ESSENTIAL 29: Emergency Response



Key Takeaways:

– Accepting that it is more effective to plan for emergency response than it is prevent emergencies
– Learning ways to respond to emergencies that reduces their severity
– Understanding the importance of reacting to emergencies for everyone’s safety

Course Description

Emergencies in the workplace come in many different forms, ranging from natural disasters like fires, earthquakes, floods, and tornados to human caused events like terrorism, Active Shooter events, spills, and critical failure. For fires, is estimated by the United States Fire Administration that there were 100 300 fires annually from 2014 to 2016 in nonresidential buildings. This amounted to around $7.2 billion in property losses, with cooking issues being the leading cause. Comparitively, Statistics Canada reported that from 2005 to 2014, 40% of structural fires were nonresidential, with cooking equipment being a cause in a third of all fires. One lesson from all these statistics may be to remove employee cooking equipment from the workplace, but a more important lesson should be that fires are very common.

Likewise, other natural disasters can be quite common or uncommon depending on the environmental factors in your workplace, in addition to how the climate in your region is changing. Nonetheless, human caused emergencies happen all the time, in every industry. Accidents like hazardous chemical spills or improperly maintained equipment can lead to dangerous exposure or even explosions in the workplace. Everyone has heard horror stories within their industries and have learned from them. As well, workplace violence is prevelant in our society. Extreme events such as terrorism and Active Shooters have the potential to be common, depending on your location of work. Incidents of severe bullying or domestic abuse can be seen in the workplace and can be considered emergencies for everyone’s safety. In short, the potential for emergencies is always there.

Majority of the parts of a health and safety system are aimed at preventing emergencies. Unfortunately, there are never guarantees, and if an emergency does happen, you need to be able to respond immediately and appropriately. In other words, you can’t prevent emergencies, therefore your time is more effectively spent preparing for them. Often, there is a belief that a good workpace has no emergencies whatsoever. That is simply not true, because it isn’t possible. A good workplace is not emergency-free, but a good workplace has systems in place for reacting to

emergencies that effectively save lives and business alike.

This course will teach basic emergency response information and key response planning tools. Although it will not make you a professional first-responder, it will help you deal with an emergency if you are at the scene. You will be taught skills on proactive actions that can be taken when danger is imminent, such as calling the authorities, isolating the hazard, establishing protocols for saving lives, and more. You do not need to know how to eliminate the potential for emergencies, but you do need to know how to reduce the potential for devasting emergencies by establishing proper reaction procedures.