



BOULDER COUNTY EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

A publication of the

**Boulder Office
of Emergency Management**

A joint office of the
City of Boulder and Boulder County

FIRE SAFETY

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ALL-HAZARDS ALERT SYSTEM ~ AHAI

INJURY OR ILLNESS

INTRODUCTION

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It is important that every Boulder County employee familiarize themselves with their building's life safety features, which are vital to the safety and security of employees, users, and clients. We may be faced with emergency situations and must be prepared to cope with them should they occur.

This booklet is designed to serve as a quick reference for the following subjects:

- Injury or Illness
- Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place
- All-Hazards Alert System (AHA!)
- Emergency Warning Sirens
- Flash Floods
- Tornadoes
- Earthquakes
- Civil Disturbance/Security
- Hazardous Materials
- Phone threats/violence or explosive devices
- Fire Safety

It is requested that every employee read and understand these emergency procedures. Keep this reference by your phone for easy access in case of an emergency. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Emergency Management at (303) 441-3390, Boulder County Facilities Management at (303) 441-3965, or Risk Management at (303) 441-3801.

INJURY OR ILLNESS

1. Provide first aid if you are trained in first aid.
2. Dial 9-1-1. If you are providing first aid, have someone else call 9-1-1.
3. Give location of injured/ill employee along with your name, phone number, building address, and office location. Answer the dispatcher's questions and stay with the patient.
4. When possible, have someone direct responding emergency personnel to the patient.
5. Do not move the patient unless he/she is in immediate danger.
6. Someone should always stay with the patient.
7. Notify your immediate supervisor as soon as the immediate threat to the patient has passed.
8. Notify Risk Management at (303) 441-3801 if the injury or illness is work-related.

INJURY OR ILLNESS

ALL-HAZARDS ALERT SYSTEM ~ AHA!

The AHA system is a way of quickly determining the current threat level of an emergency, and a basic idea of the nature of the threat.

The symbol for this system is the familiar “green/yellow/red” traffic light. Green light means everything is normal, but you should maintain your situational awareness and observe your surroundings. The yellow light means to analyze the situation, be cautious, gather more information about what is happening, and then decide what actions to take. The red light indicates that you must stop what you are doing, take action now, and fully implement your emergency plans.

You will find the AHA Signal at www.boulderoem.com

Please remember to check it daily.



RED - DANGER

YELLOW - CAUTION

GREEN - NORMAL

ALL-HAZARDS ALERT SYSTEM ~ AHA!

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

When you hear a fire alarm, OR you are told to evacuate the building, leave immediately.

- USE STAIRS TO EVACUATE. Do not use elevators.
- Use nearest exit to leave the building.
- Report to your designated Meeting Place.
- The Meeting Place should be at least 75 feet from the building.
- Be aware of emergency vehicles responding to your location. Stay clear of exits and emergency personnel.
- Stay calm and follow directions of emergency personnel.
- Account for everyone in your office, if possible.
- You may not re-enter the building until given the “All Clear” from emergency responders.

SHELTER-IN-PLACE

There may be times when you need to shelter-in-place (tornado, hazardous materials, blizzard). The actions you take will depend on the situation.

- Know the designated shelter rooms in your office building, i.e.:
 - ♦ Tornado: basement or interior room on the lowest floor
 - ♦ Hazardous materials spill: above ground room
- Close all doors and windows if there is time.
- Call Facilities at (303) 441-3965 to turn off air conditioners and ventilation systems.
- Take your emergency supplies and a radio to your shelter room.
- Stay in your designated shelter room until you are told it is safe to leave.

EMERGENCY OUTDOOR WARNING SIRENS

Outdoor warning sirens located throughout Boulder County are sounded only in the event of an emergency or during pre-announced tests. Some sirens have an informative voice message about the situation and what actions to take.

The sirens are tested on the first Monday of the month from April through August, at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. (subject to change). During flood season, check www.boulderoem.com for current siren testing schedule).

If you hear a siren at any other time than the tests, tune into your local radio or television station, or monitor your NOAA weather radio for specific information.

During an actual emergency, the sirens will sound for 5 minutes at regular intervals until officials feel that adequate warning has been provided. The same signal is used for all emergencies (flood, tornado, or other disaster). When you hear a siren you should:

- Tune to a local TV or radio station for further information.
- Take appropriate action for the nature of the emergency.
- Listen for a voice message and/or verbal "All Clear."

FLASH FLOODS

Flash floods can often occur without warning following heavy rainfall upstream. Stay informed about weather conditions by listening to NOAA Weather Radio or local radio and television news.

When a **Flash Flood Watch** is announced, it means conditions are present for a flash flood.

- Get ready; Gather emergency supplies.

When a **Flash Flood Warning** is issued flash flooding is occurring or imminent.

- Evacuate immediately to high ground.
- If driving, leave your vehicle. A vehicle can float in as little as 18" of water. Do not drive through flooded areas.
- Do not attempt to cross flooded areas. Debris and fast moving water is dangerous.
- If floodwaters have already arrived and you are trapped in a building, go to an upper floor or roof and shelter-in-place.

TORNADOES

When a **Tornado Watch** is announced, it means conditions are present for a tornado.

- Keep a radio/TV tuned for further information or monitor a NOAA Weather Radio.
- Get ready; Gather emergency supplies.

When a **Tornado Warning** is issued, it means a tornado has been sighted or is imminent.

- Take shelter immediately in a building.
- Go to the basement or lowest level of the building. Go to an interior hallway or small interior room, such as a bathroom or a closet.
- If you work outside or in a temporary building, take cover in a ditch or low-lying area. Lie down and cover your head.
- If you are in a multi-story building and cannot get to the lowest floor, go to the stairwells, bathrooms, or most interior rooms.

EARTHQUAKES

Note: Falling objects are a major concern in an earthquake. You can lessen this threat now by checking your workplace and relocating heavy objects that are 48 inches or more from the floor to a lower level.

- Move under a sturdy desk or table and Duck, Cover and Hold on.
- Be prepared for a series of shocks that may grow stronger.
- When tremors cease, check your immediate work area for any injured persons and other hazards, and be prepared to report this information.
- If you discover seriously injured persons, discover fire, or smell natural gas, call 9-1-1 immediately.
- Evacuate the premises. Avoid downed electrical lines, debris and other hazards

CIVIL DISTURBANCE/SECURITY

CIVIL DISTURBANCE

Should your building become the target of public demonstrations or riots, or in the event of civil disturbance:

- Call 9-1-1 to report the situation.
- Ask a co-worker to call 9-1-1 if you are not able to do so.
- Avoid becoming a spectator. Leave or avoid the area of disturbance if possible.
- Remove identification to protect yourself from unwanted attention from the protestors.
- Avoid becoming involved in the situation by arguing or attempting to intervene.
- Occupants of lower floors should close their blinds and avoid window areas.
- Notify Facilities Management at (303) 441-3965 to report the incident.

SECURITY

Solicitors, suspicious persons, and/or intoxicated persons should be reported to law enforcement by calling 9-1-1, and then call County Security at (303) 441-3909.

NOXIOUS ODORS/HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

NOXIOUS ODORS

- A natural gas odor can be recognized by a “rotten egg/dead fish” smell
- Ammonia leaks have a tendency to cause watery eyes and a burning sensation in the sinuses.
- Refrigerant leaks are usually odorless; however in large amounts can cause nausea, vomiting and headaches.
- If you recognize a noxious odor, such as natural gas, ammonia or refrigerant, as above, call 9-1-1 immediately using a phone located away from the odor. Follow the procedure for a Hazardous Materials incident inside, below.

Then, call Facilities Management at 303.441.3965,

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Hazardous materials incidents are identified in various ways. You may witness an accidental chemical spill, smell an unusual odor, or be notified by public safety officials. Upon notification by public safety officials of a hazardous materials release, listen to local radio or television stations for further information.

If YOU discover a hazardous materials incident call 9-1-1.

If the hazardous materials incident is inside:

- Evacuate immediately and follow instructions of authorities carefully.
- Try to stay **Uphill, Upwind, and Upstream** from the hazardous material.
- If you have specific information concerning the hazardous material(s) involved provide that information to the first responders.
- Call Facilities Management at (303) 441-3965 from a safe location to report the incident.

If the hazardous materials incident is outside:

- Try to stay **Uphill, Upwind, and Upstream** from the hazardous material.
- Follow all instructions given by authorities.
- Close all exterior doors and windows.
- Close vents and as many interior doors as possible.
- Call maintenance at (303) 441-3965 to turn off air conditioners and ventilation systems.
- Go to pre-selected shelter room (above ground room with fewest openings to the outside).
- If warned of the possibility of an explosion, close shades in the room and stay away from windows.
- Remain in the room until authorities say it is safe to leave your shelter.

PHONE THREATS/THREATS OF VIOLENCE OR EXPLOSIVE DEVICES

If you receive a threat – Take a deep breath and gather the following information. Record the exact words of the caller if possible (use Threat Form if available):

What is the THREAT? **BOMB** or **THREAT OF VIOLENCE**

- **Where** is the bomb located/where will the violent act occur?
- **When** is the detonation or threatened action going to occur?
- **What** is the description of the device or threatened action
- What does the bomb look like/who will do the violent act?
- What will cause the bomb to explode?
- **Why**/Reason for the threat
- Who is making the threat? Note the characteristics of the caller's voice, such as approximate age, gender, accent, and any background noise
- **Ask** for the caller's name and/or group affiliation?

Immediately after the threat is made:

- Do not use cell phones or hand held radios, which may cause a device to explode.
- Call 9-1-1 from a safe location. Tell the dispatcher the information you know.
- Consult with the 9-1-1 dispatcher and emergency responders to decide whether or not to evacuate.
- Immediately notify an on duty supervisor in person or via phone. Do not leave a message.
- Do not discuss with anyone unless instructed to do so.
- **STAY AWAY FROM ANY SUSPICIOUS ITEM** and report such items to your supervisor immediately.

FIRE SAFETY

IF YOU DISCOVER A FIRE:

- Leave the area immediately using your nearest EXIT. Note: Your most familiar exit may not be the nearest/best
- Yell “FIRE” and bang on doors ON YOUR WAY OUT.
- If your building is equipped with Fire Alarm pull stations:
 - ♦ Reach in and Pull down to activate the alarm to warn others. Know the location of all fire alarm pull boxes in your building - usually placed near an exit.
- Call 9–1–1 from OUTSIDE the building.
- Tell the dispatcher address. Call even if the alarm is sounding to ensure emergency response.
- Use stairs. Do Not Use Elevators. (Elevators may lose power and trap anyone inside. Elevator shafts can conduct smoke like chimneys and are NOT safe in a fire.)
- Before opening a door, use the back of your hand to check for heat. If it feels hot, use another escape route.
- If you encounter dark smoke or fumes while exiting, retrace your steps. Find a room where you can close the door to block the smoke. Signal for help from the window – fire fighters will see you during their perimeter search. Call 9-1-1 with your location in the building.
- Do not attempt to extinguish the fire unless:
 - ♦ It is very small in size (for example, small waste basket)
 - ♦ You know how to use an extinguisher
 - ♦ You have an extinguisher nearby
 - ♦ MOST IMPORTANTLY you have an Exit to your back. Fire moves very fast and is difficult to extinguish.

Violence in the Workplace / Aggressive Individual

Be a good witness

If you are a witness to a crime on Boulder County property, you are not obligated to intervene. Call 911 then contact Security (303) 441-3909, provide a detailed description and location of the event taking place, and include whether weapons or injuries are involved. Depending on the scenario, it may be better to simply get information than to put yourself in harm's way. If you know the offender's identity then concern yourself with what is occurring; Who hit whom, who said what, what are they driving, get a license plate number, which direction did they go? If you do not know the offender, then get a good description of that person's age, height, weight, hair color, color of clothing, tattoos or scars, language or accent, and describe what is occurring. Keep yourself safe; write down any statements and identifying information. If possible, ask public and staff to leave the area until the situation is resolved. Pass any information you have gathered on to Police and Security, as soon as you can, without compromising your own safety.

When threatened by an aggressive individual in your work area

- If it is safe to do so, call 9-1-1 or signal someone else to call 9-1-1.
 - NOTE: If you are unable to speak with the dispatcher, and/or you are alone in your office, you may be able to take the phone off the hook and quickly dial 9-1-1, then leave the line open. The dispatcher will have your location and may be able to overhear what is happening in your work area. NOTE: Avoid doing this while engaged in conversation with the person.
- Remain calm; avoid arguing with or threatening the person.
- Speak clearly and calmly.
- Move slowly and explain your movements at all times.
- If the person demands money or valuables, cooperate fully.
- Attempt to increase the distance between yourself and the individual(s).
- Leave if you have an opportunity to do so.

Violent incident / active shooter

If the shooter or violent person is outside your building:

- Call 9-1-1 and report the location of the incident, your name, and what is happening.
- Unless directed otherwise, turn off the lights, close and lock all doors and windows.
- Block the exterior doors with chairs if possible and get away from windows.
- Move to the innermost area of the building and remain there until police tell you it is safe.

If the shooter is inside your building:

- If possible, escape the area by the nearest door or window.
- Leave personal items behind.
- Exit the building with your hands above your head and follow police instructions.
- If you are unable to escape the building, move out of the hallway into an office, and lock or barricade the door.
- Stay out of any line of fire, and get behind a desk.
- Remain quiet.