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*This video touches on the importance of having evacuation routes prominently displayed. These can lead to interior shelters or exterior assembly areas. Safety Wardens play a role in this process and help with indicating that an area is clear of people. Ask about EXIT signs and also protection from the elements at the external sites. Last, make sure that the evacuation routes don't block first responders trying to reach the area.*

**Transcript**

*In an emergency, having a clear evacuation route that is free from obstacles can save lives.*

*In an emergency, your staff, as well as visitors unfamiliar with your facility, may need to exit the building or find shelter quickly. Here are a few things to think about when choosing and marking evacuation routes.*

*Have route maps posted around your facility. While not a lot of people may stop to refer to them in an emergency, some might. Also, having route maps prominently displayed during normal work conditions may catch the attention of your staff. Even if they occasionally glance at the route map, the likelihood that they will remember where to look for it in an emergency is increased. This constant exposure may help them remember important elements of the route such as where the shelter or assembly area is located. All of this helps reinforce their awareness of the pathways to safety.*

*Consider posting additional signage along the route to reinforce the direction that evacuees should take. Remember that in certain emergencies such as fires, signage located above waist height may not be visible due to smoke. Post route information at regular intervals along the evacuation path and in places that are easy to see even in smoky conditions.*

*If you have an active Safety Warden Program, station wardens at junctions where they can assist people who might become confused. If there are elevators in your building, consider posting warning signs telling people not to use them during the emergency. If you have a sufficient number of Safety Wardens, station them near the elevators to warn people not to take them. Permanent warning signage dealing with this topic is also helpful.*

 *Exit signs should be prominent and easy to find.*

*Managing outbound traffic flow is an often overlooked aspect of evacuation plans.*

*dMake sure that your evacuation plans and routing procedures keep staff away from roads that will be used by any first responders heading to your site. The last thing you want is to have a crowd moving up a road that fire trucks need to use to reach your facility.*

*If possible choose an area where your evacuees will gather (also known as an assembly area) that offers some shelter and has emergency lighting. Otherwise, during inclement weather, people will be unlikely to stay at the assembly area, making it difficult to account for everyone.*

*Have Safety Wardens report to the assembly site manager. If they report that everyone has left the area you can be reasonably sure that the area is clear. The assembly site manager should have a notepad or form that helps them keep track of these reports.*

*The best way to ensure that an evacuation or shelter-in-place order will be effective is through practice. For this reason, rotate the type of disruptive events you practice each year. For example, one year try an exercise that deals with violence in the workplace and the next year a severe storm or power outage.*

 *For more information on establishing evacuation routes, consult the* ***Ready Rating Resource Center****.*