

FIRE EVACUATION TRAINING PROGRAM FOR INDIVIDUALS

Individuals should receive periodic training in safe evacuation procedures. This training should be separate and apart from planned fire drills.

The following plan can be used as a guide to train individuals in safe evacuation procedures.

1. Gather all individuals into a common area or room.
2. Explain that the purpose of the training session is to learn more about safe ways to leave the building in case of a fire.
3. Discuss that fires grow very quickly, and if there were a fire, everyone would need to leave the building as soon as the alarm was sounded. Develop a sign such as a large X traced on the back which can be used to alert a sleeping person or a hearing impaired person that there is danger and they must evacuate the building immediately. Have the individuals practice making an X on each others' back. Explain that this is the signal that will be used to tell someone they must leave the building in case there is a lot of noise or some other problem which makes hearing difficult. Explain that doors need to be kept clear of obstructions and maintain a minimum of 28" in exit passageway.
4. Tell the individuals the bedroom doors are to be kept closed at all times (except for rooms where there is a fire exit door). Explain that this will prevent smoke and heat from entering the room if a fire starts somewhere else in the facility.
5. Close a door and have each individual come to the door and put their hand on the door to feel for heat. Explain that this is the technique used to determine if there is a fire on the other side of the door.
6. Take each individual one by one to his/her bedroom. Ask each individual to demonstrate how he/she would get out of the house if he/she were in the bedroom and there was a fire.
7. Make sure that all individuals know where all doors leading to the outside are located and know that the windows may be used if all other routes are blocked. Ask each individual to raise the window in his/her bedroom to determine if he/she has the ability to do so. Teach each individual how to raise and lower windows if they do not know how. Discuss that in a real emergency, the window can be broken with a piece of furniture if it cannot be opened. Show the individual how to wrap themselves in a bedspread to avoid serious cuts when crawling through a broken window.

8. Discuss that it is important to begin yelling if he/she becomes trapped in a room. This will tell others that help is needed.
9. Explain that in a real fire the house may be filled with smoke making it hard to see and breathe. Point out that if this happens, the safest way to leave the building is to crawl on hands and knees to the nearest exit. Have the individuals practice crawling from bedrooms or an interior room to the nearest exit. Instruct individuals to close all doors when leaving a room during a fire or even during a fire drill.
10. Discuss that the facility has some special features not found in most homes (ie., fire alarm system). Explain that beside each outside door, there is a special little box with a lever that causes the alarm to sound when it is pulled. Show how the pull is activated. Explain that the pull should be used if someone discovers a fire. The one who finds the fire should go immediately to the nearest pull, sound the alarm and leave immediately. Demonstrate how this can be done (do not sound the alarm since this will disrupt their thoughts). Emphasize that the pulls are for emergencies only; they should never be pulled as a joke.
11. Instruct the individuals that remaining safe once they are outside the building is just as important as leaving the building safely. Point out that everyone should meet at the same location once outside the building. Determine where that place will be, if not already designated. Have everyone practice going to the designated safe location. While at the location, emphasize that everyone is to remain there until the direct care staff, QMRP or fireman indicates that it is OK to return to the facility. Make sure that the individuals understand that once outside, they are not to return for any reason. Role-play forgetting an important item such as money or medications, etc. Make sure that the individuals understand that these are to be left behind. Emphasize that these items can be replaced, but the individuals are only one of a kind and cannot be replaced.
12. Tell the individuals that if there is a real fire and even during drills, they are to use the following procedure (have the individuals repeat this information to you):

When you hear the alarm sound:

 - a. Check doors for heat or smoke
 - b. Prepare to leave the building
 - c. Check to see if the room is empty (don't leave someone else behind)
 - d. Close all doors behind you
 - e. Leave everything in the room
 - f. Walk, don't run, quickly without shoving