

Safety Note #166

Office Preparedness for Emergencies

Emergency Preparedness Series: Office Preparedness

Note: Each UC ANR workplace should have site specific emergency plans. See the [EH&S website](#) or your location's Safety Coordinator for more information about your workplace emergency plans. For personal emergency preparedness tips, see Safety Notes #167, #168, and #169.



Photo source: CDC

Employees likely spend over 8 hours each day at the office, so the possibility of being at work during a major catastrophe is high. Your workplace is at risk from natural as well as man-made disasters – including everything from fires, earthquakes, severe weather, to workplace violence. Just as one might purchase insurance, it is important that employers arm their workforce with the tools they might need were there to be an emergency. These tools can mean the difference between order and chaos, and even life and death.

When an emergency occurs, the first priority is always life safety. The second priority is the stabilization of the incident. There are many actions that can be taken to stabilize an incident and minimize potential damage. The actions

taken in the initial minutes of an emergency are critical. A prompt warning to employees to evacuate, shelter or lockdown can save lives. A call for help to public emergency services that provides full and accurate information will help the dispatcher send the right responders and equipment. An employee trained to administer first aid/CPR can be lifesaving. Action by employees that are prepared for emergencies in the workplace can help control and minimize damage to their co-workers, facility and the environment.

Preparedness Recommendations For ANR Workplaces:

- Think about what to do if employees can't go home and make sure you have appropriate supplies on-hand
- Develop ways to communicate with employees during work hours and off hours about pending emergencies and the workplace operating status
- Have an Emergency Supplies Kit and Office Go-Bag – A Go-Bag is a collection of items you can “grab and go” in the event of an emergency event that can sustain you with essential items for up to 72-96 hours. A Go-Bag should be sturdy, lightweight and portable. Many items that should be considered are listed within *Safety Note #169—Build A Kit Full of Emergency Supplies*
- Make sure that you have your [UC Ready](#) plan in place for continuity of business operations during an emergency
- Each ANR location should have an:
 - Injury & Illness Prevention Program (IIPP)
 - Emergency Action & Fire Prevention Plan (EAFPP)
 - Emergency Evacuation Route Map and Meeting Place –Posted
 - Emergency Contact List – Posted
 - Emergency/Continuity Plan
(<http://safety.ucanr.org/Programs/emergency/>)
- ANR Employees should be knowledgeable of:
 - Employee Training and Health and Safety Resources
(http://safety.ucanr.org/Safety_Training_Resources/)
 - Structure/System for Management of Emergencies ([ICS/SEMS/NIMS](#))



Photo source: CDC

When the unexpected happens, protecting people, the environment and vital UC resources hinges on proper and consistent response by department members. Utilize available training and resources; remember emergency planning is just as critical for the workplace as it is for the home.