

## **Create Your Own Emergency Response Plan**

- I. Develop a team approach to responding to the emergency and delegate team responsibilities.
  - A. Designate an Emergency Response (“ER”) Team Leader and, if possible, a backup. (Your ER Team Leader would typically be your project Superintendent or some one else on site with senior level authority and experience.) Your ER Team Leader would perform the following:
    1. Assume on-site control;
    2. See that the area in question is properly secured;
    3. Act as media interface until the corporate spokesperson, if different, arrives;
    4. Insure that the necessary factual information is being gathered – i.e., who, what, when, where, status of injured, number of facilities, etc.; and
    5. See that key corporate officers, counsel, risk managers, consultants, insurers are contacted immediately.
  - B. Designate an ER Secretary and, if possible, a back-up. (Your ER Secretary should be someone who can work with the ER Team Leader to assist him/her in carrying out his functions, and is someone in a position of authority who understands the project in question, works well under pressure, and is detail oriented.) Your ER Team Secretary would perform the following:
    1. Assist the team leader in gathering pertinent factual information;
    2. Screen media calls and inquiries;
    3. Coordinate media interviews and press releases;
    4. Contact the family of the injured party or deceased;
    5. Work with the family in providing travel arrangements, medical care, or help them with their insurers;
    6. Assist Risk Manager and/or Counsel with on-site investigation; and
    7. Update ER Team Leader and Spokesperson on all new factual information
  - C. Designate a company ER Spokesperson. (This person should be a high-ranking company officers, someone who makes a pleasant appearance, is articulate, thinks well on his/her fee, and, preferably, someone who handles pressure well.) Your Corporate Spokesperson would perform the following
    1. Act as Corporate Spokesperson – i.e., handle all media inquiries;

2. Present press releases or position statements when necessary;
  3. give interviews; and
  4. Work with Counsel and consultants regarding the preparation of press releases, corporate position statements, and damage control, if necessary.
- II. Your Emergency Response Plan should be reduced to writing so each member of the team knows exactly what his/her job duties are. You should have your Emergency Response Plan reviewed by the Risk Manager, Counsel, and Insurer.
- III. An updated telephone list and list of all pertinent authorities – i.e., local hospitals, utility companies, etc., (similar to the attached) should be kept on the project site in a conspicuous location and updated periodically.
- IV. A plan is not much good unless it works! Periodically test it through role playing or the handling of mock emergencies.

## **Practice Pointers to Remember When Dealing with the Media**

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1. DO NOT GIVE AN INTERVIEW UNPREPARED.
2. YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ARTICULATE THE PERTINENT FACTS. (Know what happened: who, what, when, where, etc. If you cannot accurately recite the facts, write them down.)
3. DO NOT GUESS OR GIVE PERSONAL OPINIONS – STICK TO THE FACTS. If you do not know the answer, say you do not know.
4. USE PLAIN LANGUAGE.
5. DO NOT EXAGGERATE OR USE EXTRAVAGANT STATEMENTS; IT DESTROYS YOUR CREDIBILITY.
6. TAKE YOUR TIME ANSWERING THE QUESTION. Use the time to formulate your response.
7. AVOID THEATRICALS, FACIAL GRIMACES, ARM WAVING, ETC. Be aware of the tone of your voice and watch your language.
8. DO NOT BE BAITED; NOTHING IS “OFF THE RECORD.” Do not be lead into thinking otherwise.
9. DO NOT ASSUME A DUTY OR RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR COMPANY THAT YOUR COMPANY DOES NOT LEGALLY OWE.
10. DO NOT GIVE YOUR OPINION REGARDING GUILT OR BLAME. Do not assume it was your company’s fault, irrespective of how it may first appear.
11. DRESS APPROPRIATELY – DO NOT SMOKE OR WEAR DARK GLASSES WHILE BEING INTERVIEWED. Wear your hard hat if on the construction site.
12. BE HUMBLE/CONCERNED.
13. DO NOT SAY “NO COMMENT” UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. It makes you appear guilty or as if you are hiding something when that is not the case.
14. BUY TIME IF YOU NEED TO BY STATING THAT YOU HAVE NOT COMPLETED YOUR INVESTIGATION AND DO NOT FEEL IT IS APPROPRIATE TO TALK IN DETAIL ABOUT THE ACCIDENT UNTIL THE INVESTIGATION IS COMPLETED AND YOU HAVE ALL THE FACTS. As for their name and tell them you will contact them with the answer to their question, if necessary. Call them back if you say you will.
15. REMEMBER THE AVERAGE REPORTER JUST WANTS TO KEEP HIS JOB AND GET THE STORY HE HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO GET. There is not benefit getting into colloquy with a reporter.

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM MEMBERS  
CONTACTS IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY**

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Spokesperson(s):

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

Night #: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile#: \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

Night #: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile#: \_\_\_\_\_

CEO: \_\_\_\_\_

Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

Night #: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile#: \_\_\_\_\_

CFO: \_\_\_\_\_

Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

Night #: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile#: \_\_\_\_\_

President: \_\_\_\_\_

Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

Night #: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile#: \_\_\_\_\_

Executive Vice-President: \_\_\_\_\_

Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

Night #: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile#: \_\_\_\_\_

Safety Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

Night #: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile#: \_\_\_\_\_

Risk Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

Night #: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile#: \_\_\_\_\_

Human Resources: \_\_\_\_\_

Day #: \_\_\_\_\_

Night #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mobile#: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Counsel: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Night #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mobile#: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Night #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mobile#: \_\_\_\_\_

Public Relations: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Night #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mobile#: \_\_\_\_\_