TOOLBOX TALK AWARENESS PACKAGES

HAZ-EVA · Emergency Evacuation Awareness

Product Overview

Audience: All workers · Duration: 20–30 minutes

Version 1.0 · 8 November 2026

For every worker and regular contractor: what the alarms mean, how to evacuate, where to assemble, and what the wardens need from you.

Every workplace must have an emergency plan that covers how people are warned, evacuated and accounted for. In a real emergency people do what they have practised, so knowing the alarms, routes and assembly area before they are needed is what makes evacuation work.

This talk covers the emergency plan, alarms and what they mean, wardens, evacuation routes and assembly areas, helping visitors and people who need assistance, shelter in place and lockdown, and drills. It is built around your own site's plan, and is not warden training.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants will be able to:

- Describe the workplace emergency plan and the types of emergency it covers
- Recognise the emergency alarms and what each one means
- Follow the evacuation route to the assembly area, and know the alternatives
- Follow wardens' instructions, and help account for everyone, including visitors
- Explain how people who need assistance to evacuate are supported
- Describe shelter in place and lockdown, where the plan includes them
- Explain why you never re-enter until told it is safe

What it covers

Module	Covers
The emergency plan	What the plan covers; Alarms and warnings; Wardens and their roles
Evacuating	Routes and alternatives; The assembly area and roll call; Visitors, contractors and people needing assistance
Other responses	Shelter in place; Lockdown; Drills and learning from them

Activities

- Our site: workers mark their routes, alternatives and assembly area on your site plan
- What if: workers discuss what to do when the usual route is blocked or a visitor is missing

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SAMPLE · HAZ-EVA Emergency Evacuation Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

What is in the package

Item	File
Editable PowerPoint presentation with speaker notes, plus PDF	02_TRAINING_PRESENTATION/Training Presentation.pptx and .pdf
Facilitator guide with a running sheet, discussion prompts and model answers	03_FACILITATOR_GUIDE/Facilitator Guide.docx and .pdf
Participant handout with the key points to take away	04_PARTICIPANT_HANDOUT/Participant Handout.docx and .pdf
Attendance record form, to capture who attended, when, and who facilitated	06_RECORDS/Attendance Record.docx and .pdf
Excel attendance register	06_RECORDS/Attendance Register.xlsx
Multiple-choice theory assessment, to record understanding if your business wants to	05_ASSESSMENT/Theory Assessment.docx and .pdf
Answer key for the assessment	05_ASSESSMENT/Assessment Answer Key.docx and .pdf
Certificate template	06_RECORDS/Certificate Template.docx
Start here: Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms, Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (four PDFs)

What you need to deliver it

- A facilitator such as a supervisor, leading hand or WHS adviser who has read the facilitator guide and knows your site's arrangements for the topic
- A screen or projector, or printed slides or handouts: it works in a crib room, site office or on a video call
- Your own site procedures for the topic, to point to during the session

Questions

Can we add our own site procedures and photos? Yes. The slides, handout and guide are editable, and the facilitator guide marks the places to add your own procedures, contacts and photos of your workplace.

Do we have to use the assessment? No. It is there if your business wants a record that each worker understood the key points. The attendance record on its own shows who attended and when.

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TOOLBOX TALK

Emergency Evacuation Awareness

What the alarms mean, how to evacuate, where to assemble, and what the wardens need from you

20–30 minutes · All workers

[Company name] · [Date] · [Facilitator name]

EVA

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What this talk is, and is not

This talk covers

- ✓ The emergency plan and the alarms
- ✓ Wardens, routes and the assembly area
- ✓ Visitors and people who need assistance
- ✓ Shelter in place, lockdown and drills

This talk is not

- ✕ Warden training
- ✕ Fire extinguisher training (see HAZ-FIR)
- ✕ First aid or rescue training
- ✕ Our plan: **[Your emergency plan]**

Awareness only. Wardens need training for their role; using an extinguisher needs a separate practical session.

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Why it matters

In a real emergency people do what they have practised. Under stress, nobody reads a plan.

- Fire, smoke, gas or chemical leaks, explosions, structural damage
- Severe weather, flood and bushfire
- Medical emergencies, bomb threats, armed or violent intruders
- People who do not know the way out: visitors, contractors, new starters

A composite example

- The alarm sounds in a busy warehouse. Most people go to the front car park, the way they came in. The assembly area is at the back.
- The roll call is twenty minutes late, and the fire brigade search for two people who were safe all along.

Know the way out before you need it.

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Duties under WHS or OHS laws

The business must

- Prepare, maintain and test an emergency plan for the workplace
- Cover how people are warned, evacuated and accounted for
- Keep exits, alarms and emergency equipment working
- Give workers information, training and instruction on the plan

You must

- Know the alarms, your routes and the assembly area
- Take part in drills, and follow wardens' instructions
- Keep exits, doors and fire equipment clear
- Report blocked exits and faulty equipment

Victoria's laws frame emergency planning differently. Building fire safety laws may add rules for exits, signs and drills.

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The hierarchy of control for emergencies

1. **Eliminate** Prevent the emergency: remove ignition sources and unneeded fuel
2. **Substitute** Less flammable or less hazardous materials
3. **Isolate** Fire doors, fire-rated stairs and walls; safe storage
4. **Engineering** Detectors, alarms, sprinklers, exit signs, emergency lighting
5. **Administrative** The emergency plan, wardens, drills, evacuation diagrams
6. **PPE** Escape equipment, where a site's plan calls for it

HIGHER ORDER

Higher order controls remove or control the hazard at the source, or put a barrier between people and the hazard.

LOWER ORDER

Lower order controls rely on people to do a thing or wear a thing, every time, tired, distracted or rushed.

Behaviours are not on the hierarchy, but behaviours and culture decide whether every control on it actually works.

The best emergency is the one that never starts. The plan is for when one does.

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TOOLBOX TALK · HAZ-EVA

Emergency Evacuation Awareness

Participant handout · keep this

In a real emergency, people do what they have practised. Know the alarms, two ways out and the assembly area before you need them. Keep this page.

Our arrangements

- Alert signal: **[What our alert signal sounds like]**
- Evacuation signal: **[What our evacuation signal sounds like]**
- Wardens: **[Your wardens and how to spot them]**
- Assembly area: **[Your assembly area]**

At the assembly area

- ☐ Go straight there and stay
- ☐ Help account for everyone, including visitors
- ☐ Tell the warden who is missing, and where they were
- ☐ Never re-enter until the emergency services or chief warden say so

When the alarm sounds

1. Stop work; make it safe if you can do it quickly
2. Take the nearest safe exit; know your alternative
3. Walk; stairs, not lifts; close doors behind you
4. Smoke? Stay low and use another route

Visitors and people needing assistance

- Visitors are signed in; their host takes them out
- Follow personal emergency evacuation plans
- Tell a warden if someone needs help you cannot give

Not every emergency means leaving

- Shelter in place: stay inside when outside is worse
- Lockdown: secure yourself inside, away from the threat
- Drills: take part seriously, from where you work

Report

- Blocked or locked exits; wedged fire doors
- Faulty alarms, exit signs or emergency lights
- To: **[Who to report to here]**

Know the alarm, know two ways out, and never go back in.

This is awareness training. It is not a licence, a ticket, a permit or a competency. It is not warden, fire extinguisher or first aid training.

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