



# FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES CAN HELP YOU PREPARE FOR AN EVACUATION

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Fires, power outages and other emergencies cause thousands of building evacuations in both residential and nonresidential facilities every year. Nonresidential fires are a common cause of building evacuations with approximately **111,000** per year from 2014-2018, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Facilities of all types, uses and occupancies could require building evacuations at some point.

To address these challenges and prepare for a potential emergency, property owners are responsible for developing their own evacuation plan. As part of developing their evacuation plan, facility managers can plan ahead by properly maintaining key equipment and consulting the various professional resources available.

Are your systems properly maintained? Taking these practices under consideration can help facilities improve their emergency preparedness and promote the safety of their occupants.

### 1. MAINTAIN IMPORTANT EQUIPMENT

Your facility's fire protection equipment can help alert those inside to an emergency and assist them in evacuating safely and quickly. Ensuring you have your systems and devices inspected regularly can help you be prepared for that evacuation.

**a. Emergency lights & exit signs** – Functioning exit signs help employees see the direction of the way out, while emergency lights can help you find your way to safety during a power outage

or fire. Regular testing, inspection and maintenance of these devices to confirm batteries are working and bulbs are functioning is a key part of that system.

**b. Fire alarms** – Fire alarms can help detect a fire, notify occupants, and help alert first responders. Having these regularly tested can provide an additional safety measure to aid building occupants in the event of an emergency.

**c. Fire extinguishers** – Fire extinguishers can help control or extinguish small fires or help you get to safety during a fire event. Regular testing and inspection can help you be prepared in the event of an emergency. With Cintas' even exchange program, if upon inspection an extinguisher is not functional, we immediately

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exchange it for a unit that has been inspected so you don't have to be without.

## d. ***Fire Sprinkler systems*** –

Fire sprinkler systems can help control a small fire or help slow the spread of a fire before first responders arrive. Cintas can test and inspect sprinkler heads in your facility so that you can provide an additional protection to your occupants in the case of an emergency.

## 2. **SEEK EXPERT GUIDANCE**

When formulating an evacuation plan, it can be helpful for facilities to follow the guidance of credible authorities for their recommendations on evacuation procedures. Some agencies and organizations that can help include the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), NFPA and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

a. ***OSHA***

b. ***NFPA***

c. ***FEMA***

Facilities may also consult their local AHJs and first responders for guidance and recommendations on evacuation procedures.

An evacuation is never a desired outcome, but Cintas can help your business by inspecting critical fire protection systems, positioning you to better aid your occupants in the case of an emergency evacuation.

To learn more about how Cintas Fire protection services can help you get **READY™** for a fire emergency, visit <https://www.cintas.com/fire-protection-services/>.

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