



▶ EMERGENCY PLANNING...1



▶ BUSINESS CONTINUITY...2



▶ NOISE EXPOSURE.....2

Business & health

ADDRESSING PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE
WORKPLACE

EMERGENCY PLANNING

Local public health agencies, along with the assistance of state and federal resources are continually improving their plans to respond to large scale public health emergencies. In any large scale emergency there may be a need to distribute and dispense medication or vaccinate the population to treat or prevent disease. In this event, the federal government owns a repository of medications and supplies, known as the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS).

Local public health agencies are in the process of recruiting their partners as closed point of dispensing (POD) sites. A closed POD site is a dispensing site that is only for a specific population. Closed POD sites are not open to the general public and they differ from community sites because they only address those individuals specific to a setting. Businesses, nursing facilities, hospitals and other institutional settings are all local partners that would be ideal settings for a closed POD. A closed POD site can determine the population within their setting they would like to dispense medications to, whether it is the residents, families of residents, employees, and/ or families of employees.

Similar to other local agencies, the Independence Health Department is making it

a priority to include other institutions in their emergency planning.

You protect your business by planning for the unexpected. You anticipate events and manage situations at hand. State and local public health agencies take the same approach to protecting the health and safety of their communities. As we build this bridge of mutual communication and alliance, we're calling on you, as local business leaders to help protect your business, your employees, their families and your community by making your business, agency or organization a location to dispense medication thru a dispensing site. Taking a few small steps now to prepare for future public health emergencies will not only protect your greatest asset, your employees, but also help prepare the entire community to respond.

By participating as a closed POD, you will provide a valuable service to your employees and their families and the overall community. By participating you will increase the likelihood that your employees will come to work, thus improving your organization's ability to continue to function.

To learn more about how to become a closed POD, contact the Independence Health Department at 816-325-7185.



BUSINESS CONTINUITY



Business continuity and crisis management can be complex depending on the size and type of your business, but by putting a plan in motion well before disaster strikes, the greater the likelihood that your company will survive and recover.

By following just a few of these recommendations, you may improve your chances that your business avoids closure.

- ▶ Make sure all insurance policies are kept updated.
- ▶ Have an inventory list of supplies and equipment for insurance purposes.
- ▶ Know what kind of emergencies might affect your company and have employees know evacuation routes and shelter areas.
- ▶ Create an emergency contact list of employees, utilities and vendors. Keep lists current and off site as well as on site.
- ▶ Keep current fire extinguishers and smoke alarms.
- ▶ Keep anti-virus and firewalls current and backup all critical data. Keep off site.
- ▶ Prepare for extended outages during and after a disaster.

NOISE EXPOSURE

Noise is not a new hazard. Too much noise exposure may cause a temporary change in hearing (your ears may feel stuffed up) or a temporary ringing in your ears (tinnitus). These short-term problems usually go away within a few minutes or hours after leaving the noise. However, repeated exposures to loud noise can lead to permanent, incurable hearing loss or tinnitus. NIOSH recommends removing hazardous noise from the workplace whenever possible and using hearing protectors in those situations where dangerous noise exposures have not yet been controlled or eliminated. The degree of hearing hazard is related to both the level of the noise as well as to the duration of the exposure. But this question is like asking how long can people look at the sun without damaging their eyes. The safest thing to do is to ensure workers always protect their ears by wearing hearing protectors anytime they are around loud noise. There are two rules: First, if you have to raise your voice to talk to someone who is an arm's length away, then the noise is likely to be hazardous. Second, if your ears are ringing or sounds seem dull or flat after leaving a noisy place, then you probably were exposed to hazardous noise. Anyone regularly exposed to hazardous noise should have an annual hearing test. Also, anyone who notices a change in his/her hearing (or who develops tinnitus) should have his or her ears checked. People who have healthy ears and who are not exposed to hazardous noise should get a hearing test every three years.

INDEPENDENCE
HEALTH
DEPARTMENT



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Independence Health Department
515 S. Liberty
Independence, MO 64050
816-325-7185
www.independencemo.org/health