



Preparedness Committee  
Security and Life Safety  
Commercial Office Building Protective Measures

<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Smoke / Fire</b>
<b>Date:</b>	Jan 2014; Revised May 2018

**Background** A report of smoke or fire requires the upmost urgency and requires immediate response from Security, Building Management, and Engineering. Since every building and emergency situation is different, site specific plans are required in order to adequately respond to these types of calls. For assistance in drafting site specific emergency response plans for smoke/fire, the following sections from the Municipal Code from the City of Chicago should be referred to:

- Chapter 13-76, High Rise Buildings
- Chapter 13-78, High Rise Buildings – Emergency Procedures
- Chapter 13-196, Existing Buildings – Minimum Requirements

As with any emergency operations plan, pre-planning is important and City of Chicago code requires the following measures:

- Evacuation plan, to include exit routes and floor plans
- Formation of building emergency team(s)
- List of persons needing assistance with evacuations
- Training and drills

In addition, certain buildings (based on type, size, and occupancy) will require additional measures such as the Chicago Fire Department’s Life Safety Data Sheet and the Fire Safety Director certification. Both of these forms can be obtained from the Chicago Fire Department website at <http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cfd.html>

**Response Measures** Upon receiving a call for smoke, the below information should be solicited from the caller. It is important that all of the information is received and it should be noted if the caller has contacted 911 already. To assure 911 has been contacted, a call to 911 should be immediately placed, noting the street address and floor, especially if the incident involves a serious or life-threatening condition. Note: it is important that **all** team members within a building understand how to take an emergency call and how to initiate emergency response

measures. The following information should be obtained when taking a call requiring emergency response:

- Location of incident, to include floor and office number
- Nature of incident
- Name of caller and phone number calling from
- Identification of injured persons and location of those persons

Once the information is received, the caller may be directed to alert others in his/her immediate area and to evacuate the floor. If the fire panel has not activated, Security will need to alert Engineering and Building Management. **Depending on the nature of the emergency and the building’s protocol for reports of smoke or fire, Engineering and/or Security may report to the reported incident floor to further investigate.** This is determined by each property.

**Best Practices / Considerations** Once the above information is obtained, consider the following actions:

- Contact 911 and be ready to receive first responders as they arrive
- Depending on the situation, alert occupants on the public address system and initiate full or partial evacuations – announcement scripts should be kept at fire panel
- Security will need to provide updates to occupants as conditions change
- Place elevators in “Fire Recall” mode if not automatically performed by elevator system
- Unlock stairwell doors if not automatically performed by building management system
- Security officers may be strategically placed to receive and direct persons evacuating the incident floors – specific post locations may be identified by emergency operations plan
- The building should be locked down (entrances, docks, garages, etc.) controlling entry
- Engineering may be positioned at fire panel and fire pump during an actual fire
- Per code and type of structure, each building is required to staff emergency teams, as described by below table, and is required to conduct regular evacuation drill(s)

Area Warden	
<p>The Area Warden is responsible for emergency coordination and reporting of any potential or actual emergency condition to Building Management. The Area Warden is also responsible for organizing his/her emergency team members and making sure emergency procedures are carried out correctly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoints personnel to the Emergency Teams and fills vacant positions.</li> <li>• Maintains an updated roster of all Emergency Team members.</li> <li>• Alerts key personnel of potential emergencies.</li> <li>• Supervises the activity and training of all key team members. Ensures that all team members know their assigned duties and locations in case of an emergency.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is responsible for informing and training team members and all floor personnel in emergency procedures.</li> <li>• Pre-plans the handling of physically disabled persons during evacuation.</li> <li>• Is responsible for the evacuation of floor personnel. Is responsible for notifying Emergency Team members to evacuate.</li> <li>• The Floor Warden/Assistant Floor Warden will assist the Area Warden in all areas of responsibility and assume the leadership role in his/her absence.</li> </ul>
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<b>Floor Warden / Assistant Floor Warden</b>	
<p>Operating under the supervision of the Area Warden, the Floor Warden (or Assistant) is responsible for the control of the Emergency Team members and the people on the floor. In addition, he/she is responsible for the safe evacuation of personnel in his/her work area during an emergency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervises assembly of personnel in his/her work area.</li> <li>• Is responsible for orderly evacuation of all personnel in his/her area via designated exits or areas of shelter.</li> <li>• Remains with the group throughout the evacuation period and leads them to evacuate or shelter in place.</li> <li>• Assists in training of all personnel in his/her work area.</li> </ul>

<b>Searcher</b>	
<p>Under the supervision of the Floor Warden, Searchers are responsible for finding and evacuating all personnel from the floor, specifically from remote areas such as storerooms, file rooms, break areas, restrooms, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Checks all rooms including rest rooms, conference rooms, reception areas, and remote areas, closing but not locking all doors behind them.</li> <li>• Advises any remaining personnel on the floor of the emergency and insists on their evacuation.</li> <li>• Evacuates non-employees found on the floor.</li> <li>• Reports to Floor Warden when his/her area is clear.</li> </ul>

<b>Stairwell Monitor</b>	
<p>Under the direction of the Floor Warden, Stairwell Monitors are responsible for an assigned exit, such as a stairwell and assist in the orderly evacuation or sheltering of personnel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Takes a position at his/her assigned exit and assists in the orderly evacuation of personnel.</li> <li>Inspects stairwells for possible heat or smoke conditions before evacuation.</li> <li>Instructs personnel to form single file lines into the stairwell and directs personnel to exit along the right side of the stairwell.</li> <li>Supervises and monitors evacuation flow while remaining calm and encouraging a calm and orderly evacuation.</li> <li>Stays at the exit until Searchers have cleared all personnel from the floor.</li> </ul>

<b>Elevator Monitor</b>	
<p>Under the supervision of the Floor Warden, Elevator Monitors are responsible for making sure no one uses the elevators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be familiar with the building evacuation plan and the location of all stairways.</li> <li>Positions self at elevator bank and directs employees to the nearest stairway or area of shelter.</li> <li>Stays at his/her post until instructed to evacuate by the Floor Warden.</li> </ul>

<b>Aide to Persons Needing Assistance</b>	
<p>Under the supervision of the Floor Warden, the Aide to Persons Needing Assistance is responsible for making sure all physically challenged personnel are evacuated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintains an up-to-date list of physically challenged employees on the floor.</li> <li>Assists personnel to stairwell (Area of Safe Refuge) and calls Security on stairwell phone alerting them to person in stairwell.</li> </ul>

***Conclusion / Follow Up*** An emergency involving smoke or fire can be a traumatic event, but with proper planning and training, building employees will be more confident in their response and aid will not be delayed.

At the conclusion of a smoke or fire incident, Security should consider the below actions.

- Obtain relevant information for an Incident Report
- Return building back to normal operations (security posts, elevators, etc.)
- Return all fire response equipment and replace any used items (i.e. fire extinguishers)
- Conduct an after-action-review with team to identify gaps in response measures and opportunities for improvement
- Review findings with Building Management and Engineering, and update emergency plans as necessary
- Report losses to insurance carriers, risk management, and ownership

*Note: The above measures are provided for informational purposes only and do not constitute any set standard, guideline, or code. They are offered as possible options to consider when developing response measures to issues in a commercial office building. When developing response measures, consider all variable, such as building size and design, staffing, time of day, etc. The purpose of these measures is to provide general information to those persons responsible for developing site-specific protective measures, to serve as practices to consider when drafting emergency operations plans, and do not constitute any set policy or procedure.*