



# Fighting the Flames

HOW TO KEEP YOUR BUSINESS SAFE FROM FIRE

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*It's a quiet Monday morning. Employees are going about their daily routine: checking email, scheduling meetings for the coming week, and reviewing their to-do lists. Business as usual. But then someone mentions they smell smoke. Suddenly, a fire alarm blares. **Panic.***

It's a scenario no business ever wants to think about: a dangerous fire in the workplace. From electrical sparks and faulty equipment to combustibles on site and even arson, there are numerous ways a fire could ignite at your place of business. Protecting life throughout the entire duration of a fire should be every organization's top priority.

This guide is intended to help businesses prepare for and recover from a fire. But it's only a first step. Having a thoroughly tested plan in place and a reliable communication system to quickly notify all employees is crucial to ensuring everyone's safety.

# Fire Proof: Risks in the Workplace

While some situations are simply out of an organization’s control, the threat of most workplace fires could be extinguished well before the initial spark. There are a variety of factors that could place a business at higher risk of a fire incident occurring.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) lists some of the most common causes of workplace fires<sup>1</sup> in an effort to instruct those responsible for fire safety—and ultimately educate every employee.

While the following list is not comprehensive, it does cover the most common workplace fire hazards:

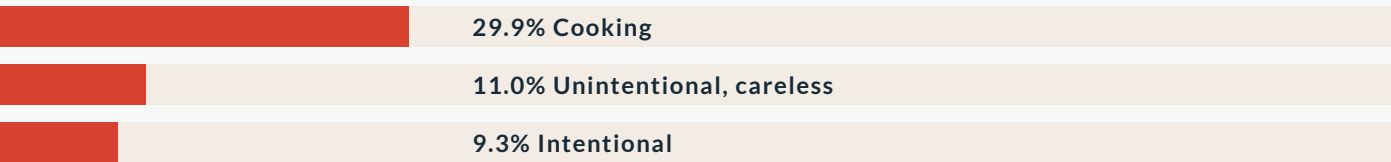
- Cooking Appliances
- Electrical Wiring
- Lighting Equipment
- Heating Appliances
- Arson
- Smoking Materials
- Flammable Materials
- Office/Entertainment Equipment

Any structure with a kitchen containing a toaster oven, microwave, or heating appliance is vulnerable. Just over one fifth of reported workplace fires over a five-year period started in an office kitchen or cooking area. It should be noted that while only 2% of fires began in a workplace’s ceiling/attic area, those fires were responsible for 13% of direct property damage.

Understanding where the fire risks are throughout your entire office is essential to maintaining a safe work environment. In the event of a fire, an unprepared organization will likely find itself thrown into chaos.

Statistics from the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA)<sup>2</sup> reveal that, while fire incidents are down since 2008, both deaths and financial loss have increased. The implication is clear: businesses are vulnerable and need to place fire prevention at the top of their priority list.

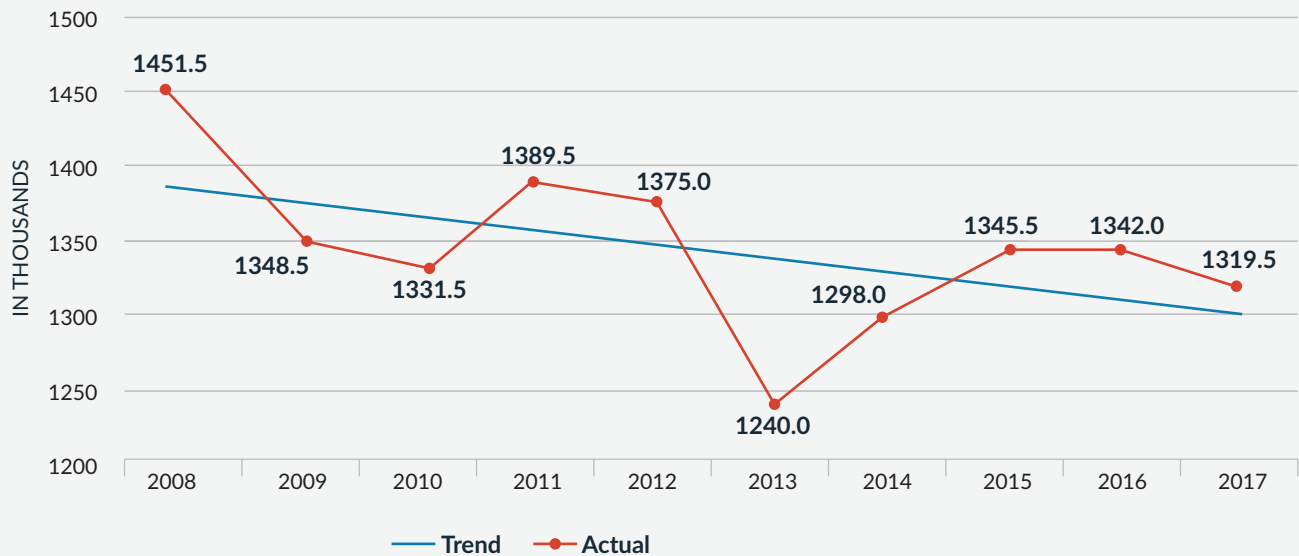
## Nonresidential building fire causes in 2016 96,800 fires (estimated)



Source: U.S. Fire Administration



## Fire Statistics from 2008 to 2017



Source: U.S. Fire Administration

Conducting routine walkthroughs, electrical inspections, and maintaining functional appliances are all behaviors that can help mitigate fire hazards.

There are also precautions every business should take to lessen the impact if a fire does occur.

These include minimizing loose paper throughout the office, properly storing flammable materials, and instructing all employees on fire response prevention and protocol.

## Fire Statistics from 2008 to 2017

|          |                           |                      | Trend |
|----------|---------------------------|----------------------|-------|
| Fires    | 1,319,500<br>in 2017      | -6.2%<br>from 2008   | ▲     |
| Death    | 3,400<br>in 2017          | +9.6%<br>from 2008   | ▲     |
| Injuries | 14,670<br>in 2017         | -15.8%<br>from 2008  | ▼     |
| \$ Loss  | \$23.0 billion<br>in 2017 | +12.0%<br>*from 2008 | ▲     |

\* Adjusted to 2017 dollars; included \$10 billion in losses from Northern California wildfires.

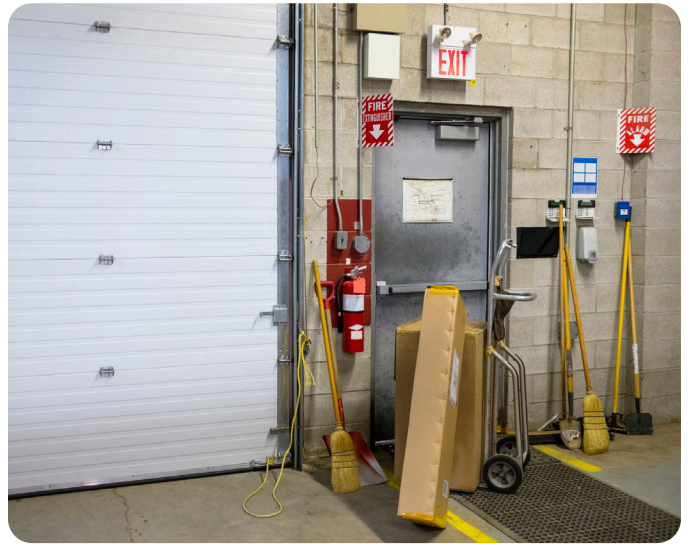
Source: U.S. Fire Administration

# Fire Safety Guidelines Every Business Should Follow

In 1991, a Hamlet, North Carolina poultry plant with 90 employees inside went up in flames. One of the plant's deep fryers ignited into a fireball that quickly spread throughout the structure. Many of the fire exits were locked, the building's sprinkler system failed, and the company had no evacuation plan in place.

*Sadly, 25 workers perished in the fire.*

In its 11 years in operation, the plant had never received a proper safety inspection. It's clear the loss of life could have been mitigated had the organization been equipped with a proper fire extinguishing system, functional exits, and a rehearsed evacuation plan.



## Fire Safety by Industry

***Some businesses have unique industry considerations when it comes to fire safety.*** For example, the Hamlet poultry plant required a specialized carbon dioxide fire extinguisher above their fryers that likely would not exist outside of a food manufacturing or restaurant environment.

The banking industry, with a dispersed office environment, will have multiple branches to take into consideration. In addition to bank tellers and employees, banks will also have customers to protect in the event of a structural fire.

Similarly, the health care industry will have a wide variety of staff they'll need to keep safe (nurses, doctors, technicians) as well as patients to consider in the event of a fire.

Employees should be trained on specific needs your organization has surrounding fire safety. Customizing your plan to fit your industry will also help fulfill your duty of care obligation to the people you employ and serve.

## OSHA Workplace Fire Safety Guidelines

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)<sup>3</sup> requires organizations, depending on specific industry and hazardous materials present, to follow strict safety guidelines. In addition, businesses have a duty of care obligation to their employees. This legal and moral responsibility requires that employers do everything within their power to keep their people out of harm's way. Regardless of the legal obligation, every organization should be committed to a safe working environment.

The following OSHA fire safety guidelines can help businesses fulfill their duty of care and give employees the peace of mind they need to go about their work:

- Ensure office layout has enough fire exits for everyone to quickly evacuate
- Understand fire safety building codes
- Implement your insurance company's fire safety requirements
- Develop an emergency action plan that includes clear communication
- Provide fire safety equipment (portable fire extinguishers)
- Train employees on equipment, evacuation protocol, and your company's emergency communication system
- Check that equipment is up to date
- Ensure the facility meets safety standards
- Train staff on equipment and fire protocol
- Invest in a reliable emergency communications system



*One of the most important components of fire safety priority for every business: developing a thorough evacuation plan.*

# Steps to Building an Effective Fire Evacuation Plan

Fires are dangerous enough, but the threat can be compounded by panic if your company is unprepared. A detailed and rehearsed fire evacuation plan is the best way to prevent a chaotic response.

The following 7 steps are designed to help guide leadership through creating a fire evacuation plan for your business:

## 1 THINK THROUGH SCENARIOS

When planning your business fire evacuation plan, start with some basic questions that explore the primary threats your business may face during a fire.

**Where might fires ignite?** As mentioned, most fires are caused by cooking equipment, intentional acts, and electrical malfunctions. Target these areas as you conduct a safety audit.

**How and why could a fire start?** Think through reasons a fire might threaten your business. Are employees using portable space heaters or personal fridges? Is your business in a wildfire zone? Identify threats and how they might impact your organization.

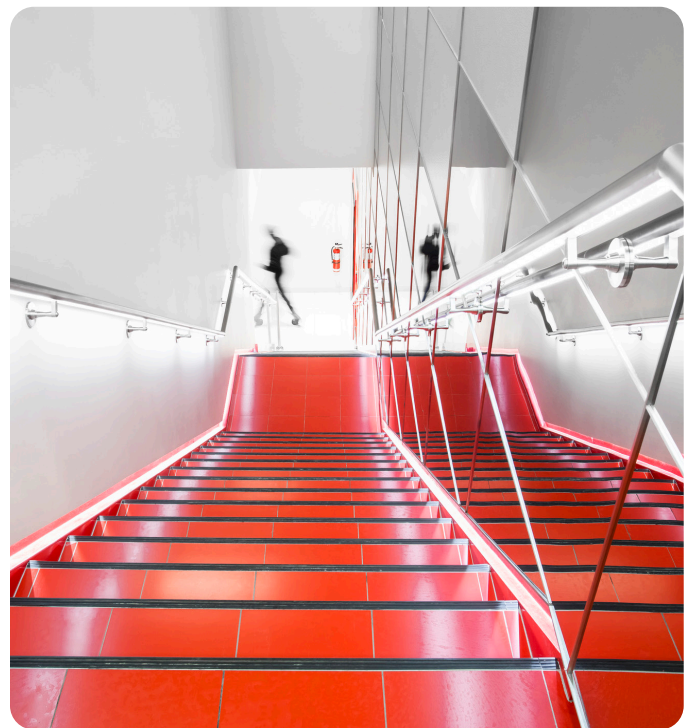
**Where is the main exit?** Identify your main and secondary exits, communicate evacuation routes to all employees, and be sure to utilize those same exits when running fire drills.

**Who needs special assistance?** Understand which employees are mobility-impaired (whether they have a permanent condition or temporary injury) and make accommodations or designate a person to assist them during evacuation.

**What if “X” happens?** Make “X” business specific:

|“What if we have to abandon our headquarters with very little notice?” Keep a list of “What if X happens” questions and answers.

Preparing for various scenarios helps transform a potential fire into a tangible reality that could impact your business.





## 2 ESTABLISH ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

During a fire, employees look to leadership for guidance. Create and communicate a clear chain of command that states who has the authority to order an evacuation and specific actions for each role.

Note that situations will differ and should be adopted to a facility's specific layout. Some roles will have crossover depending on availability, but the following team assembly should capture all relevant tasks during a workplace fire:

**Chief Fire Warden:** This employee has overall responsibility for a fire event including planning and preparation. The Chief Fire Warden will often ensure doors have been closed, check bathrooms, and perform a backup headcount at the safe location.

**Assistant Fire Warden:** This role ensures all employees have evacuated by conducting a walkthrough (if possible). They'll also check that doors are closed, remind everyone to evacuate through stairwells, and help assist mobility-impaired staff.

**Headcount Manager:** This person will handle employee wellness checks once gathered in a safe location. Some emergency communication solutions come with polling functionality that allows for a quick safety survey easily sent out to all employees. Once everyone is accounted for, the headcount manager should notify the Chief Fire Warden and the facilities manager.

**Route Guide/Stairwell Guide:** These employees play an important role by ensuring paths are clear, reminding everyone to continue on the designated evacuation route, and ultimately ensuring evacuation remains orderly and calm.

**Floor Monitor:** This is the last person out after making sure the area is clear. They'll have an assigned area to cover, ensure all employees evacuate, and report back to the Chief Fire Warden once safe.



## 3 CREATE A COMMUNICATION PLAN

As necessary, designate someone (such as the Assistant Fire Warden) to disseminate information to employees. Depending on your business, you might also need to inform customers, news media, the community, management, suppliers, transportation partners, or government officials.

Employees may not have access to normal channels of communication (and networks could fail), so you'll want to provide this critical role with a multi-channel communication system. Message through email, phone, text, and mobile app to ensure broad distribution.

Once your communication tool is in place, your communications team will need to let the appropriate stakeholders know how the situation impacts the business, what actions they should take, and next steps.



## 4 PLAN AND MAP ROUTES

A good fire evacuation plan for your business will include primary and secondary escape routes (clear signs should mark all exits). For large offices, post multiple maps so that employees are fully informed.

- Once your people are safely out of the building, where should they congregate?
- Establish an assembly area for employees to gather. The Assistant Fire Warden should be at the location taking a head count and providing updates. Make sure the escape routes and the assembly area can accommodate the expected number of employees who will be evacuating.
- Modern emergency communication systems offer a survey feature to quickly determine who is safe and who still needs help.

## 5 KNOW YOUR TOOLS AND INSPECT THEM

It happens all too often: fire extinguishers forgotten about and gathering dust. It's easy to forget that fire safety tools require routine maintenance and inspection. The NFPA recommends refilling reusable fire extinguishers every 10 years and replacing disposable ones every 12 years.

**You should also ensure that you have up-to-date and operable:**

- Fire Alarms
- Emergency Lighting
- Fire Doors (if applicable)
- Escape Ladders (if applicable)

Equipping the office with fire safety devices is only effective if they're fully functional.

## 6 REHEARSE FIRE EVACUATION

Schools practice regular fire drills (as often as monthly) for good reason: repetition helps minimize confusion and teaches kids how to remain calm when the alarm blares.

Adults also require the same repeated instruction. Fire evacuation leaders should meet quarterly and plan for an annual or semi-annual rehearsal of the fire evacuation plan.

Experts also recommend making a mini-fire evacuation drill part of a new employee's onboarding process.

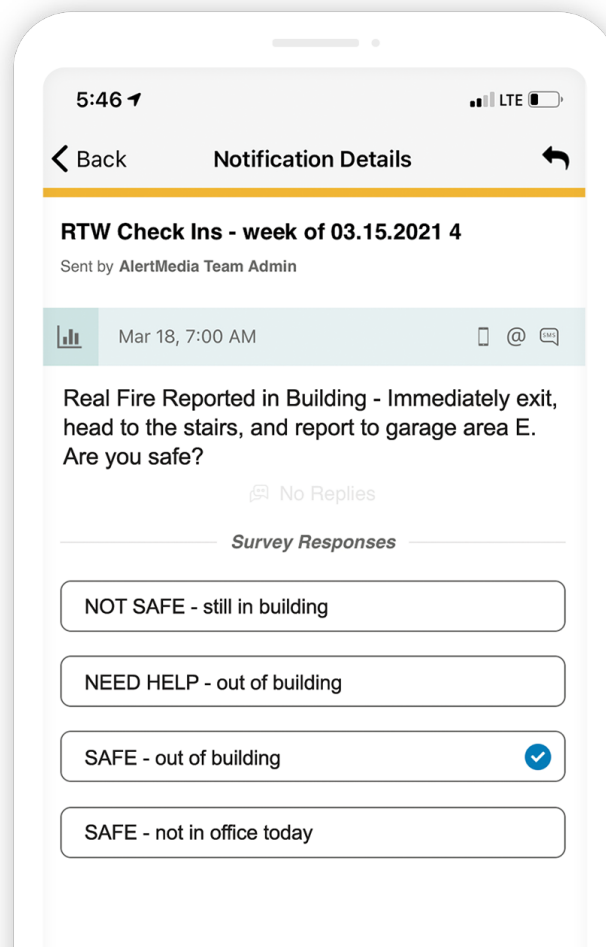
## 7 FOLLOW-UP AND REPORTING

Your company's leadership needs to be communicating and tracking progress in real-time. Because fires move quickly, every second counts.

The Assistant Fire Warden can simply send out a survey asking for a status update and monitor responses to see who's safe. More importantly, they can see who hasn't responded and direct resources to assist those in need.

**One of the biggest challenges businesses face:** workers who aren't in the office. Inevitably, some employees will be out sick or on vacation. Include options such as "I'm not in the office today" in your surveys to get an accurate status.

In order to keep all employees informed on new developments, you'll likely want to make use of a central hub or "event page." This is where you can update with real-time info including photos, video, and details as the situation unfolds.



## AlertMedia is the leader in emergency communication software.

With two-way messaging across any device and an intuitive user interface, you can keep your people safe, informed, and connected throughout the duration of a dangerous workplace fire.

**REQUEST DEMO**

### KEEP YOUR PEOPLE SAFE AND PROTECTED

**Send Wellness Checks:** Gain real-time insights into your team's condition during a workplace fire. AlertMedia uses multi-channel communications and a trained staff to identify and protect your people in need of assistance.

**Get Emergency Templates:** During the chaos of a sudden workplace fire, you likely won't have time to craft effective messaging. Get and store pre-set emergency templates so that you're prepared to communicate if a fire breaks out.

**Conduct Conference Calls:** Speed up the recovery process by easily looping in key decision makers through AlertMedia's Conference Call feature. Navigate through the aftermath of a fire and quickly restore business continuity.

# Why Fire Drills Matter and How to Conduct One

Some employees might view fire drills as a hassle. They're working on deadline and don't have a minute to spare. But when human lives are on the line, there's no such thing as too safe. Running routine fire drills is one of the most effective practices in ensuring company-wide safety during a fire. By scheduling them regularly, you can condition employees to respond calmly and efficiently in the event of a workplace fire.

## The Importance of a Life-Saving Fire Drill

The National Fire Protection Association reports there were an average of 3,340 fires per year in U.S. office properties from 2007-2011<sup>4</sup>. When deaths occur as the result of a workplace fire, it's typically because businesses are unprepared, their facility isn't up to code, or employees have not received proper instruction and guidance.

It's no surprise that many landlords and office management companies require regular fire drills in their leases.



## A CULTURE OF DRILLS CAN SAVE LIVES

One of the most gripping stories of disaster drill planning is the story of Rick Rescorla, Head of Security for Morgan Stanley<sup>5</sup>. After surviving the 1993 terrorist attack on the Twin Towers, Rescorla was certain another attack would happen again.

In preparation, he had Morgan Stanley employees practice orderly and swift evacuation drills every three months. The drills were conceived as a response to a terrorist attack, but they also would have been useful in a fire. His foresight and leadership ultimately saved lives.

Rescorla led 2,700 Morgan Stanley employees out of the World Trade Center's South Tower on Sept. 11, 2001. Part of how he was able to maintain order during the evacuation: he'd rehearsed the drill countless times with Morgan Stanley staff.

This shows that regular fire drills have benefits that extend beyond fire safety. Evacuation can be a necessity during a number of emergencies including active shooter scenarios, bomb threats, gas leaks, earthquakes, etc.



## How to Prepare for a Fire Drill

First and foremost, repetition is key when it comes to fire drill preparation. Schools repeat fire drills often so that routine becomes habit and kids know what to do without consciously thinking. This falls in line with the “Seven P’s”:

### PROPER PRIOR PLANNING AND PREPARATION PREVENTS POOR PERFORMANCE

When you stop to consider that many employees couldn’t even tell you where the fire exits are located in their office—the importance of preparation is clear.

If exit doors are partially blocked or doors are jammed, regular fire drills will reveal these issues so that they can be resolved ahead of time.

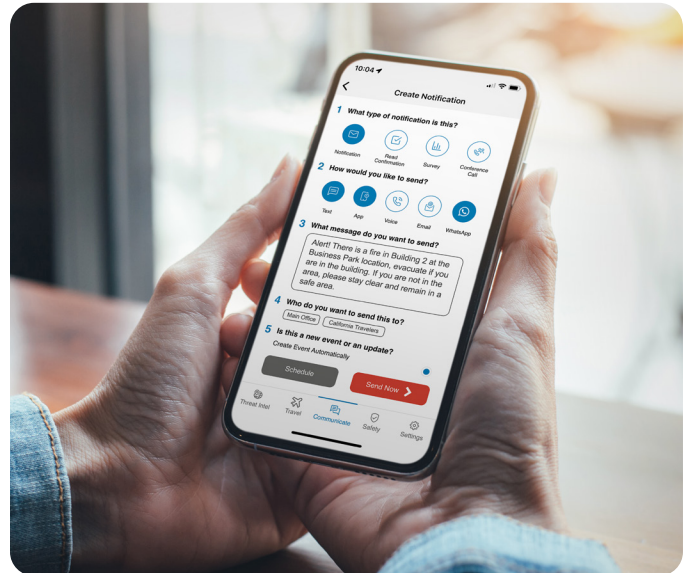
**Set Goals for Your Fire Drill:** Your Fire Team will need to establish objectives and standards for the drill. If you include these in your first drill, you can improve them in subsequent exercises. For instance, if your first drill takes 15 minutes to get everyone safely outside because you discover people are visiting the restroom or wrapping up calls, you have work to do.

#### Some metrics to measure:

- Time to evacuate
- Time to report completion of the drill
- Successful shutdown of equipment (where appropriate)

**Ensure Everyone Is on Board:** Once you have your fire evacuation plan in place, you should know the routes. But it’s not as easy as simply pulling an alarm lever. Everyone needs to be up to speed when you conduct a fire drill at work.

First of all, you must ensure the whole fire team is trained and ready to make the drill a success. You also need executive buy-in since the drill will take people away from the factory line, their desks, and their job. All employees need to understand the importance of the fire drill, otherwise they won’t take it (or you) seriously.



**Communicate Your Plan:** The key to a successful fire drill at work: **communication**. Announce the first fire drill in every place employees will see it including platforms such as an employee portal, intranet, or website; Slack channel; newsletter; and text message. After the first drill, you can conduct unexpected drills to replicate a real emergency (more on that below).

It’s essential to make use of emergency communication software during a drill. This will help familiarize employees with receiving notifications (and fire wardens with sending them), so that everyone is prepared when an actual emergency occurs.

Ideally, organizations will want to conduct fire drills without prior notice to their employees so that evacuation becomes habitual and second nature. If this isn’t feasible, schedule the drill on the company Outlook or Google calendar and include the fire team and their roles, time of the drill, evacuation maps, and expectations.

# How to Conduct an Effective Fire Drill

## APPOINT OBSERVERS

When you conduct a fire drill at work, you should choose a few people who are not on the fire evacuation team to act as neutral observers. They should be tasked with looking for the following:

- Large groups moving slowly or talking with each other
- Employees on cell phones or using other mobile devices
- Risky behavior such as grabbing coats, purses, and bags
- Difficulties for workers who are mobility impaired (stairs and hard-to-open doors)
- Workers choosing a different exit rather than the one closest to their workstation

## REPEAT DRILLS OFTEN

Conduct rehearsals of increasing complexity. Your fire team leaders could rehearse “on paper” describing the plan to the Fire Warden. Then, the team can describe their actions during a fire drill and analyze any weaknesses or confusion. After the fire team leaders understand their roles, they should physically walk through the fire drill.

Finally, you should conduct a full rehearsal with as many of your employees as possible. Large companies may favor doing this by building or by section to prevent business disruptions.

## AFTER THE DRILL

At the conclusion of the fire drill, observers should conduct a debriefing on their findings. The meeting location is a convenient place to conduct this debrief, since memories of the drill will be fresh. Gather the fire team together to discuss areas that need attention.

### Deep-dive into issues such as:

- Did employees close the doors upon exiting rooms?
- Were employees calm and confident?
- Did everyone meet at their assigned spot?
- Was the fire alarm reset and the alarm company notified of the drill?
- Did all employees get the alert from your emergency notification system?
- Did the building facilities (doors, alarms, automated voice commands) work correctly?

Conducting effective, thoughtfully planned fire drills truly can save lives. Take the time to think through every aspect of a drill, course correct as issues arise, and clearly communicate with all employees. Give your people peace of mind to ensure business continuity if a fire does happen.

# Do's and Don'ts During a Workplace Fire

A workplace fire can quickly become a nightmare scenario for any business. It's understandable that panic might set in, especially if your people are not adequately prepared.

Understanding what constitutes good behavior during a fire and communicating that knowledge to your people should be a step every organization takes as part of their fire safety planning.

Employee training is only beneficial if the instruction your people are given actually helps them safely navigate a fire scenario. The following behaviors can also serve as a helpful guide during a fire drill.

## Clear Communication

Both during a fire incident, in the immediate aftermath, and as your organization begins the process of recovering, how you communicate with your people is essential.

In the moment, it's unreasonable to expect to have the time or clarity of mind to craft a coherent, helpful message to your people.



## In a workplace fire, **DON'T**

### **DON'T panic**

While it's understandable that employees will be frightened during a fire, keeping a level head is essential to survival. Fortunately, running fire drills should help ensure a calm reaction since everyone will understand exactly what to do.

### **DON'T gather personal belongings**

Fires spread fast. In as little as 30 seconds, a small flame can blaze out of control. Immediate evacuation is the top priority.

### **DON'T take the elevator**

Because a fire can quickly take out a structure's electrical system, a stalled elevator can end up being a death trap. Employees should be instructed to use stairwells, fire escapes, or alternate routes.

### **DON'T leave doors open**

Oxygen fuels fire. Instruct your Fire Wardens to shut doors as they enter/exit them in an effort to keep the fire contained.

### **DON'T remain in the building/facility**

There are numerous (sometimes invisible) dangers present during an office fire. Carbon monoxide poisoning and structural failure can jeopardize workers who remain in place.

### **DON'T attempt to extinguish an out of control fire**

Containing a large fire should be left to properly trained firefighter professionals.

### **DON'T follow your own plan**

Fire drills are designed to provide everyone with a shared plan to safety. By going rogue, employees put their own lives at risk as well as endangering their coworkers.

### **DON'T return into a burning structure**

While it's human nature to want to ensure the safety of all employees, re-entering a dangerous fire could mean two lives lost instead of one.

### **DON'T ignore status check-in**

Leadership needs to account for every employee. If you receive a mobile check-in requesting your status (and you're in a safe location), respond immediately to expedite the process.

### **DON'T flee the scene once safe**

It might be tempting to get as far from the site as possible. But if you're a safe distance away, workers should stay in place until they receive further instruction.



## In a workplace fire, DO

### DO remain calm

Part of every organization's fire drill should be to instruct their people not to panic. While there will be a certain level of anxiety during a fire, reminding everyone to remain calm is always an evacuation best practice.

### DO take only a mobile device

Fleeing from the fire should be everyone's top priority. If a worker's mobile device is immediately accessible, they should grab it in order to stay informed and reply to status check-ins.

### DO listen to your leader

A designated company Fire Warden should provide necessary instruction as they help guide all employees to safety. If an individual has questions, they should direct them to the company's fire safety team.

### DO immediately notify proper authorities

Someone on the fire team should be tasked with notifying the fire department at the first signs of a fire. Don't assume that systems have triggered alerts.

### DO assist mobility-impaired coworkers

Whether an employee has a sprained ankle or a permanent mobility issue, some workers will need extra assistance to make it out of the structure safely.

### DO close doors behind you

Open doors can exacerbate an already dangerous fire. This task should be part of the fire team's checklist after all employees are safely out of a particular area.

### DO use evacuation routes

During evacuation, remind everyone where the nearest exits are (established during your fire drills) and what routes should be avoided.

### DO gather in a safe location

Your fire drill will have established a safe meeting place some distance from your building/facility such as a parking garage or lot.

### DO check in with leadership

Once everyone is safely away from the danger, there will undoubtedly be questions surrounding next steps. In order to minimize the risk of false information spreading, the fire team should relay all information.



# When the Smoke Clears: Recovering From a Workplace Fire

All building occupants have safely evacuated. The flames have died down. And now it's time to regain operations, restore your organization's IT infrastructure (data backups if servers have been impacted), and ensure all employees return to work in a safe and timely manner.

Maintaining business continuity after a devastating fire can present various challenges depending on the scope of the damage and the nature of your business/industry. The following represent some of the main areas of focus most organizations will need to take into consideration following a fire.

## COMPANY-WIDE COMMUNICATION

**Employees:** Keeping your people informed and connected should be an organization's top priority to help ease the transition back into normal business operations. This is the time to send out surveys for status checks, provide updates on office hours and relief information, and inform staff of alternate working locations.

**Leadership:** Management will need a clear understanding of all damage for potential insurance claims. Again, this is where a conference call feature looping in all key decision makers is essential.

**Partners:** A workplace fire, depending on the nature of your business, could impact vendors, suppliers, landlords, service providers, and others. Reach out to anyone associated with your organization who will need to be informed you've experienced a fire.

**Community/Public:** Depending on how public-facing your organization is, you'll need to inform the community/your customers that there has been a fire and an estimate on when you'll be back up and running.

## DAMAGE ASSESSMENT/INSURANCE CLAIM

You'll want to conduct a thorough assessment of the damage your business has suffered immediately following the fire. Because sprinkler heads might have deployed (or a fire department deluge to extinguish the fire), water damage could be substantial and costly. Beyond damage to the physical location, you'll also want to assess damage to company data, equipment, and devices.

Contacting your insurance company is one of the first steps to rebounding from a major workplace fire. Your provider will require proof of losses due to the fire, so you'll want to be prepared with documentation. This might include receipts or credit card statements, so having information ready will ease the process of filing a claim.

Organizations will also want to document property damage with digital photography, video, and detailed accounts from eye witnesses. Relevant information can prove useful if there are legal proceedings following the fire.

## BACKUP RECOVERY

If servers have been damaged, some companies will need to take steps to retrieve company data. Both fire and water damage can impact servers or hard drives, which hold critical data necessary to maintaining business continuity.

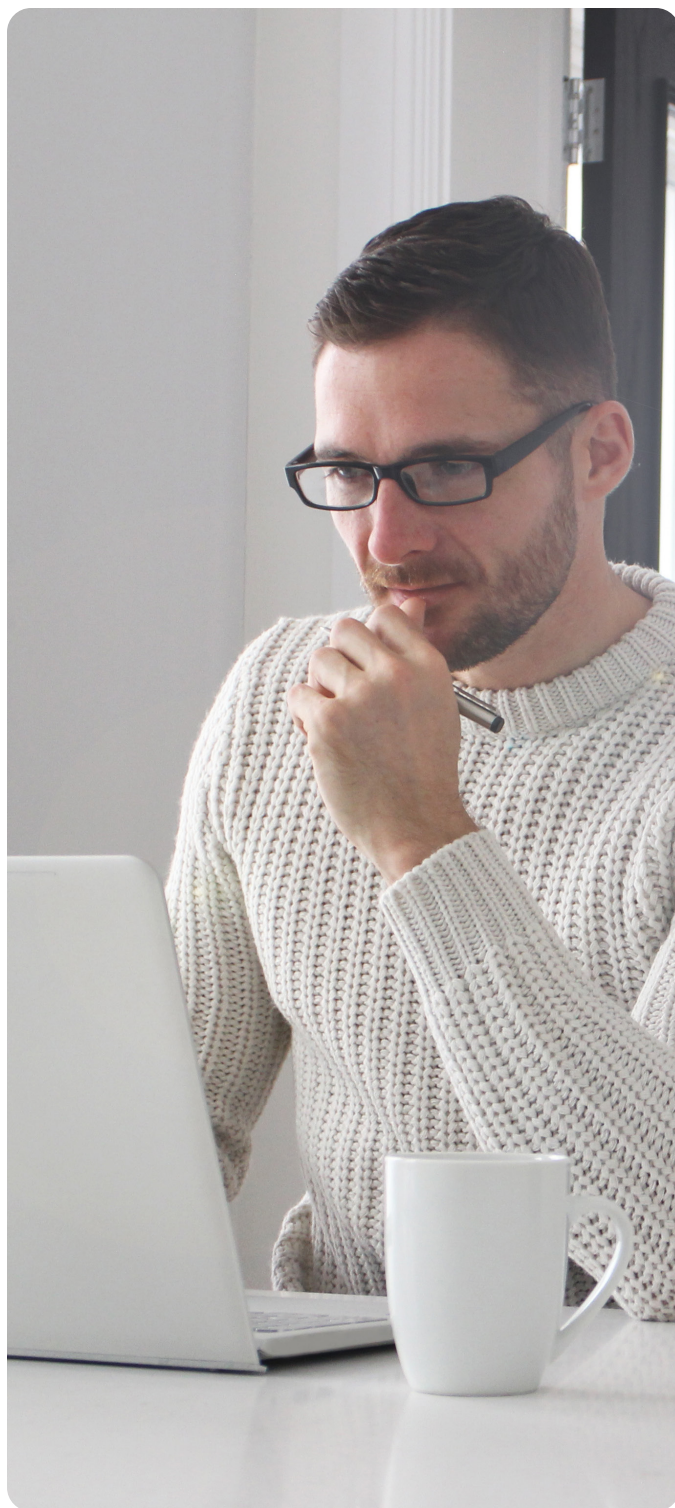
If your organization's fire damage is extensive, it might be necessary to hire a third party to help with your backup recovery process. Proactively storing data off premises or in the cloud to fully safeguard data is also a recommended best practice.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Organizations should revisit their fire safety plan and conduct a thorough audit of the fire incident. Regroup quickly while the incident is still fresh to work out relevant improvements.

Questions to ask: What caused the fire? Was it preventable? How could the evacuation have gone more smoothly? What can the company do in the future to either prevent fires or respond better if they happen?

Sometimes, a workplace fire is unavoidable. But there are usually ways to improve some aspect(s) of the response. Whether it's investing in dependable emergency communication software or overhauling your fire drill procedure, there's always room for improvement.



# Fire Safety Checklist

This list is designed to help organizations prepare both before a workplace fire and following an incident. While these items do capture main areas of concern, businesses will have unique needs to take into consideration.

| Pre-Fire   | ✓ |
|--|---|
| <b>Equipment &amp; Tools</b>   |   |
| Fire safety equipment is inspected and up-to-date (extinguishers, smoke alarms, sprinkler heads)   |   |
| Company data is backed up both on premises, off premises, and in the cloud   |   |
| You've invested in a reliable emergency communication system to message your people before, during, and after a fire or emergency situation  |   |
| <b>Facility</b>  |   |
| Fire exits are clearly marked, illuminated, and accessible   |   |
| A safe meeting place has been established for staff  |   |
| Walkways are clear (per building code requirements)  |   |
| Evacuation plan has been posted in a location visible to all employees   |   |
| <b>Personnel &amp; Training</b>  |   |
| Fire Safety Team roles and responsibilities have been assigned   |   |
| Staff is properly trained on all aspects of the evacuation plan  |   |
| Staff is properly trained on the use of all fire safety equipment, location of extinguishers, and where fire exit routes are located   |   |
| Staff is aware of workplace do's and don'ts during a fire  |   |
| <b>Planning</b>  |   |
| A thorough fire safety evacuation plan is built  |   |
| Fire drill plan is ready: schedule, evacuation route, roles, and safe meeting location   |   |
| Leadership has conducted a thorough audit of the facility for fire risks: exposed wiring, faulty kitchen appliances, loose papers, properly stored and labelled flammables/hazardous materials, and cluttered areas where fire exit routes are located |   |
| Protocol is in place for post-fire messaging, status checks, and alternate working locations   |   |



| Post-Fire  |  | ✓ |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Communication</b>   |  |   |
| Safety wellness checks have been sent out to all employees immediately following fire incident                           |  |   |
| Incident has been communicated externally: customers, partners, investors, community                                     |  |   |
| Fire debrief conducted to assess cause of fire, company-wide response to fire, and what could have been done differently |  |   |
| Instructions have been sent regarding office closure/reopening and alternate working sites                               |  |   |
| Employees have been educated on cause of fire and how to avoid fire risks in the future                                  |  |   |
| Resources for impacted employees (psychological/financial) have been communicated  |  |   |
| <b>Assessment</b>  |  |   |
| Walkthrough conducted (once safe) to assess fire/water damage to structure, equipment, devices, and additional assets    |  |   |
| Photos and video have been taken and written documentation made for potential insurance claims                           |  |   |
| <b>Learning</b>  |  |   |
| Plans to better fireproof the workspace have been made   |  |   |
| Fire drill procedure has been modified based on post-fire findings   |  |   |

If any of these items are left unchecked, you could be putting lives in danger. Revisit any areas you feel are weak or could use more attention. Better safe than sorry is never more applicable than when your employees and business are at risk.

# Real-World Success

## CAPTRUST TURNED TO ALERTMEDIA TO RUN FIRE DRILLS AND COMMUNICATE IN PREPARATION FOR ANY EMERGENCY.

CAPTRUST is a financial firm with over 40 regional offices spread across the country. Their emergency communication provider was falling short, so they began looking for a solution to address their concerns—effectively running fire drills and communicating with employees across geographic locations.

With headquarters in a high-rise building, evacuations were problematic. If there's a fire, staff would need to be instructed to either stay in place, wait for emergency responders, or evacuate down the nearest stairwell. Because employees occupy several different floors in the building, CAPTRUST struggled to locate and notify affected employees. Jon Meyer, Chief Technology Officer at CAPTRUST, had one main goal: protect employees and put their minds at ease.

Once they adopted AlertMedia, CAPTRUST was able to run efficient fire drills, dynamically group people to ensure the right people are notified with explicit instructions, and message employees to confirm they safely evacuated. They also used the system to conduct quarterly tests for read confirmations with an impressive 98% reply rate.

During an emergency, especially a fire, the situation can quickly turn chaotic. Being able to communicate on the go and receive input from employees is critical to ensuring safety and maintaining business continuity throughout an evacuation drill or an actual fire.

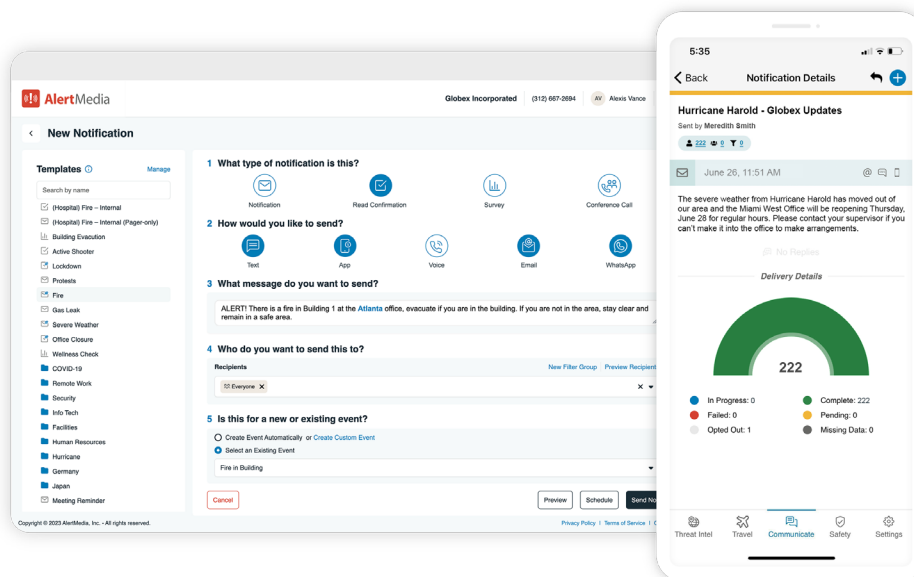
**“ If you’re looking for a quality emergency communication solution, AlertMedia checks all the boxes.”**

Jon Mayer, Chief Technology Officer, CAPTRUST



# About AlertMedia

AlertMedia provides two-way emergency communication software. We help businesses communicate throughout a fire and before, during, and after fire drills. Our solution also helps protect organizations throughout any emergency, improve operations, and mitigate loss from anywhere, at any time, using any device.



Leading organizations across all industries trust AlertMedia



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## Footnotes

1. "U.S. Structure Fires in Office Properties." National Fire Protection Association. August 2013a. <https://www.nfpa.org/News-and-Research/Data-research-and-tools/Building-and-Life-Safety/US-Structure-in-Office-Properties>
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3. "Fire Safety in the Workplace." Occupational Safety and Health Administration. 2002. [https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data\\_General\\_Facts/FireSafetyN.pdf](https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/FireSafetyN.pdf)
4. "U.S. Structure Fires in Office Properties." National Fire Protection Association. August 2013b. <https://www.nfpa.org/News-and-Research/Data-research-and-tools/Building-and-Life-Safety/US-Structure-in-Office-Properties>
5. "Rick Rescorla Saved 2,687 Lives on September 11." September 13, 2017. <https://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Rick-Rescorla-Saved-2-687-Lives-on-September-11>