



Waterberg District Municipality

Waterberg District Disaster Management Centre: Evacuation Plan

Prepared by:



Providing workable solutions

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1 Introduction

This evacuation plan was developed for the Waterberg District Disaster Management Centre, as envisaged when fully operational. The planning process of the centre made provision for the following posts (though not all of these are currently filled):

- Head of the Disaster Management Centre (1);
- Deputy HDMC, Manager(s) Operations, Planning, Communications and Training (5);
- Senior Secretary / Disaster Management Administration Officer (1); and
- Information Systems (and GIS Support) Officer.

At any given time, the centre may be used by more people. This plan therefore makes provision for the evacuation of ± 30 people.

2 Conditions under which an evacuation would be necessary

A wide variety of emergencies both man-made and natural may require the Centre to be evacuated. These emergencies include the risks identified in the risk assessment, namely fires and floods, but it could also become necessary due to explosions, floods, toxic material releases, civil disturbances and workplace violence.

As the Centre shares its premises with the Fire Station, it is generally seen as a safe place. One would, however, need to be prepared to evacuate should the circumstances require it. Evacuation should take place if the working conditions in the centre are not safe.

3 Chain of command

In the case of the Centre having a limited number of people continuously present, the officer on duty will act as Evacuation Warden. If circumstances warrant it, he/she must appoint someone as Assistant Evacuation Warden. First Aid and Fire Fighting Teams are also mentioned, though in this case, sharing the premises with the Fire Station means that the necessity for a Fire Fighting Team is slim and the numbers of people do not really warrant a First Aid Team.

4 Evacuation procedures

1. The officer on duty makes the decision to evacuate.
2. The following emergency call is transmitted through the PA system:

Attention! Attention! Communication of emergency: All personnel must abandon their work stations immediately. Please remain calm and proceed to the assembly point at the end of the Southern parking area.

3. Before evacuation, all equipment should be switched off (if possible).
4. Remain calm and exit through the main entrance to the assembly area.
5. If the main entrance is not available, exit through the fire station as the alternative evacuation route (as indicated on site map).
6. Evacuate to the alternative assembly point if the assembly point is compromised.
7. The officer on duty (also acting as evacuation warden) or his/her assigned representative must take a roll call at the assembly area to establish whether everybody has been evacuated.

General:

1. Do not give instructions if you are not assigned to do it.
2. Assist any disabled or injured people to evacuate.
3. Do not smoke during evacuation or in the assembly area.
4. Use the emergency number under the following circumstances:
 - a. If you see unfamiliar smoke
 - b. If you see leaks of corrosive or toxic substances
 - c. If you see major water leaks

5 Evacuation responsibilities

Evacuation responsibilities as listed here are generic in nature. In the case of the Centre, this will be reduced if only a few people are present in the Centre at the time of evacuation. However, should the Centre be used to its full capacity in future, this plan can be implemented as-is.

Duties of the Evacuation Warden:

1. Take command of the situation.
2. Instruct that evacuation must take place.
3. Call out First Aid and Fire Fighter Teams if necessary.
4. Ensure that incapacitated (injured, disabled, etc) people are assisted.
5. Ensure that the area is completely cleared.

Duties of the Assistant Evacuation Warden:

1. Ensure that evacuation of all personnel and visitors takes place in an orderly fashion; that no panicking occurs; that people do not run; and that they do not return to their work stations.
2. Ensure that all people evacuate.
3. Direct people to the available exit.
4. Assist First Aiders and Fire Fighters.
5. Do not engage in other duties whilst overseeing the evacuation.
6. Report to the Evacuation Warden when evacuation is complete.

Duties of the First Aid Team:

1. Proceed to the scene when instructed to do so over PA system.
2. Provide First Aid to injured people.
3. Report situation to Evacuation Warden.
4. Assist injured to evacuate if necessary.

Duties of the Fire Fighting Team:

1. Proceed to the scene when instructed to do so over PA system.
2. Extinguish fire where possible.
3. Report situation to Evacuation Warden.

6 Evacuation Route

The evacuation route is indicated on the attached map. Ensure that, at all times, the route is:

- Clearly marked and well lit;
- Wide enough to accommodate the number of evacuating personnel;
- Unobstructed and clear of debris at all times; and
- Unlikely to expose evacuating personnel to additional hazards.

Make sure that there are no obstacles that may prevent passageways from providing the required width to accommodate a safe evacuation.

7 Procedures for assisting visitors and disabled to evacuate

Generally, individuals are designated as evacuation wardens to help move employees from danger to safe areas during an emergency. Usually one warden for every 20 employees should be adequate and the appropriate number of wardens should be available at all times during working hours. In the case of the average number of people in the centre being so small, the officer on duty will act as warden.

Wardens are responsible for checking offices, bathrooms and other spaces before being the last person to exit an area. They must also ensure that fire doors are closed when exiting. All employees designated to assist in emergency evacuation procedures should be trained in the complete workplace layout and various alternative escape routes in case the primary evacuation route becomes blocked. Employees designated to assist in emergencies should be made aware of employees with special needs (who may require extra assistance during an evacuation), how to use the buddy system and any hazardous areas to avoid during an emergency evacuation.

Visitors should also be accounted for following an evacuation and may need additional assistance when exiting. All visitors and contractors should sign in when entering the workplace and this list must be used when accounting for all persons in the assembly area. The hosts and/or area wardens, if established, should be tasked with helping these individuals to evacuate safely.

8 Performance of critical operations

Designated employees should remain behind briefly to operate fire extinguishers or shut down gas and/or electrical systems and other special equipment (e.g. IT equipment) that could be damaged if left operating or create additional hazards to emergency responders. The preferred approach is immediate evacuation of all employees when the evacuation alarm is sounded.

All employees remaining behind must be capable of recognizing when to abandon the operation or task and evacuate themselves, before their egress path is blocked. Indicate on the evacuation plan where utilities (such as electricity/gas) can be shut down by emergency response personnel.

9 Accounting for evacuees

After evacuation, roll call must be taken to ensure that everyone has evacuated safely.

- Identify the names and last known locations of anyone not accounted for and pass them to the official in charge. Accounting for all employees following an evacuation is critical. Confusion in the assembly area can lead to delays in rescuing anyone trapped in the building, or unnecessary and dangerous search-and-rescue operations;
- Account for non-employees such as suppliers and customers by using the visitor's book from reception; and
- If the incident escalates, send the employees home by normal means or provide them with transportation to an offsite location (i.e. the municipal offices in town).

Appendix: Site map indicating evacuation route, alternative evacuation route and assembly point.