Fire Drills Matter

Why do fire drills exist?

Fire drills became mandatory in the early 1900s after workplace fires demonstrated that panic, confusion, and lack of exit awareness contributed to injuries and fatalities. The Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY) requires 2 fire drills per year to ensure building occupants are familiar with alarm response procedures and exit routes before an emergency occurs.

What to Expect During a Fire Drill

Fire drills follow a structured process to promote safe and orderly response:

1. The fire alarm will sound
2. The Fire and Life Safety Director (FLSD) will make an announcement
3. Fire & Life Safety volunteer staff, including wardens and searchers assigned to each floor, will assist during the drill
4. All occupants are to leave their workstations and walk toward the nearest exit stairwell to practice exit route familiarization (do not enter stairwell or attempt to use elevators)
5. Once occupants are accounted for, the floor warden communicates status to the FLSD
6. A final announcement will be made, and occupants may return to their workstations

Fire Drill Awareness

- Know who the Fire & Life Safety team is on your floor, including wardens and searchers.
- Be familiar with your primary and secondary exit routes.
- Know the designated point of assembly in the event of an actual evacuation.
- Follow all instructions provided by Fire & Life Safety staff.

Important Note

Fire drills do not require exiting the building. The purpose of a fire drill is to practice quick response and become familiar with exit protocols in the event of an emergency. Everyone is required to gather at the exits for practice.

Occupants with disabilities are required to participate in fire drills; reasonable accommodations are in accordance with the building-specific Emergency Action Plan. For clarification on applicable procedures, contact your Fire and Life Safety Director (FLSD).

Remember, preparedness reduces panic, saves lives, and protects everyone in the building.

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