

## news & notes

### YOUR ROLE IN EMERGENCIES

You may think that it can't happen here, but it can! Be prepared to respond properly and safely to these types of emergencies:

- Fires
- Explosions
- Hazardous chemical spills or leaks
- Natural disasters such as tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, or floods
- Terrorist events

Know what to do in emergencies, including any assigned response tasks, such as:

- Account for employees after an evacuation
- Help others to evacuate
- Close windows and doors
- Shut down equipment
- Rescue or response tasks that require special training

Learn the basics of emergency response:

- Read, understand, and follow the Emergency Action Plan
- Know how to evacuate the area safely
- Know the locations of fire exits, fire extinguishers, and alarms
- Know whom to contact in an emergency
- Know basic first aid
- Know how to use a fire extinguisher

Do your part to help keep emergencies from turning into disasters!



**"So, you were supposed to paint the 'Preparedness Month' signs, and you forgot the paper, the brushes and the paint?"**



# CITY OF HELENA SAFETY AWARENESS

**2011-09**

## Be Prepared!

### *September Is National Preparedness Month*

To help workplaces prepare for emergencies, such as natural disasters or terrorist events, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS - [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov)) has set up [www.ready.gov/business](http://www.ready.gov/business). What can YOU do to be prepared?

1. **Know the risks.** What kind of natural disasters happen in your area? What businesses or buildings in your area (your workplace included) may be terrorist targets, such as government buildings, military bases, transportation centers, or large utility companies?
2. **Know workplace procedures.** Learn the emergency plan and your role in it (see **sidebar**), including location of first aid and emergency supply kits, fire alarm pulls and extinguishers, essential shut-down procedures, when to leave and when to shelter in place, exit routes, and other items for your workplace.
3. **Know how to communicate.** Learn where and to whom to report when you exit your workplace. Know where to get emergency information from your workplace and/or public safety announcements regarding when it's safe to return to work or to leave your building.

You also need to be prepared at home. According to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov), here's what every citizen should have in their home emergency kit:

- Water—1 gallon of water per person per day for at least 3 days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food—at least a 3-day supply of nonperishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First-aid kit—see website for items to include
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask—to help filter contaminated air, and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food if kit contains canned food
- Local maps

Check the website for further items you may include, such as prescription medications; family documents like insurance policies; cash and travelers' checks; and fire extinguishers and emergency reference material.

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### **TAKE CARE OF YOUR CAMERA**

If you own an expensive movie or video camera, you take good care of it. Why, then, would you treat your personal camera—**your irreplaceable eyes**—as if they were less valuable than the man-made imitations?

Protect your eyes because they have no substitute if they are damaged. The cornea that shields the eye is capable of outperforming the best optics ever produced, but it is paper-thin and delicate.

**First, get your vision tested.** If you need prescription lenses, get shatter-resistant, fitted frames of a recommended type for maximum protection, and wear the glasses faithfully. Get your vision rechecked periodically.

**Second, wear eye safety protection** whenever work hazards require them.

#### **Finally, follow these eye safety tips:**

- Never wear cracked, pitted, or otherwise damaged glasses or goggles; turn them in for a new pair.
- Avoid looking directly into any source of brilliant or potentially harmful light unless your eyes are shielded.
- Wipe your face and eyes with clean hands only, to avoid transferring dirt or other material to the eyes.
- If something does get into the eye, do not rub it; get the proper first aid immediately.
- If eyes are burned by heat or chemicals, flush immediately with cool water for several minutes. Seek medical attention.
- If you feel your eyes straining, close your eyes or focus on a far distance. Hold a clean cloth wet with cool water gently over your closed eyes.



# **ADA and You**

## *What you need to know*

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is the federal law that makes it illegal to discriminate against people with disabilities. One out of six Americans has a disability, but that doesn't mean that person has no ability. People with disabilities want to be judged by their abilities, not by their disabilities.

Examine your attitudes about disabilities and people with disabilities.

- Don't let prejudices or fears interfere with your relationships on the job.
- Consider how you'd respond to this person if he or she didn't have a disability.
- Reaffirm that everyone deserves the right to earn a living with their abilities.

You may work with co-workers with a variety of disabilities. For example:

- Speech impairment
- Hearing impairment or deafness
- Visual impairment or blindness
- Limited mobility
- Learning disabilities

Here's how to work effectively with co-workers with disabilities:

- **Ask** before providing help.
- **Let people with disabilities decide** what they can't do or aren't interested in.
- **Speak as you would to anyone.**
- **Include co-workers with disabilities** in work and work-related social activities.
- **Keep your sense of humor.**

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# **Help Keep Violence Out**

## *Take security seriously*

You can help keep violence out of your workplace.

- Wear your identification badge, and don't lend it to others.
- Keep security doors closed and locked.
- Escort visitors to the work area after they sign in and obtain a name tag.
- Obey rules against weapons, drugs, and alcohol at work.
- Set up a "danger signal" with co-workers.
- Know security and police phone numbers.
- Lock up purses and valuables.
- Tell security if you see a stranger with no identification in a work area.

Know how to recognize potentially violent behavior, such as someone who:

- Threatens violence
- Threatens to "get even" with you, co-workers, or supervisors
- Tries repeatedly to intimidate you or others
- Talks a lot about weapons
- States that others are out to "get" him or her
- Holds grudges
- Blames others for problems
- Displays frequent, unreasonable anger
- Combines disturbing behaviors with substance abuse

Report behavior that concerns you. You may head off violence and get people the help they need.