

# Loss Prevention

## JOBSITE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

---

***Tragic events, like the one described in the next paragraph, are a reminder that company emergency preparedness must also cover jobsites away from the company office or location.***

---

Ten people were shot and others injured as a result of the New York City subway shooting on April 12<sup>th</sup>. As expected, this shooting also caused a major disturbance in the Sunset Park neighborhood along with delays and schedule changes on different subway lines. Local schools were in lockdown and businesses were disrupted. Travel in the neighborhood was restricted because the area around the 36th Street station was cordoned by the police. This tragic event is a reminder that company emergency plans must also cover jobsites away from the company office or location.

Emergencies affecting jobsites can occur on the site itself, or, like the April 12<sup>th</sup> subway shooting, occur elsewhere but near enough to the jobsite to require an emergency response. Besides police activity, fires, explosions, motor vehicle accidents, and building collapses that occur in the immediate area will cause disruptions.

Jobsite emergencies can occur any anytime. Natural emergencies occur more frequently than man-made emergencies, such as, hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, wildfires, and severe storms. Fortunately, some of these events – such as storms and hurricanes – develop with advance notice.

Preparing for an emergency by providing an emergency action plan (EAP) for offsite locations is more challenging than for emergencies that occur at fixed locations – such as company headquarters. Even within the same trade, operations differ, the conditions at different jobsites are not the same and conditions change during the course of a project. Additionally, depending on where the jobsite is located, alerting everyone on the site and getting them out can be a problem. At times, the commitment of building owners and general contractors is wanting.

OSHA requires an emergency action plan in certain instances. OSHA provides general information on its [website](#), and through its [publication](#) *How to Plan for Workplace Emergencies and Evacuations*. For jobsites, there is information that is needed in an EAP to ensure the safety of workers, they include:

- A method to report fires and other emergencies.
- A method to alert workers of an emergency.
- Emergency escape procedures.

- Emergency numbers.
- Identifying the warden or person in charge of emergency planning at the site.
- Identifying an offsite assembly area to meet, or a procedure for reporting into the company management during and after an emergency.
- Location of the nearest medical facility.
- Availability of personal protective equipment and first aid supplies.
- Procedures to account for all employees after an evacuation.

Coordinating with the general contractor or landlord is needed if you are not involved in the planning. Training is essential.

### **April 12<sup>th</sup> New York City Subway Shooting**

- This event occurred below ground in the subway system. However, the area around the 36<sup>th</sup> Street stations was restricted and became the central point for the emergency response. Anyone working in the station either evacuated on their own or at the direction of the police.
- Buildings nearby may have been evacuated, or, were under a lockdown order for the safety of the workers and to restrict pedestrian and vehicular traffic on the street.
- Access to and from the immediate area was also restricted, so, leaving the Sunset Park neighborhood was limited or impossible.
- Restrictions in the area began to ease near the end of the day.
- There was a large police presence in the days following the April 12<sup>th</sup> incident.

What actions would you want your employees to take if they were in the affected area? Consider:

- How would they communicate to company managers or supervisors? How do you account for workers?
- Do workers know where to meet (if so directed) in the event of an evacuation order?
- What happens to company equipment and material?
- What happens to company vehicles if access out of the area is restricted?
- If you are the general contractor on a project, what responsibilities do you have to other contractors?
- How would you learn about injured employees taken for medical treatment?
- In the event workers are injured, is there a way to notify family members?

Emergency Preparedness Plans will be established based on the scope of work, location of work, and atmospheric conditions. Evacuation routes must be chosen taking into account the potential other hazard exposures. Evacuation routes will be posted at the job site. All personnel will be made aware of the emergency preparedness plans and evacuation procedures during site specific training.