*In an emergency, proper lighting can point the way to safety. Some jurisdictions have mandated that exit signs be located at waist height and illuminated. Lowering signs reduces the likelihood that they will be obscured by smoke during a fire.*

*Proper illumination in workspaces has been shown to help reduce eye fatigue. Having appropriate illumination when working with various tools also contributes to safety. In these various settings, light is generally expressed in terms of lux units which measure the amount of light over an area.*

**Action to Take Before an Emergency:**

There are industry standards and building codes that govern the proper application of emergency lighting. There are also local regulations and ordinances which take precedence over national or regional codes. Check with a local building inspector for more information on the regulations that apply in your area.

Review the following checklist to identify areas where your organization may need to improve its lighting.

* Are your exit signs illuminated by a light source that will continue to operate in the event of a power outage? Battery-powered lights are acceptable but check local codes to determine how long they must be able to stay lit.
* Are your exit routes marked with signs and arrows showing the way to the nearest exit?
* Are the indicators used in the exit routes distinctive enough to be visible throughout the immediate area? Some jurisdictions specify the amount of light required for different settings such as hallways, business offices, and stairwells.
* Are stairways properly illuminated?
* Is your facility equipped to automatically engage emergency lighting in the event of a power failure?
* Are exit signs distinctive in colour, and easily distinguished from decorations, interior décor, and other signs?
* Are there signs clearly indicating which doors, passageways, and stairways are neither exits nor a way to an exit?
* Is your organization maintaining a written record of inspections conducted by the facility owner, trained personnel, or the relevant authority?

**Other Emergency Lighting Suggestions**

It is advisable to have emergency lighting in the following locations:

* + Near fire and other types of alarm systems.
  + Near fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and automated external defibrillators (AEDs).
  + In locations where hazards exist such as explosives, caustic chemicals, and uneven floors.
  + Areas undergoing construction.
  + Control rooms.
  + Elevators/lifts.