
Staff members shall be trained on the facility's emergency plans, policies, and procedures upon hire and at a minimum semi-annually. The purpose of presenting training programs on a regular/consistent basis is to help create a "culture" of emergency preparedness within the facility to help ensure the safety of facility occupants.

18. Exercises, Drills, and Simulations

In addition to the establishment of a regular training program, _____ (facility name) shall conduct training exercises, drills, and simulations **at least semi-annually**. (CMS Proposed Guidelines.) It is essential to provide periodic testing of emergency plans and procedures to ensure that the staff is properly prepared to respond to a crisis or disaster situation. Exercises, drills, and simulations are used as a means of practicing emergency/disaster procedures and of identifying potential issues that can be corrected prior to a crisis or disaster situation.

_____ (facility name) shall consider the following points regarding exercises, drills, and simulations:

- Exercises, drills, and simulations shall be conducted on all levels of management within the organization and not just be confined to routine fire or evacuation drills. It is essential for all levels of the organization to be periodically "tested" to help ensure that proper planning, response, and recovery programs are in place and are appropriate for the facility.
- An annual schedule should be developed to help _____ (facility name) comply with a regular regiment of exercises, drills, and simulations to help ensure compliance with regulations as well as meet recommended practices.
- Activation and use of the _____ (facility name) Incident Command Post should be considered for all exercises, drills, and simulations to help ensure a thorough understanding of the system. The Incident Command Post should not only be activated during real crisis or emergency situation and should be utilized as often as possible.
- Outside resources including local emergency responders, County emergency managers, insurance program representatives, and other appropriate persons or agencies should be invited to periodically participate in, observe, and evaluate internal exercises, drills, and simulations.
- Every exercise, drill, and simulation shall be properly documented to include those individuals who participated, issues identified, and corrective actions taken to correct deficient areas. The reports shall be maintained on file within the facility for a period of five years.