

TOOLBOX TALK

The Truth About Emergency Action Plans

Think Emergency Action Plans are all about what to do during a fire emergency or severe weather?
Think again.

Do you have equipment with rotating parts or chains, sprockets, or belts? What if one of your employees had their arm trapped in that equipment? Is that employee working alone and have no way to summon help? Do nearby workers know how to disable that machine and extract their co-worker? Abandoning that worker is not an option that most of us would choose, so we either must be prepared to help or know who to summon for help.

One of the most commonly overlooked hazards is chemical storage, particularly those in large quantity containers, such as barrels or totes. Leaky containers can mean serious trouble, especially if the chemical is flammable. A spreading pool of solvent presents a greater hazard than a spreading pool of hydraulic fluid. Secondary containment is one method to capture leaks.

Employees may have medical problems or severe allergies. It's important to understand when and what type of assistance may be needed.

Always designate management point of contact(s) and make certain employees know who this person is and how to contact them.

Make sure your company vehicles are equipped with fire extinguishers and appropriately stocked first-aid kits. Both of these pieces of equipment will need to be inspected at least monthly.



Secondary containment can prevent catastrophic damage from chemicals.

Common sources of emergencies identified in emergency action plans include:

- ◆ Fires
- ◆ Explosions
- ◆ Floods
- ◆ Hurricanes
- ◆ Tornadoes
- ◆ Toxic material releases
- ◆ Radiological and biological accidents
- ◆ Civil disturbances
- ◆ Workplace violence

BUT don't forget to assess your work and working environment every day for potential hazards!