

Evacuation and the Headcount

About 8 minutes to deliver

Getting out is the easy half. The half that gets firefighters hurt is nobody knowing whether everyone is out.

1910.38 requires an emergency action plan, and buried in the middle of it is the requirement people skip: (c)(4), procedures to account for all employees after evacuation.

That is the part that matters most. If nobody can say whether everyone is out, firefighters go back into a burning building to look for somebody who is standing in the car park.

BEFORE ANYTHING HAPPENS

- Know two ways out from wherever you are working today. The one you came in by may be the one on fire.
- Know where the muster point is — the actual spot, not "out front."
- Know the alarm. 1910.165 requires a distinctive signal for each purpose. A fire alarm and a tornado warning mean opposite things: one says get out, the other says get in and get low.

WHEN IT GOES OFF

- Go. Immediately. Not after saving the file, finishing the weld, or waiting to see if it is a drill. The people who die in fires are usually the ones who spent the first two minutes deciding.
- Shut down what would be dangerous left running — only if it is in your written duties and only if it takes seconds. Cylinders closed, torches out, machines stopped.
- Close doors behind you. A closed door buys a corridor several minutes.
- Walk. Do not use lifts.
- Help anyone who needs it. Know before the day comes who on your crew cannot use stairs unaided.

AT THE MUSTER POINT

- Report to whoever is counting, and then stay put. Wandering off to find your truck is what turns a clean evacuation into a search.
- Say who is missing and where you last saw them. Not "I think everyone's out."
- Nobody goes back in. Not for tools, not for a phone, not for a dog. That decision belongs to the fire service.
- Wait to be told it is over. An alarm that stops is not an all-clear.

VISITORS AND SUBCONTRACTORS

They do not know any of this. Whoever signed them in owns getting them out and getting them counted.

ASK THE CREW

- Where is our muster point, and who does the count?
- What are your two ways out of where you are working today?
- Who on site right now is a visitor or a sub, and who is responsible for them?

29 CFR 1910.38 · 29 CFR 1910.165 · 29 CFR 1926.35

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ATTENDANCE RECORD

Evacuation and the Headcount

About 8 minutes to deliver · 29 CFR 1910.38 · 29 CFR 1910.165 · 29 CFR 1926.35

Date

Job / site

Delivered by

Company

#	Print name	Signature	Date
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I delivered this talk and determined it was suitable for this crew and this work.

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