

# St. John's Regional Fire Department Procedures for Fire Safety Planning



Today's buildings are constructed and equipped to meet certain standards of fire safety. Alternative safe means of egress should be available from all floor areas. Portable fire extinguishers are provided to fight fire during their incipient stages.

Most buildings contain large quantities of combustible materials, such as paper, books and office furnishing. Regardless of non-combustible construction, smoke and other toxic gases may spread rapidly through a building. Most fire fatalities are caused by asphyxiation - not bodily burns. It is therefore imperative that everyone knows what to do in case of a fire.

Such dangerous practices as wedged open fire doors, emergency exits locked unnecessarily and hazardous accumulation of waste materials prevail in many buildings due to either procrastination or carelessness. Only by continual co-operative effort by all employees can fire safe working conditions be maintained.

This manual of procedures has been prepared to point out what plans can be made to enhance your safety. It outlines the requirements for Fire Emergency Organization in all buildings, explaining the need and organization required.

This manual was developed by the St. John's Regional Fire Department.

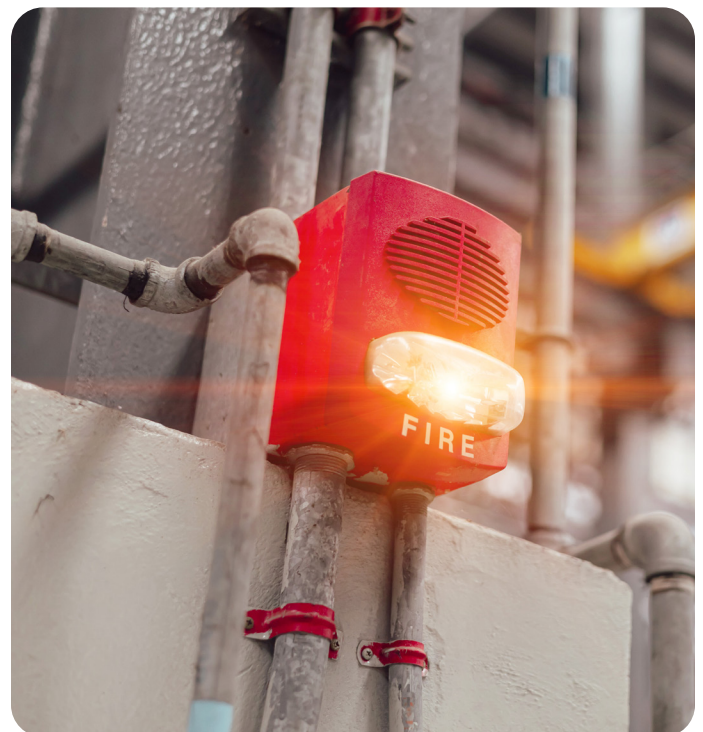


# National Fire Code of Canada, Section 2.8.2: **Fire Safety Plan**

## 2.8.2.1 Measures in a Fire Safety Plan

1. A fire safety plan conforming to this Section shall be prepared in cooperation with the Fire Department and other applicable regulatory authorities and shall include:
  - Emergency procedures to be used to be used in case of fire, including:
    - o sounding the fire alarm
    - o notifying the fire department
    - o instructing occupants on procedures to be followed when the fire alarm sounds
    - o evacuating occupants, including special provisions for people requiring assistance
    - o confining, controlling and extinguishing the fire
  - The appointment and organization of designated supervisory staff to carry out fire safety duties,
  - The training of supervisory staff and other occupants in their responsibilities for fire safety,
  - Documents, including diagrams, showing the type, location and operation of the building fire emergency systems,
  - The holding of fire drills,
  - The control of fire hazards in the building,
  - The inspection and maintenance of building facilities provided for the safety of occupants
2. The fire safety plan shall be reviewed at intervals not greater than 12 months to ensure that it takes account of changes in the use and other characteristics of the building.
  - Method of training supervisory staff
  - Method of frequency of conducting fire drills
  - Maintenance procedures for fire protection systems
  - Alternate measures for occupant fire safety
  - Diagram showing type, location and operations of fire protection systems.

The fire safety plan should be prepared and consolidated before submission to the St. John's Regional Fire Department and should deal only with matters which pertain to a particular building.





## Audit of Building and Human Resources

An audit of existing fire safety systems, equipment and human resources should be conducted prior to preparing a Fire Safety Plan.

The audit of building systems should indicate the availability of existing features such as;

- Fire alarm systems
- Exit locations
- Access to fire department equipment
- Portable fire extinguishers
- Standpipe and hose systems
- Automatic sprinkler systems
- Fire pumps
- Emergency power
- Emergency lighting
- Smoke control measures
- Emergency voice communications systems

The audit of human resources might include the following:

- Building owner
- Building manager
- Security personnel
- Caretaker staff
- Occupants

Having determined the existence of fire safety systems and evaluated human resources, supervisory staff should be designated and individuals assigned specific duties.

## Forming a Fire Emergency Organization

### Appoint a building Fire Marshall

To be appointed by the administrative head of the major occupying department or their designated official.

### Appoint Deputy Fire Marshall(s)

In buildings occupied by a single department, the Deputy Fire Marshall is to be appointed by the administrative head or designate departmental official concerned, upon agreement and/or recommendation of the Building Fire Marshall.

In multiple department occupied buildings, the Deputy Fire Marshall is to be appointed by a designated senior administrative official of a different department to that responsible for the formation of the Fire Emergency Organization but by arrangement with the Official of the latter department, and upon agreement and/or recommendation of the Building Fire Marshall.

In certain buildings, operations are carried out on shifts beyond core hours. In such instances it will be necessary to appoint several Deputy Fire Marshal(s) to ensure that one is always in responsible charge when the Building Fire Marshall is not available so that the emergency is covered during all operating shifts.

### Draft a Manual of Emergency Procedures

The Building Fire Marshall and their Deputy should make a complete survey of the building and draft a Manual of Emergency Procedures in consultation with any other officials with related responsibilities.

The manual should include the Fire Safety Plan, the duties and responsibilities of all other Officers of the Fire Emergency Organization, an organizational chart, and all emergency procedures.

### Appoint Floor Wardens and other members of the Fire Emergency Organization

To be appointed by the administrative head or designated official of the department upon recommendation and/or agreement with the Building Fire Marshall.



## Responsibilities and Duties

### Building Fire Marshal

1. To be appointed by the administrative head of the major occupying department or their designated official.
2. To be responsible for providing leadership, assuring the establishment and continuity of the Fire Safety Plan by providing information and guidance; advising on establishing the Fire Emergency Organization, and by recruiting qualified personnel.
3. To be responsible for liaison activities with the Fire Department and/or any other designated authority in the event of an emergency.
4. To be responsible for the appointment of other personnel as may be required. All members of the Building Fire Emergency Organization should be appointed from Managerial or Supervisory Categories whenever possible.
5. To establish liaison with Building Fire Marshal(s) of neighboring buildings in order that mutual assistance can be preplanned.
6. To prepare a fire safety plan as part of a Manual of Emergency Procedures.
7. To hold fire drills as required by this manual.
8. To report any changes in the status of the building to the Deputy Fire Marshall.

### Deputy Fire Marshall

1. To be appointed by the administrative head of an occupying department or their designated official upon agreement and recommendation of the building Fire Marshall.
2. To act as building Fire Marshall in their absence and to assist them in his duties and responsibilities.
3. Notifying the building Fire Marshall of the name of a replacement in case of absence.

### Floor Wardens

1. To be appointed by the administrative head of an occupying department or their designated official upon agreement and/or recommendation or the building Fire Marshall.
2. To have a responsibility for the safety of all personnel including visitors on their floor in the event of fire or other emergencies transpiring during core hours, and for advising the building Fire Marshall of all such emergencies. This involves on-the-spot decisions for fire safety, the relocation of building occupants and the exercising of flexibility of directions.
3. To be responsible for establishing search teams on their floor and the supervision of search procedures at the time of bomb threats.
4. To appoint Deputy Floor Wardens as may be required.
5. To be responsible for the appointment of Floor Monitors who may be required to assist handicapped personnel.
6. To be familiar with and to act in accordance with all the provisions of the emergency procedures.





## General Duties (Floor Wardens)

1. To conduct a visual check of their floor area daily and report any faulty condition immediately to the building Fire Marshall for their action. If the officer is absent, leave a message. Faulty conditions would include:
  - Fire doors wedged or blocked open
  - Exit lights out
  - First-aid firefighting equipment inoperative or obstructed
  - Obvious fire hazards such as; accumulation of combustibles, oily rags, defective or temporary electric wiring, unauthorized smoking
2. The building Fire Marshall is to be kept posted by the Floor Wardens as to the names and locations of physically disabled personnel on each floor. Two monitors are to be assigned to each physically disabled persons and a prearranged plan for their evacuation should be established.
3. Arrangements shall ALWAYS be made whereby assigned duties can be undertaken in the absence of the Floor Wardens or their Deputy. This may entail the appointment of additional Deputy Floor Wardens.



## General Duties - In Case of Alarms (Floor Wardens)

1. Any person seeing fire or smoke or smelling gas is to warn people nearby, operate the nearest manual fire alarm station, and confirm the alarm by telephoning the fire department. All other unusual circumstances are to be reported to the building Fire Marshall or their Deputy for action.
2. If fire, smoke or gas is reported, Floor Wardens are first to supervise the immediate evacuation of personnel close to the fire, then the evacuation of the whole floor. Detail personnel who would be competent for first-aid firefighting. A message is to be transmitted to the Building Fire Marshall to give information on the location and size of the fire.
3. If a fire alarm sounds, fire and smoke doors are to be closed when possible and Floor Wardens are to be responsible for directing traffic. The nearest stairway and exit door are to be used for evacuation purposes. Elevators are not to be operated unless specifically authorized by the Fire Chief.
4. Floor Wardens are to check that two (2) Monitors are assisting each disabled person in evacuating.
5. As soon as the main evacuation flow is over, Floor Wardens or Monitors are to check ALL rooms, closets and washrooms to ascertain that the floor has been completely evacuated.
6. The Floor Warden is to be the last to leave their floor and is to report to the Fire Marshall that the floor has been fully evacuated.
7. Cases requiring medical assistance are to be accompanied by two Monitors to a first-aid post.
8. Instructions from the Fire Chief are to be awaited before re-entry of the building is permitted.
9. If requested by the Building Fire Marshall, to supervise search procedures on the floor, correlate reports of search team, and report to the Building Fire Marshall the results of the search.

## Deputy Floor Wardens

1. To be appointed by the floor warden and confirmed by the administrative head of an occupying department or their designated official.
2. To act as floor warden in their absence and to assist them in their duties and responsibilities.

## Occupant Traffic Fire Emergency Personnel

When buildings are located in congested areas or have a high occupant load, sufficient Occupant Traffic Fire Emergency Personnel shall be appointed from the lower floors whose duties shall be, upon hearing the alarm to proceed directly to the outside of the building and direct occupants up or down the street to a minimum distance of 100m from building, ensuring that the entrance is free of occupants, to facilitate fire department operations and that occupants do not cross the street obstructing traffic. Under certain conditions it may be necessary to direct occupants to another building.



## Activities of a Fire Emergency Organization

1. **Instruct Building Personnel:** Floor Wardens are to instruct personnel on their floor of their actions to take in case of fire or other emergencies.
2. **Arrange Fire Prevention Meetings:** The Building Fire Marshall or their Deputy should hold meetings at least monthly to discuss problems and arrange for fire prevention training. Interest can only be maintained by keeping the meetings short - 15 to 30 minutes. If possible, arrange to have a member of the local fire department present. The fire prevention division will assist upon request.
3. **Organize Drills:**
  - (a) Frequency: An adequate number of drills should be conducted each year.
  - (b) Procedures: All personnel, with the exception of those authorized by the Building Fire Marshall, shall participate in evacuation drills.





Special Consideration is necessary for such personnel as those handling money, high security of confidential documents, conducting laboratory experiments or operating computer equipment. In such cases the fire drill situation shall be pre-planned so that there is maximum participation by all people including the public in the drills to the limit of practicability.

In conducting fire drills involving great numbers of people in downtown areas, it may be necessary to check with the fire and police departments for assistance in crowd control.

Whenever possible the local fire chief should be notified prior to any drill being held and he/she should be invited to attend.

Observers should be posted during drills and debriefings held to rectify all defects. Only by having drills can the procedures be evaluated and amended when necessary.

Although speed is desirable in evacuating a building, it is not the object itself but secondary to maintaining order and discipline.

#### 4. Maintain Year-Round Visual Checks of Work

**Areas:** The duties and responsibilities of the Fire Organization Member include a daily visual check of the floor area and reporting to the Building Fire Marshall or their Deputy of any faulty conditions such as:

- Fire doors wedged open or blocked open
- Exit lights out
- First-aid firefighting equipment inoperative or obstructed
- Obvious fire hazards:
  - o accumulation of combustibles
  - o oily rags
  - o defective or temporary electric wiring (extension cords)
  - o unauthorized smoking

Under normal operations of a building, two or three complaints may be reported daily. It is the responsibility of the Building Fire Marshall to report all faulty conditions to the building maintenance staff and to see that if practicable they are remedied within 24 hours.

Inspections should be highlighted during the Spring Clean-Up, Autumn check-up and Christmas check-up periods.

The Building Fire Marshall is responsible for ensuring that an arrangement exists whereby any fire hazard or faulty condition observed by night watchmen or security personnel may be reported to them.





## Fire Orders

Name of Building:

Location:

### All Personnel

Action to be taken if you hear the fire alarm.

1. If you hear the fire alarm in your area, turn off all equipment; every effort is to be made to secure valuable and/or confidential materials, however, life safety is to be the main concern. Notify the Fire Department - 911.
2. Close doors behind you - walk quickly but do not run.
3. Keep to the right and in single file, in halls and on stairs.
4. Merge alternately if two lines meet at any floor landing in order to keep all lines moving.
5. Do not return at any time for any reason.
6. Keep conversation to a minimum.
7. If the exit stairway is blocked due to smoke or other conditions on the lower level, proceed to the alternate (pre-planned) exit route.
8. Do not use elevators. They are put on manual control when the alarm sounds and are reserved for firefighters only.
9. All physically disabled persons shall be assisted by monitors, as assigned by the Floor Wardens.
10. Leave the building unless otherwise instructed and proceed directly away from the building to a minimum of 100 metres.
11. Move away from exterior doorways and move along the sidewalks away from the building to allow progress of those following and to keep the area clear for Fire Department operations. Do not cross streets in heavy traffic.
12. Do not attempt to remove any vehicle from any parking lot or level, unless directed to do so by the Fire Chief.
13. Keep the doors to stairways closed at all times.
14. Keep stairways, landings, hallways, passageways and exits (inside and outside) clear of obstructions at all times.
15. Do not permit combustible materials to accumulate in any part of a stairway, fire escape, elevator, ventilation shaft of any other means of egress.
16. Do not permit combustible waste material to accumulate in quantities or locations where they will create fire hazards.
17. Promptly remove all combustible waste from areas where waste is placed for disposal.
18. Keep access roadways, fire routes and pumper connections clear and accessible for Fire Department use.
19. Have a working knowledge of the fire alarm system and how it is reset. (Note: only to be reset upon the advice of the fire department).
20. Always maintain the fire alarm system and other fire protection equipment in satisfactory operating conditions.
21. Interruption of normal operation of a fire protection system for any purpose constitutes a "temporary shutdown." During a shutdown, alternative measures are necessary to ensure that the level of safety intended by the Code is maintained.
22. Arrange for a substitute in your absence.
23. Participate in fire drills.
24. Have a copy of the National Fire Code of Canada.
25. Ensure that all occupants are aware of the fire safety plan.

## Emergency Procedures

A copy of the Fire Safety Plan is required to be posted on each floor. It may be desirable to post "In Case of Fire" cards on each floor. If so, a copy of the card is to be posted, and must be included with the Fire Safety Plan.

The following example is provided for persons wishing to use "In Case of Fire" cards:

### In Case of Fire

- Upon discovery of fire leave fire area immediately and close all doors
- Call 9-1-1
- Sound fire alarm
- Leave building via nearest exit

### Do Not Use Elevators

- Upon hearing fire alarm leave building, via nearest exit
- Close doors behind you

### Caution

- If smoke is heavy in the corridor, it may be safer to stay in your area
- Close door and place wet towel at base of door
- If you encounter smoke in stairway, use alternate route

### Remain calm

