



The primary purpose of a building *fire & evacuation drill* is to ensure building occupants know how to respond to building fire incidents, and other building emergencies, with an emphasis on familiarity with building's evacuation routes and procedures. Periodic fire drills, & associated training, including participation from building emergency response team facilitators, fire wardens, and building occupants-tenants, is a vital life safety training requirement, and a legal one.

Fire Department | AHJ

The training of building occupants, in emergency preparedness and evacuation, is an essential responsibility within the building's life safety program. The local [Authority Having Jurisdiction \(AHJ\)](#), typically the city or county fire department, will promulgate the specific frequency, and other requirements, for conducting and documenting fire and evacuation drills, at commercial buildings within their jurisdiction. For example, the fire and evacuation drill requirement for an office building owner could be two times per year, whereas the requirement, at a day care center facility, might be monthly. The fire department could enforce evacuation of all occupants, at a specific size and type of building, while requiring partial-selective evacuation for a larger, hi-rise property.

The property owner's performance, of periodic fire and evacuation drills, represents a compulsory legal obligation, with specific requirements varying by location and building use".

Life Safety Director | Central Role

The building's **Life Safety Director** - Property Manager | Facilities Manager | Operations Manager | Security Director - should confirm and understand their building's specific "fire department-approved" fire evacuation procedures & fire drill requirements, by contacting their fire department representative and by checking the fire safety section of the AHJ's government web-site, e.g., [www."countyname".org](http://www.) or www.cityname.org.



Fire & Evacuation Drill Program - Organization

A building fire and evacuation drill involves all building occupants and owner-management representatives. The building's life safety emergency preparedness organization facilitates the fire and evacuation drill event, led by the **Life Safety | Fire Safety Director**. The building (or portfolio) Life Safety Director position should be designated in writing and performed by an experienced property owner-manager representative. The building's (senior) Property Manager - Facilities Manager - Operations Manager - Security Director are best-suited for this central role. In some jurisdictions, e.g., New York City, the designation of this position "Fire Safety Director" (FSD) is a legal requirement and must be appointed to an individual experienced building owner | manager representative, as a principal title and duty.

Fire & Evacuation Drill Process

The fire drill itself is just one component of the property's fire and evacuation drill program. The organized preparation, and subsequent execution, of a fire and evacuation drill can best be accomplished by approaching the program in distinct phases. Thorough, thoughtful, and sequential completion, of each of the five essential phases, will not only ensure success in each progressive phase, but will also deliver positive results in emergency preparedness team and building occupants' training, and an overall successful fire and evacuation drill program. Completion of each phase, including *Evaluation and Documentation*, will help ensure statutory requirements are fulfilled, and will add considerable value, to the continuous improvement process, for future life safety drills conducted at the property.



FIRE & EVACUATION DRILL - FIVE ESSENTIAL PHASES

The fire and evacuation drill must simulate an actual fire alarm condition, including [sounding of the building's evacuation signal](#). The fire department-approved, building occupant evacuation plan must be followed during the fire drill exercise. A building's specific evacuation procedures typically follow one of two evacuation protocol: 1. [Selective](#) Occupancy Evacuation (staged occupancy evacuation) or 2. [Entire](#) Occupancy Evacuation. Selective evacuation is more common in larger, high-rise properties and is considered the most effective method in protecting the life safety of high-rise building occupants. The selective evacuation method will normally be accompanied by the refuge floor concept in higher floors of larger high-rise buildings. This concept incorporates the evacuation of occupants, from the location of impact (fire floor), and from several floors adjacent to the fire floor, to several floors below the floor of impact.

Fire & Evacuation Drill -Time Line Script

In order to facilitate an organized fire and evacuation drill, the fire and evacuation drill facilitator can “script” individual fire drill steps, and timing of these steps, in a *Fire and Evacuation Drill Timeline Script*.

Fire & Evacuation Drill - Event Details & Timeline (*representative partial sample*)

Event	Time	Comments
Building Emergency Response Team final pre-fire drill meeting to review fire drill event specifics. Distribute evaluation and grading forms and other emergency response team supplies.	10.00 AM	Utilization of most effective communication and emergency response team equipment & supplies: hand-held two-way radios (large properties), cell phones, bull horns, and emergency response team gear (vests, hats).
Emergency Response Team on site , at the Fire Command Center & assigned evaluation stations . Test communications with one another - hand held radios, direct connect phone, text, phone call.	10.20 AM	Life Safety Director, fire system contractor testing personnel and Chief Engineer at the Fire Command Center. Deputy Life Safety Director in Main Lobby. Lead Engineer & Assistant Property Manager at each emergency stairwell egress to outside. Building engineer at each evacuation Assembly Area. Fire Dept. personnel (if on site) station in locations as appropriate in order to observe and participate in the fire and evacuation drill process.
Call the fire alarm monitoring company fire dept. alarm division & place the fire system in test mode .	10.30 AM	Chief Engineer & fire system contractor personnel
PA Announcement - Fire Alarm & Evacuation Drill to be conducted - stand by.	10.40 AM	For buildings having a PA system. Confirms audibility of PA system throughout the building. Training benefit for emergency team member using the PA system and building occupants listening to instructions delivered by PA system.
Activate the fire alarm pull station located: [4 th floor adjacent to the North Stairwell]	10.45 AM	During the fire drill preparation phase, determine the device (s) to be tested and, for larger high rise buildings, the flow and sequence of (multiple) fire alarm tests.
Confirm & record proper functioning of fire alarm system and evacuation signals .	10.45 AM +	Chief Engineer & fire system contractor
Tenant Fire (Floor) Wardens carry out responsibilities in accordance with the building’s emergency procedures plan.	10.45 AM +	Fire Wardens, Deputy Fire Wardens, Stairwell Monitors, team members assisting persons with disabilities - carry out respective responsibilities. Fire Warden to record results & observations in the Evacuation Drill Evaluation Form .
Emergency Response Team personnel to ensure occupant evacuation out of the building and away from the immediate building perimeter area. For high-rise buildings having select evacuation & refuge floor protocol in place, ensure evacuation out of the emergency stairwell and into the designated refuge floor .	10.50 AM +	Record observations and results in the Fire & Evacuation Drill Evaluation Form . For full building evacuation: monitoring & evaluation performed by emergency response personnel stationed in the main lobby & emergency stairwell ground floor egress to outside. For refuge floor evacuation: monitoring & evaluation performed by strategically stationed fire wardens & stairwell monitors.

Lead your building’s Fire & Evacuation Drill
with passion and professionalism !