

Step 6: Alternative communication systems

It's common to lose telephone service following a fire, explosion, hurricane, or other serious emergency. It is important to establish an alternative plan for communicating.

Your EAP should specify at least one alternative means of contacting help. For example, you may want to equip farm or ranch vehicles with two-way radios or a Citizens Band radio. Be sure this alternative system is maintained and working by checking it regularly.

Step 7: Prepare for regulatory investigations

Following a crisis, especially if someone has been injured or deaths are involved, you could be visited by OSHA, EPA, attorneys, and others. Someone should accompany

representatives from these outside organizations at all times during inspections on your farm or ranch. It's a good idea to require all individuals to sign in and out of your property.

Step 8: Preplan salvage operations

Establish a system of product inventory. Share this information with your insurance company. Following a disaster, cleanup efforts may involve working to identify and salvage undamaged inventory.

Establish and follow specific procedures for disposing of chemicals and other hazardous materials in compliance with the EPA, and other regulators. Plan your methods for cleanup and disposal.

Your EAP should include a method for debris disposal. Be aware of what materials the landfill nearest your farm operation may accept, and find alternatives, if needed.

Include contact information for one or more salvage contractors on your emergency phone listing.

The purpose of this booklet is to assist your farm or ranch in developing an emergency action plan. Under no circumstances do the suggestions in this manual constitute a warranty and none should be implied that regulatory standards will meet compliance. These interpretations may not present the entirety of regulatory standards or underwriting guidelines of Nationwide Agribusiness.



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Prepare for emergencies

Guide to creating an Emergency Action Plan for your farm or ranch



Consider this

Before starting

- Sit down with everyone who works on the farm or ranch and talk about best ways to handle specific situations. Make it a team effort.
- Keep the plan simple. If it's too complicated, you won't use it.
- Identify who will be in charge during an emergency. Your emergency coordinator should be on-call or on the premises at all times and able to respond quickly.
- Make duplicate copies of your written plan. Every person who works on your farm or ranch should have one, along with all family members. Keep copies in your home, office and vehicle so no matter where you are when an emergency situation occurs, you'll be prepared.

OSHA Requirements

OSHA requires employers with 11 or more employees to have a written emergency action plan (EAP). No matter how many employees you have, it's always a good practice to have a written EAP. Being prepared and having a written plan will be invaluable help when things are chaotic during a crisis.



Create a Farm Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

The most important function of an EAP is preventing the need for you to make time-consuming decisions during a crisis. Your advanced preparations can help save lives and minimize damage.

A well-developed EAP also provides critical information to emergency responders, neighbors and the community. One of the best loss prevention measures for legal liability arising from emergency situations is developing and implementing an EAP.

Minimum requirements for an EAP

1. Emergency escape procedures and emergency escape routes mapped out
2. Procedures to be followed by those who will remain on the farm or ranch to operate critical functions while everyone else evacuates
3. Procedures to account for each person after an emergency evacuation

4. Best ways for reporting fires or other emergencies
5. Names and phone numbers of all persons who would need to be contacted in an emergency

Create your own EAP

Following the steps outlined in this guide will help you develop an effective EAP. The best plans are tailored to your specific operations. This will require time, thought and pre-planning. While creating the plan may take some up-front time, it'll reduce valuable response time needed during an emergency.

Your EAP won't be effective if no one knows about it. Be sure to provide copies to everyone involved in your farming operations, and spend some time reviewing it at least twice a year. If you have 11 or more employees, OSHA requires you to train them and document the training.

Step 1: Identify potential emergency situations and major hazards

List all general categories of emergencies or worst-case scenarios that could occur on your farm or ranch.

Examples to consider:

- Tornadoes or other natural disasters
- Explosions
- Electrical fires
- Chemical spills
- Flooding or hurricanes
- Wild fires
- Loss of power
- Product contamination
- Human entrapment in grain or equipment
- Collapse of structures
- Severe falls
- Medical emergencies such as heart attacks or seizures

After determining each possible emergency situation you could face, then decide for each one what supplies, tools and responses are needed.

One efficient way to do this is to list potential emergencies on one side of a piece of paper, with response measures on the other side. As you complete this process, you'll find that the "solution" side of your paper will begin to form an outline for the response and prevention procedures needed for each emergency situation you've listed.

You'll want to devote special attention to fire emergencies. List all major fire hazards in your operations and develop a list of proper handling and storage procedures that can help prevent these fires.

Step 2: List all people and important contact data

Include key contact information for each person who is on your farm regularly — whether that is employees, contractors, vendors or delivery people. Think about the people you would need to contact about the farm in an emergency.

If you have employees, you'll want to maintain an up-to-date roster with key contact information for each person. If possible, include cell phone numbers and emergency contacts for each person.

Step 3: List emergency phone numbers

Post these phone numbers in easily accessible locations throughout your farm, home, office, cell phone and in a prominent place on your EAP:

- Fire department
- Ambulance/rescue
- Police department
- Air ambulance
- Nearest hospital or hospitals
- Electric power company
- Gas company
- Railroad agent (home and depot) if appropriate

- Insurance company (agent, home office, claim reporting numbers)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Salvage company

Leave enough space for adding other important contact information, including space for changes and updates. In an emergency, be prepared for law enforcement officials, fire fighters or other responders to ask for details about the emergency situation, including any injuries and locations of any dangerous chemicals, to help them quickly assess the seriousness of the situation.

Step 4: Develop maps of your operations

Develop a map for each property/location you have. Using grid paper to keep your maps to scale as much as possible, include these elements:

- All buildings
- Access roads
- Gate access and other openings in fences
- Railroads and rail intersections on your property
- Power lines/power line cutoff locations
- Water hydrant connections or nearby bodies of water (that could be used in a fire)
- Any unique installations/equipment

For each building you have listed, indicate the type of construction. Label each building and include equipment and inventory contained in each. This is especially critical for buildings used to store chemicals, petroleum products and other hazardous or flammable materials.

Indicate on your maps the locations of all work areas and emergency escape routes. Indicate information that may be useful to fire fighters or other emergency responders.

Update maps whenever you complete renovations or expand your operations. Be sure to distribute these maps to your local fire officials and to your Nationwide or Allied insurance agent.

Step 5: Designate evacuation routes and head count areas

The best way to designate evacuation routes is to show them on the maps you created in Step 4. Indicate escape routes with a highlighter. Then, make sure all family members (as well as employees) receive a copy and post them in conspicuous work areas throughout your farm or ranch.

Whenever you have to evacuate — whether it's for a fire, explosion, or other emergency — it is crucial to account for each person on your premises. Establish a head count area or areas, as needed. The location should be some distance from your operations, and preferably along the route that fire or rescue personnel would use to access your farm or ranch.

When disaster strikes, everyone on your farm or ranch should understand that they are to quickly move to the appointed head count (assembly) area. We strongly recommend using disaster drills to ensure everyone on your farm is prepared to make a quick evacuation. Periodically review your procedures.

It's also a good idea to establish a sign-in policy for visitors to your farm or ranch. You need to know, at any given time, who is on your property and in what location so everyone can be directed to the head count (assembly) area in the event of an emergency.