

Fire Drill And Evacuation Procedure

1.0 Objective & Intent

This SOP establishes the mandatory procedures for conducting fire drills and executing a safe, orderly evacuation of all personnel from the cabinet and millwork manufacturing facility. The primary objective is to ensure that every employee can respond instinctively and safely to a fire alarm, minimizing the risk of injury or death during a real emergency. This procedure is designed to comply with WorkSafeBC regulations (OHS Regulation Part 3 – Rights and Responsibilities, and Part 4 – General Conditions) and the National Fire Code of Canada, which require regular emergency drills and clear evacuation plans.

The specific risk mitigated by this SOP is the potential for panic, confusion, and blocked egress during a fire event, which can lead to smoke inhalation, burns, crush injuries from stampedes, and failure to account for all personnel. By standardizing the drill process and evacuation routes, we reduce response time and ensure accountability.

2.0 Operational Scope

This procedure applies to all personnel, including full-time employees, temporary workers, contractors, and visitors present in the cabinet and millwork manufacturing facility. It covers all areas of the plant, including the main production floor, finishing and spray booth areas, lumber storage yard, maintenance shops, office spaces, break rooms, and shipping/receiving docks.

All fire drills must be conducted at least once every calendar month, as per WorkSafeBC requirements, and must involve the activation of the building fire alarm system. Drills shall be held at varying times and days to ensure all shifts are trained. This SOP does not cover fire suppression or firefighting activities, which are reserved for trained emergency response team members and local fire departments.

3.0 Hazard Identification & Mandatory PPE

- **Smoke Inhalation:** Toxic fumes from burning materials (wood dust, finishes, adhesives) can cause disorientation, unconsciousness, and death. Stay low to the ground during evacuation.
- **Panic and Crush Injuries:** Crowded exits and narrow corridors can lead to trampling. Do not run; walk quickly and calmly.
- **Falling Debris:** Overhead storage racks, light fixtures, or ceiling tiles may become unstable. Keep hands over head for protection if necessary.
- **Slip/Trip Hazards:** Debris, cords, or spilled liquids on evacuation routes. Always keep pathways clear.
- **Electrical Shock:** Exposed wires or damaged equipment near fire sources. Avoid touching any electrical panels or cords during evacuation.
- **CSA-Approved Steel Toed Boots** (mandatory for all production floor personnel during drill)
- **High-Visibility Safety Vest** (mandatory for all personnel during drill to ensure visibility in smoky conditions)
- **Safety Glasses** (mandatory for all personnel in production areas)
- **Hearing Protection** (mandatory if drill occurs during active production with noise levels above 85 dBA)
- **Dust Mask or Respirator** (recommended for individuals with respiratory sensitivities; N95 minimum)

4.0 Required Safety Equipment & Tools

- Building Fire Alarm System (audible and visual strobes) – must be tested and operational prior to drill
- Emergency Evacuation Maps posted at all exits and common areas (must show primary and secondary routes)
- Designated Assembly Point Signage (weather-resistant, visible from all evacuation routes)
- Two-Way Radios or Public Address System for drill coordinators and floor wardens
- Clipboard, Pen, and Personnel Roster (printed or digital on SafeDesk) for head count at assembly point
- Flashlight with extra batteries (for use if power fails during drill)
- First Aid Kit (fully stocked, located at assembly point)
- Stopwatch or Timer (to record total evacuation time for compliance records)

5.0 Step-by-Step Safety Procedure

1. **Pre-Drill Notification:** At least 24 hours before the drill, notify the safety committee and all shift supervisors of the planned drill time. Post a notice on the main safety board and send a company-wide email. Do not disclose the exact time to all employees to maintain realism, but ensure floor wardens and first aid attendants are aware.
2. **Pre-Drill Equipment Check:** Verify that the fire alarm system is functional by performing a silent test with the building maintenance team. Ensure all exit doors open freely and are not blocked. Confirm that the assembly point is clear of snow, debris, or vehicles. Check that two-way radios are charged and on the correct channel.
3. **Alarm Activation:** At the designated time, the drill coordinator (safety officer or designated floor warden) activates the fire alarm by pulling a manual pull station located near a primary exit. The alarm must sound continuously for the duration of the drill. Do not use a verbal announcement unless the alarm system is inoperable.
4. **Immediate Evacuation Response:** Upon hearing the alarm, all personnel must immediately stop all machinery and equipment. Production workers must perform an emergency shutdown of their machines (e.g., press emergency stop button) without performing a full lockout. Do not take time to gather personal belongings. Close doors behind you to contain smoke, but do not lock them.
5. **Evacuation Route Execution:** Proceed calmly but quickly to the nearest marked exit. Stay to the right side of corridors to allow emergency responders to pass. If the primary route is blocked by smoke or fire, use the secondary route indicated on evacuation maps. If you encounter smoke, stay low to the ground and cover your mouth and nose with a shirt or cloth. Do not use elevators.
6. **Assembly Point Accountability:** All personnel must proceed directly to the designated outdoor assembly point. Floor wardens must immediately conduct a head count using the personnel roster. Report any missing persons to the drill coordinator via two-way radio. Do not re-enter the building for any reason until the all-clear is given.
7. **Drill Termination and All-Clear:** Once the head count is complete and all personnel are accounted for, the drill coordinator announces the all-clear via two-way radio or public address system. The fire alarm is reset by authorized maintenance personnel only. Personnel may re-enter the building in an orderly manner, one department at a time, to avoid congestion.
8. **Post-Drill Debrief and Documentation:** Gather all floor wardens and supervisors for a brief debrief meeting. Record the total evacuation time, any observed issues (e.g., blocked exits, slow response, confusion on routes), and near misses. Document the drill in the SafeDesk safety log, including date, time, duration, number of participants, and any corrective actions required. File the report with the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

Regulatory Disclaimer: This document is a generic safety template provided for educational and informational purposes only. It does not constitute professional engineering, legal, or regulatory compliance advice. The end-user assumes all liability for validating all safety protocols against specific machinery manufacturer manuals and local occupational health and safety regulations (e.g., WorkSafeBC, CSA standards) before deployment.