



TEXAS A&M
FOREST SERVICE

Employee Emergency Reference Guide

What Should You Do in An Emergency?

Protect yourself both before and during an incident or emergency: Be familiar with the guidelines contained in this document **before** you need to use them. Based upon your assessment of the situation, use your best judgment to protect yourself and, if possible, others during an incident or emergency.

Be aware of your surroundings: Being aware of where you are and what is happening around you can help you to understand how information, events, and your own actions will impact your safety and your ability to protect yourself, both now and in the near future.

Call for help: Any emergency service can be summoned by calling **911**.

Help others: Once you are safely away from danger, warn others of the hazard and help if you can without putting yourself in danger.

Fire, Police, Medical, and Other Emergencies: Dial 911

Employee Emergency Reference Guide

Active Shooter

If you find yourself in an active shooter situation, try to remain as calm as possible and use these suggested actions to help you plan a strategy for survival:

Run when an active shooter is in your vicinity:

- If there is an escape path, attempt to evacuate.
- Evacuate whether others agree to or not.
- Leave your belongings behind
- Help others escape, if possible
- Prevent others from entering the area.
- **Call 911** when you are safe.

Hide If evacuation is not possible, find a place and:

- Lock and/or blockade the door.
- Silence your cell phone
- Hide behind large objects.
- Remain quiet.
- Your hiding place should:
 - Be out of the shooter's view.
 - Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction (cover)
 - Not trap or restrict your options for movement or escape.

Fight as a last resort, and only if your life is in immediate danger:

- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter.
- Act with physical aggression / yell.
- Use firearms or improvised weapons.
- Commit to your actions

If able, provide the following information to the 911 operator and/or law enforcement officers:

- Location of the active shooter(s)
- The number of active shooters, if more than one
- Physical description of the shooter(s)
- Number and type of weapons held by the shooter(s), pistol, rifle, shotgun, etc.
- Number of potential victims in your area

How to react when law enforcement officers arrive:

- Remain calm and follow the officers' instructions.
- Put down any items in your hands (i.e., improvised weapons, firearms, bags, jackets)
- Keep hands visible at all times.
- Avoid pointing, screaming, and/or yelling.
- Do not stop and ask officers for help or directions when evacuating. Proceed in the direction instructed.

For reference material use the link: <https://alerrt.org/reading>

Employee Emergency Reference Guide

Bomb Threat

Bomb threats are serious until proven otherwise. Act quickly but remain calm and obtain as much information as possible about the type and location of the bomb.

Bomb Threat by Phone

If you receive a bomb threat phone call:

- Keep the caller on the line for as long as possible - DO NOT HANG UP, even if the caller does.
- Listen carefully - Be polite and show interest.
- Try to keep the caller talking to learn more information.
- If possible, write a note to a colleague to call 911.
- If your phone has a display, copy the number and/or letters displayed.
- Immediately upon termination of the call, do not hang up, but from a different phone, contact 911 with information and await instructions.

Bomb Threat in Writing

If a bomb threat is by handwritten note or email:

- **Call 911** and the dispatcher will notify police.
- Handle note as little as possible, or if email, do not delete.
- Evacuation building
- Search your immediate work area before evacuation in order to assist the police by identifying unknown objects for investigation.
- Do not re-enter the building until it is cleared by authorized personnel.

For reference material see the following link: <https://www.cisa.gov/bomb-threats>

Suspicious Letter or Package

Characteristics of mailed packages as “suspicious” includes missing return address; poorly written or typed with misspelled words; rigid, misshapen, or protruding wires; strange order; oily stains; and excessive use of tape.

If you receive a suspicious letter or package:

- **Do NOT handle the letter or package!**
- Isolate the area immediately.
- **Call 911**
- Initiate an emergency evacuation.

Emergency Evacuation

Use the following guidance to prepare for an evacuation:

- The most senior employee on site will be responsible for the evacuation of that facility.
- Instruct personnel regarding their role in an evacuation.
- Involve all occupants in evacuation drills.
- Prepare building evacuation instructions for each enclosed building (excluding buildings with only one exit). The following is the minimum information to be included:
 - Building floor plan with exits marked and route directions to nearest exit.
 - Location to meet for accountability.
 - Instructions for evacuating people with special needs

Use the following guidance during an evacuation:

- Activate the alarm, or notify occupants, and call 911.
- Shut down powered machinery.
- Take immediate personal effects only and leave the doors open.
- Account for all personnel.

Employee Emergency Reference Guide

Workplace Violence

Violence in the workplace may culminate in the death of an employee at the hands of another employee. The first stage is simple assault. The next three stages are aggravated assault, sexual assault, and finally homicide. The following outlines actions to take if an assault occurs to you or a co-worker and prevention and response measures.

Actions to take if assault occurs to you or a co-worker:

- Find safety.
 - Remove yourself from the area where the assault has taken place.
 - Ensure that your attacker cannot cause any further injury.
- Seek medical attention.
 - Do a full body audit of any wounds that you may have.
 - If other people can help you, get them to check you over.
 - Obtain/use the office first aid kit.
 - Follow the Accident and Injury Guidelines for personal injuries.
- Report the attack to the police.
- Report the assault to your supervisor.
 - Tell them orally, then follow up with a letter or email.
- Maintain evidence of the assault (once you are safe and have tended to your injuries)

Prevention measures:

- AgriLife HR conducts background checks on all new employees
- Hiring supervisors perform reference checks prior to hiring new employees.
- Supervisors should strive to maintain a workplace that is fair and impartial.
- Supervisors should not tolerate threats from any employee and immediately contact HR.
- Supervisors should, in consultation with HR, address any of the following warning signs an employee may exhibit:
 - Increasing belligerence directed at others.
 - Threats of violence
 - Hypersensitivity to criticism
 - Obsession with a supervisor or coworker grievance
 - Preoccupation with violent themes
 - Outbursts of anger
 - Continued unsolicited advances after rejection.
 - Reports of stalking or other forms of sexual harassment

Violence response measures:

- All allegations of assault **will be** referred to the local authorities immediately.
- AgriLife HR will be consulted regarding the immediate separation of the alleged assailant from the workplace.

Employee Emergency Reference Guide

Severe Weather

Tornado Watch: Means that tornadoes are possible.

- Remain alert for approaching storms and watch the sky.
- Monitor NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or the local news for more information.

Tornado Warning: Means that a tornado has touched, down, been sighted, or indicated by weather radar.

For a tornado warning, you should take shelter immediately:

- Go to a designated “tornado shelter” or move to interior hallways or small interior rooms (e.g., bathroom, closet, etc.) on the lowest floor of the building.
- Stay away from exterior walls, doors, and windows and get under a piece of furniture if possible (e.g., sturdy table, desk)
- **Call 911** if emergency help is needed.

Once the storm has passed, you should:

- Report to your supervisor so that he/she can determine the accountability of all employees.
- If you smell gas or hear a hissing sound indoors, open windows and leave the building.
- Monitor your portable or weather radio for instructions or wait for an official “all clear” notice from your chain of command or appropriate authority.
- Evacuate damaged buildings. Do not re-enter until declared safe by authorities.
- **Call 911 only to report a life-threatening emergency.**

Hurricanes, Severe Thunderstorms or Severe Winter Weather:

- Listen to radio and television for weather updates and information concerning delays and cancellations.
- Stay indoors and minimize travel.
- Watch for downed trees and power lines, flooded roads, icy roads, or other hazards.

Remember: “Turn around / don’t drown!” if you encounter flooded roads while driving.

Lightning:

- Cease outdoor activities.
- Seek shelter inside a building or automobile.
- Avoid open areas, places near water, trees, metal fences, overhead wires, or power lines, as well as elevated ground or open vehicles.
- Avoid use of two-way radios or cellular phones

Remember: The best source of information during a thunderstorm is your local news, radio stations, and any NOAA Weather Radio. Also follow the directions provided by your division or department supervisors

For reference material see the following link:

<https://www.weather.gov/safety/thunderstorm-prepare>

Employee Emergency Reference Guide

Fire / Hazardous Materials

Fire

If there is a fire inside a building:

- Activate a fire alarm or pull station (if so equipped)
- **Call 911**
- Evacuate the building using Building Evacuation instructions.
- Do not re-enter the building until cleared by authorized personnel.
- Assist with the evacuation of individuals with special needs.

If you are unable to leave the building, you should create an area of refuge:

- Seal the room. Use wet cloth to stuff around cracks in floors and seal up vents to protect against smoke.
- Do not break windows, except as a last resort for escape.
- Stay low under smoke. The freshest air is near the floor. Keep a wet cloth over your nose and mouth; breathe through your nose only.
- **Call 911** or hang something in the window to signal for rescue.

For reference material see the following links:

<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/>

<https://www.osha.gov/chemical-hazards/resources>

Hazardous Materials

If hazardous materials (HazMat) or natural gas are involved:

- Turn off air conditioners and ventilation systems or set ventilation systems to 100 percent recirculation so that no outside air is drawn into the building.
- Select a room(s) which is easy to seal and, if possible, has a water supply and access to restrooms.
- If gas or vapors could have entered the building, take shallow breaths through a cloth or a towel.
- Avoid eating or drinking any food or water that may be contaminated.
- Listen to local radio or television stations for the latest emergency information.
- Act quickly if you have come into contact with or have been exposed to hazardous chemicals.

After a Hazardous Materials Incident

- Follow decontamination instructions from local authorities.
- Seek medical treatment for unusual symptoms as soon as possible.
- Place exposed clothing and shoes in tightly sealed containers.
- Advise everyone who comes in contact with you that you may have been exposed to a toxic substance.
- Open windows and vents and turn on fans to provide ventilation.
- Report any lingering vapors or other hazards to your local emergency services office.

Employee Emergency Reference Guide

Medical Emergencies

INFECTIOUS DISEASE RESPONSE PLAN

- This Infectious Disease Response Plan may be used in situations that include naturally occurring outbreaks (e.g., measles, mumps, meningococcal disease), emerging infectious diseases (e.g., SARS, pandemic influenza), and bioterrorism. Verify local public health organization contact for your office per attached list of local health authorities:
<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/regions/lhds.shtml>

Actions to take in **readiness level 4**. The term “Level 4” will be used to denote a situation that causes a higher degree of readiness than is normally present.

- Employees should review emergency plans.

Actions to take in **readiness level 3**. The term “Level 3” will be used to refer to a situation which presents a greater potential threat than “Level 4,” but poses no immediate threat to life and/or property.

- Environmental Health and Safety Officer (EHSO) will issue sanitation guidelines and links to updated information.
- Agency-sponsored events require approval from an Associate Director
- EHSO will coordinate for the acquisition and distribution of prophylaxis to offices, if needed
- Affected offices will implement daily sanitization procedures for all surfaces.

Actions to be taken in **readiness level 2**. The term “Level 2” will be used to signify hazardous conditions in which there is the potential and probability of causing loss of life.

- AgriLife HR will issue “stay at home” leave guidance for affected employees.
- Offices will report employees who are absent due to influenza symptoms to AgriLife HR
- Agency-sponsored events require approval from the Director.
- Department heads will review and brief their department on their business continuity plans.
- The EHSO will coordinate immunizations to sustain continuity of essential services, if needed

Actions to be taken in **readiness level 1**. The term “Level 1” will be used to signify that hazardous conditions are imminent.

- A representative will attend daily update briefings with the Texas Department of State Health Services
- The Director must approve:
 - attendance at any large-scale event by an employee
 - sponsorship of any large-scale event by a department
- Implement “work from home” contingencies, where feasible
- Close non-critical facilities when attendance at work poses a significant health risk.