows, skylights and items that could fall. Do not use the elevators.

BOMB THREAT CALL PROCEDURES

Most bomb threats are received by phone. Bomb threats are serious until proven otherwise. Act quickly, but remain calm and obtain information with the checklist on the reverse of this card.

If a bomb threat is received by phone:

1. Remain calm. Keep the caller on the line for as long as possible. **DO NOT HANG UP**, even if the caller does.
2. Listen carefully. Be polite and show interest.
3. Try to keep the caller talking to learn more information.
4. If possible, write a note to a colleague to call the authorities or, as soon as the caller hangs up, immediately notify them yourself.
5. If your phone has a display, copy the number and/or letters on the window display.
6. Complete the Bomb Threat Checklist (reverse side) immediately. Write down as much detail as you can remember. Try to get exact words.
7. Immediately upon termination of the call, do not hang up, but from a different phone, contact the Oakley Police Department immediately with information and await instructions.

If a bomb threat is received by handwritten note:

- Call _____
- Handle note as minimally as possible.

If a bomb threat is received by email:

- Call _____
- Do not delete the message.

Signs of a suspicious package:

- No return address
- Excessive postage
- Stains
- Strange odor
- Strange sounds
- Unexpected delivery
- Poorly handwritten
- Misspelled words
- Incorrect titles
- Foreign postage
- Restrictive notes

DO NOT:

- Use two-way radios or cellular phone; radio signals have the potential to detonate a bomb.
- Evacuate the building until police arrive and evaluate the threat.
- Activate the fire alarm.
- Touch or move a suspicious package.

WHO TO CONTACT (select one)

- Oakley Police Department at 925-625-8060
- 911

BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST

Date: Time:

Time Caller Hung Up: Phone Number Where Call Received:

Ask Caller:

- Where is the bomb located?
(Building, Floor, Room, etc.) _____
- When will it go off? _____
- What does it look like? _____
- What kind of bomb is it? _____
- What will make it explode? _____
- Did you place the bomb? Yes No _____
- Why? _____
- What is your name? _____

Exact Words of Threat:

Information About Caller:

- Where is the caller located? (Background and level of noise) _____
- Estimated age: _____
- Is voice familiar? If so, who does it sound like? _____
- Other points: _____

Caller's Voice

- Accent
- Angry
- Calm
- Clearing throat
- Coughing
- Cracking voice
- Crying
- Deep
- Deep breathing
- Disguised
- Distinct
- Excited
- Female
- Laughter
- Lisp
- Loud
- Male
- Nasal
- Normal
- Ragged
- Rapid
- Raspy
- Slow
- Slurred
- Soft
- Stutter

Background Sounds:

- Animal Noises
- House Noises
- Kitchen Noises
- Street Noises
- Booth
- PA system
- Conversation
- Music
- Motor
- Clear
- Static
- Office machinery
- Factory machinery
- Local
- Long distance

Threat Language:

- Incoherent
- Message read
- Taped
- Irrational
- Profane
- Well-spoken

Other Information:

TECHNOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES

Technological emergencies include any interruption or loss of a utility service, power source, life support system, information system, or equipment needed to keep the City in operation.

Mitigation Plan:

The Public Works Department/Facility Maintenance Division is responsible for identifying all critical operations, including:

- Utilities including electric power, gas, water, hydraulics, compressed air, etc.
- Security and alarm systems, elevators, lighting, heating, ventilation and air conditions systems, electrical distribution system;
- Manufacturing equipment, pollution control, wastewater pumping equipment;
- Communication systems, both data and voice computer networks; and
- Transportation systems including streets, highway and railroad crossings.

The Public Works Department/Facility Maintenance Division will:

- Determine the impact of service disruption;
- Ensure that key safety and maintenance personnel are thoroughly familiar with all building systems;
- Establish procedures for restoring systems and determine need for backup systems.

UTILITIES FAILURES AND SHUTOFFS

For temporary minor utility failures, all departments shall keep flashlights and fresh batteries in a central, secure location.

Emergency lighting shall be checked periodically to make sure it is functioning properly.

Most utility shutoffs will be handled by Public Works/ Facility Maintenance Division.

The following are general guidelines in case of emergency:

- a. **WATER SHUTOFF- do not shut off unless there is a major water leak or flooding.** If water shutoff is required, contact Public Works Department.
- b. **GAS SHUTOFF- do not shut off unless you smell natural gas or hear it leaking from a gas pipe or appliance.** If a shutoff is warranted, find the gas main. The gas valve is located to the lower left of the gas main. Use a wrench and move the gas valve one-quarter turn in either direction.
- c. **ELECTRICAL SHUTOFF- Only shutoff electricity if time permits; if you know where and how to shut electricity off and if directed to do so by the Incident Commander, ERT or responding emergency public safety officer. Otherwise, do not shut off electricity.**

V. Training

Training will be conducted on an annual basis to familiarize employees with the existence, elements and guidance of the Emergency Action Plan including the roles and responsibilities, emergency escape routes and evacuation rallying points.

Training will be conducted for:

- All existing employees;
- All new employees;
- Whenever an employee's responsibility or designation under this procedure has changed;
- Whenever the Plan itself has changed or building conditions change;
- Annually.

City of Oakley
**EMERGENCY ACTION AND FIRE
PREVENTION PLAN**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

My signature below acknowledges that I have received a copy of the City of Oakley Emergency Action and Fire Prevention Plan. I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to read and familiarize myself with the provisions of this document and should it be necessary, to follow the established procedures.

Furthermore, I understand that it is my duty as an employee of the City of Oakley to immediately report any emergencies or situations that could evolve into an emergency to my supervisor or other responsible department management staff.

Signature

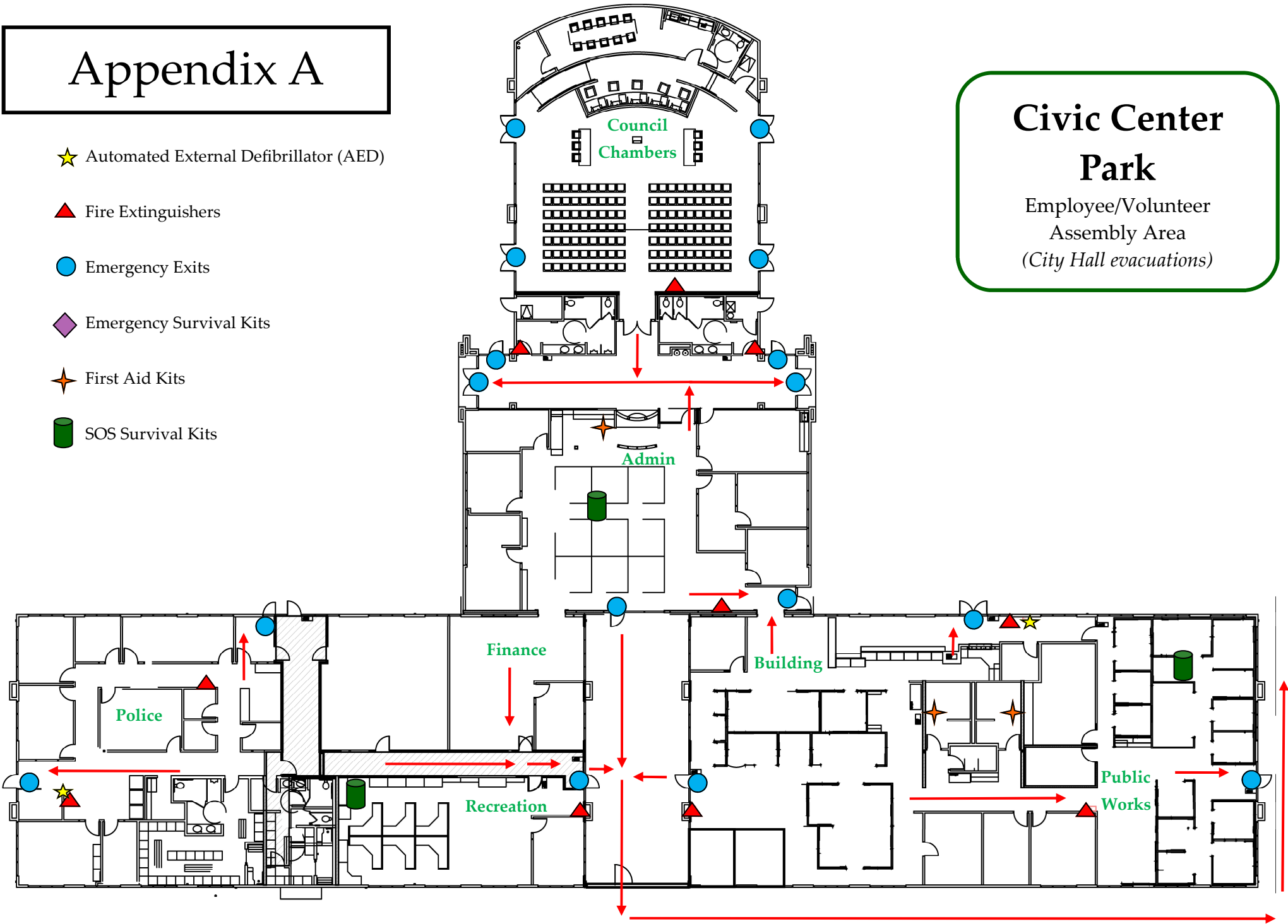
Printed Name

Date

Appendix A

- ★ Automated External Defibrillator (AED)
- ▲ Fire Extinguishers
- Emergency Exits
- ◆ Emergency Survival Kits
- ✦ First Aid Kits
- SOS Survival Kits

Civic Center Park
 Employee/Volunteer
 Assembly Area
(City Hall evacuations)



APPENDIX B

Evacuation of the Elderly:

Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to identify the unique problems associated with emergency evacuation of persons with limiting disabilities from a facility. Additionally, there are examples of techniques that can be used for preplanning and executing emergency evacuation of disabled persons.

ADA and Emergency Evacuation

The *American with Disabilities Act* (ADA) legislated equal access to facilities. One segment of the intent of the ADA that has been overlooked is equal exit during emergencies. It is essential that the City's facilities that provide services to the general public such as senior centers and recreation facilities have a preplanned procedure for evacuation of disabled.

The Elderly & Children

There are two groups that are not normally associated with the disabled: the elderly and children. As the average age of the population increases, the size of elderly clientele is also increasing. While many of these people may have no impairments, many will be limited by the natural and normal restrictions associated with the aging process. These limitations include, but are not limited to, mobility impairment, hearing and visual difficulties, speech problems, and reduced mental capabilities. Children pose different problems in emergency evacuation procedures. They are normally provided close supervision by parents, or other responsible adults, who provide explicit direction for their daily activities. During a situation that requires emergency evacuation, children cannot be expected to understand or comply with directions designed for adults. If they have become separated from their caregivers, their link to appropriate action has been severed, and they will require special assistance.

Employees Role in an Emergency

During emergencies people generally look to authority figures for direction. The general public normally expects this direction to come from City employees and will, in most cases, comply adequately. For employees to provide proper direction and leadership in an emergency they must have had proper training in the procedures to be followed. Employees must be trained to act in concert with each other and in accordance with the City's policies and emergency plan.

APPENDIX C

People with Disabilities and Evacuation Challenges:

Hearing Impaired

The most significant problem during emergencies for the hearing impaired is immediate notification of the emergency. Hearing impairment covers a wide range, from loss of high frequency hearing to total loss of auditory perception. Many people who augment their hearing with electronic aids often remove them and in an emergency might not hear the audible alarms designed to warn them of danger. Even after they become aware of the emergency they may forget to install their hearing aids in a crisis. People with no hearing disability can temporarily lose their hearing if a loud sharp noise occurs such as an explosion. Another problem encountered by the hearing impaired is their inability to ensure their communication of an emergency has been received. Special procedures should be implemented to allow the hearing impaired to communicate that an emergency situation exists and/or obtain assistance.

Speech Impaired

In emergency situations, persons with speech impairments are not only limited by their own disability but also **limited by the inability of others to recognize they are trying to communicate non-verbally**. Under normal circumstances the techniques employed by speech impaired persons to communicate their needs, wants and desires are effective when the recipient provides adequate focus on the communication. *In emergencies, employees must be trained to take the necessary time to understand the ideas being communicated.* As an example: During the evacuation of a facility due to fire, an employee encounters a City resident that is exhibiting the need to communicate, but is not coherent. This person is motioning and possibly making sounds. The employee knows that this person must leave the area by the emergency route and tries to communicate this necessity. The person resists. In this and similar cases, the employee must be trained to take the few seconds required to calmly attempt to receive the communication. The disabled person may have knowledge of a hazardous condition or location of persons needing assistance. Training employees to communicate with speech-impaired persons is not difficult and does not require the learning of the American Sign Language. The idea here, as in the above case of communicating with hearing impaired persons, is to *provide the disabled person an opportunity to communicate.*

Visually Impaired

As with hearing and speech-impaired persons, visual impairment runs a wide spectrum. For those people with significant reduction in visual acuity, being in an unfamiliar environment causes them difficulty in navigating their surroundings. In an emergency they would be at a significant disadvantage

unless aided. To assist persons with limited sight ability, the following techniques will be helpful:

- Signs and emergency directions should be large print and in colors that do not preclude recognition by persons with color blindness.
- Provide verbal emergency instructions for visually impaired members of the public and employees.
- Provide familiarization tours for the visually impaired.

Providing proper sensitivity training for employees can prevent inappropriate behavior. It has been noted that some people have a tendency to speak louder and more slowly to visually impaired persons. This is an inappropriate reaction on their part in their attempt to deal with their misconception of visual impairment.

Mobility Impaired

When most people think of disabled persons they have a mental picture of someone in a wheelchair. Mobility impairment however also has a wide range. While persons restricted to wheelchairs may be the most limited, accommodations must be made for all types of mobility restrictions. These restrictions may include conditions that require the use of crutches, canes, or walkers, and people with motor dysfunction and health problems that limit mobility. Evacuation of people with mobility impairment is compounded by the nature of emergency route design. Stairwells used in lieu of elevators present the largest obstruction for evacuation. Employees need to be trained in techniques for assisting the mobility impaired. This includes knowing their own physical limitations and *ascertaining the mobility impaired person's condition and preferences by asking them*. Disabled people live with their disability every day and probably know the best methods for assistance.

Mentally Impaired

Again, as with all the previous disabilities discussed, mental impairment may range from slightly diminished abilities to total incapacitation. Effective communication of the need to evacuate may be hampered if employees are not calm and persistent in their efforts to assist the mentally impaired. Though it is not always the case, some mentally impaired people may react to an emergency in an unexpected manner. Employees must be trained to handle unexpected behavior and provide the proper assistance attention to these people during evacuation. Additionally, they should be trained to be sensitive to mentally impaired persons attempts to communicate information or questions.

Elderly Persons

Determining the limitations of an elderly person is sometimes difficult. The normal aging process causes diminished physical and mental abilities. These may occur sooner for some, later for others, all to varying degrees. Elderly persons may have all or some of the impairments discussed earlier. Accommodations that are designed for the disabled may be used successfully for the elderly. It should be noted that the percentage of elderly persons in the United States is growing dramatically larger. This trend will continue for the next 50 years.

Children

As stated earlier, children are normally provided close supervision by parents, or other responsible adults, who provide explicit direction for their daily activities. During a situation that requires emergency evacuation, children cannot be expected to understand or comply with directions designed for adults. If they have become separated from their caregivers, their link to appropriate action has been severed and they will require special assistance. As the number of facilities that provide on-site childcare rises, facility planning for emergency evacuation of children has become more important.

Pre-planning for Building Evacuation:

Preplanning and preparation will increase the margin of safety, save lives and property when an emergency arises. Evacuation of the disabled can be carried out successfully if the following is implemented:

- Train employees in methods of assisting the disabled;
- Train employees how to effectively communicate with the disabled or elderly in an emergency;
- Assign specific tasks during an emergency;
- Identify specific needs of the disabled;