

## **ON-SITE EMERGENCY PLAN Why ?**

In spite of various preventive and precautionary measures taken in the plant, the possibility of a mishap can not be ruled out. Hence the need to prepare an Emergency Plan for dealing with incidences which may still occur and are likely to affect LIFE and PROPERTY both within the plant and in the immediate neighborhood. A major emergency in the plant is one which may cause serious injury or loss of life and damage to the property. The On-Site Emergency Plan ( OEP ) explains the code of conduct of all personnel in the plant along with the actions to be carried out in the event of an Emergency.

The plan gives the guidelines for employees, contractors, transporters, etc. It not only defines responsibilities but also informs about prompt rescue operations, evacuations, rehabilitation, co-ordination and communication. The Emergency procedures outlined should be suitable for round the clock coverage including holidays as well. These emergency procedures should be followed as outlined in the **OEP** during general shifts as well.

## **EMERGENCY PLANNING AND CONTROL**

Even though an emergency situation with lives and property at stake may seem remote at your plant, it can happen. Even small plants that use seemingly harmless materials sometimes have emergencies. To minimize property loss, injuries or even loss of lives, your plant must have a properly developed Emergency Control Plan. With such a plan, when a real emergency occurs, it won't be an unknown situation.

If your plant already has an emergency control plan, you must ask these questions: Is the plan up-to-date and do the employees in your plant fully understand what their responsibilities are in emergency situations? The key to an Emergency Control Plan is response – how well can your plant respond in an emergency?

Although each plant's emergency control plan should be unique and tailored to the individual plant's needs, every plan should have four common objectives. These objectives are:

- 1) to prevent injuries and save lives
- 2) to minimize danger to property and the environment
- 3) to provide for a continuity of operations and,
- 4) to help the plant to be a good neighbour to the surrounding community.

In every plant there are three possible sources of emergencies:

- 1) physical emergencies such as fires, explosions or spills
- 2) natural emergencies such as floods, earthquakes or heavy snows
- 3) social emergencies like riots, bomb threats or vandalism.

All emergency control plans must cover these three areas.

Each emergency plan will have certain basic elements.

## **DESIGNATE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The most important and obvious need is to clearly designate the responsibilities of each member of the emergency control team. A complete emergency control organization with an emergency coordinator and well-defined roles for everyone involved is essential. The emergency coordinator will direct overall plan activities and have authority to make all final decisions. A communications officer will coordinate all communications, both on-site and off, during an emergency situation. The emergency control plan should also provide for a public relations officer who will serve the vital function of keeping the public and the media informed. The public relations officer can help prevent the spreading of rumours and misinformation about the emergency.

Other people essential to an emergency control team include a medical officer, environmental control officer, a fire chief, and a plant security officer. A personnel officer should be designated to account for all the people who would be in the areas of the emergency, to compile lists of missing or injured people and to provide needed names and addresses.

Additionally, an engineering officer should be designed to control shutdown procedures and repairs. Since one or more of these officers might not be available in a real emergency, alternates should be designed. Alternates should be selected not only for members of the emergency control team but also for both the on-site and off-site emergency control centers.

### **ESTABLISH CONTROL PROCEDURES:**

After the emergency control team, control centers and their alternates have been chosen, the second step in forming an overall emergency control plan is to establish emergency control procedures. Meetings with the officers of the emergency control team can help develop procedures based on your plant's individual needs. These procedures should be clear and understandable to all plant employees, and each employee should have a role to play.

Procedures should include an evacuation plan, not only for plant employees, but also for the area surrounding the plant. These evacuation procedures must be worked out with local authorities such as the police, civil defense and the fire department. Other procedures should be coordinated with local authorities as needed. For example, contingency plans for containing spills and emissions should be coordinated with the E.P.A.

### **TRAIN AND DRILL ALL EMPLOYEES:**

The next essential step in the emergency control plan, after procedures have been formed, is to train and drill employees. Employees must practice carrying out their responsibilities during an emergency and must learn what alternative courses of action are available to them. Shutdown procedures should be written and all employees should know evacuation routes from their areas, where to find first aid equipment and how to contact the emergency control team.

Training drills for employees are essential. Various drills that do not require an actual plant shutdown can be developed. After the drills, a critique with suggestions, questions and answers among employees may also be helpful.

### **CONTINUE ON CURRENT BASIS:**

Finally, your plant's emergency control plan must be kept up-to-date. The phone numbers for key plant, division and corporate personnel, as well as local authorities should be kept current. Written procedures must also be kept current. These procedures may change because new plant construction can affect the emergency control plan.

Any changes should be stressed during drills. Written copies of the emergency control plan should be made available to all concerned employees.

### **KEY POINTS**

Plants with existing emergency control plans must make sure those plans are up-to-date and all employees fully understand their responsibilities and duties.

All emergency control plans should have these objectives:

1. To prevent injuries and save lives
2. To minimize danger to property and the environment
3. To insure continuity of operations
4. To help maintain a good-neighbour relationship to the adjacent community

Plant emergencies will come from physical, natural or social sources. All emergency control plans must therefore cover these broad areas.

### **FIRST STEP**

Emergency control plans must clearly designate one member of the emergency control team as its leader. The emergency coordinator must have the power to direct activities and make final decisions.

### **Other essential team members are:**

Communication Officer Environmental Control Officer; Public Relations Officer Fire Chief Medical Officer; Plant Security Officer; Personnel Officer; Engineering Officer

All team members should have alternates. Emergency control plans must have alternate on-site and off-site emergency control centers.

### **SECOND STEP**

Establish emergency control procedures. Some of the procedures used include

1. Evacuation procedures (for the plant and the surrounding area)
2. Contingency plans for containing spills or emissions
3. Shutdown procedures
4. How to contact the emergency control team; company and outside officials

### **THIRD STEP**

Employees must be trained and drilled in the emergency control procedures. Without the necessary drills, an emergency plan will not be effective.

### **FOURTH STEP**

Once the emergency control plan has been instituted at your plant, it must be kept up-to-date and written copies made available to all employees who may need them.

