



Floor Wardens

A Factsheet for Members of a Sunnyvale High Rise Emergency Team

Trained emergency team members can make a significant difference in the success of a building fire response plan. Floor wardens are on the front lines of emergency response when a fire occurs. High-rise buildings in particular benefit from the actions of these members of the emergency response team.

Floor Warden Duties

The primary role of floor wardens is to lead the evacuation of occupants from the floor during a fire alarm. Their quick actions, clear thinking and calm leadership are vital to ensuring the safety of building occupants during a fire emergency.

Begin Evacuation

Upon activation of the alarm, floor wardens should quickly tour the floor and alert all occupants that a fire alarm has sounded and evacuation is required. Particular attention should be paid to isolated offices and individuals who may be deaf or hard of hearing. An assertive manner and authoritative voice will help motivate those who are hesitant about evacuating. Instruct occupants to use the exit stairwells, not the elevators, to evacuate the floor.

Close Doors

While checking the floor and alerting occupants, the floor warden should also close the doors to all rooms. Closing doors helps prevent fire spread, as well as limiting the spread of smoke and toxic gases.

Meeting Place Reminder

As tenants exit the floor, floor wardens should remind them to stay to the right of the stairwell and where their designated meeting place is. It is also a good idea to remind people not to enter a floor where the alarm is sounding and to remain at the meeting place until notified.

Inform Fire Safety Director or Fire Department of Problems

Persons remaining on the floor or in the stairwell should be reported to the building's Fire Safety Director as soon as possible. The Fire Safety Director will then ensure that firefighters are sent to assist those in need if evacuation is required.

Assign Assistants To Those Persons Who Use Wheelchairs

Two persons (and alternates) should be assigned to each individual whose limited mobility would prevent their evacuating by way of the exit stairwells. This should be done before a fire emergency so that all three persons will have time to become familiar with their course of action.

For Persons Unable To Use Exit Stairs

Persons who are unable to negotiate exit stairs should review the following items:

- Wait near the exit stairwell until everyone has evacuated the floor and traffic in the stairwell has cleared.
- Enter the stairwell with two assistants and wait on the landing. Make sure that the door is securely closed.
- Wait for further instructions. The Department of Public Safety will send firefighters to assist if evacuation is necessary.
- If traffic again builds from the evacuation of upper floors while waiting on the stairwell landing, it may be best to reenter the floor to allow others to pass.
- Assistants should not attempt to carry anyone down the stairs unless conditions in the stairwell deteriorate and become threatening.
- If there are no assistants or if there are too many individuals to wait on the landing, an area of refuge should be sought on the floor.
- An area of refuge has a door to block the spread of smoke and heat, a phone to call 911 for evacuation assistance and a window to aid in signaling for help.

Related Information

Client Assistance Memos:

#1200 High Rise Fire Emergency Planning

#1202 High Rise Building Emergency Evacuation Drills

#1204 High Rise Tenant Safety

#1205 Alternate Fire Evacuation

Fire Safety Teaching Guide:

#1203 High Rise Floor Wardens

For More Information

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