

FES Media Release:

Maintaining Essential Safety Measures Throughout COVID-19 Restrictions

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent stay-at-home orders issued by the Victorian Government, office buildings are seeing significantly decreased occupancy, including a reduction in Emergency Wardens.

With so many people working remotely, potential issues or fire hazards can be missed. Likewise, with residential buildings currently seeing increased occupancy, this places additional pressure on Essential Safety Measures (ESM) services and infrastructure.

Whilst we acknowledge that every building will have different resources and procedures, when a designated fire warden is not present, all workers in the building must be aware of Emergency Procedures.

If a worker is alone in a building or is one of very few workers present in a building, the building owner or site supervisor must be advised that a worker is on-site and of the exact location of that worker. Anyone working on-site within the building must familiarise themselves with the closest fire exit and emergency procedures, including primary and secondary assembly areas.

Emergency Procedures – What to do in the event of a fire emergency

If you see a fire or can smell smoke, you must:

- Assist any person in immediate danger **if safe to do so**.
- Isolate the fire by closing the door.
- Call the Fire Brigade on **000** giving the following information:
 - Number and address of building
 - Nearest cross street
 - Location and details of fire
- Operate a Manual Call Point (Break Glass Alarm) if available
- Notify Security of the fire: Check for your building's specific internal emergency number
- Check your Evacuation Diagrams for location of Emergency Exits and Assembly Areas
- Evacuate the floor and proceed down the nearest safe emergency exit stairwell. Wait for the Fire Brigade and provide them with the details of the fire
- Do not use lifts in the event of a fire

- If the Alert signal tones operate, prepare to evacuate by:
 - securing confidential and valuable items
 - proceeding to designated assembly point
 - following instructions on evacuation plan procedure
- If the Evacuate signal tones operate, immediately evacuate to your Assembly Area:
 - check to see if there is anyone at the Main Control Point (Foyer) and let them know that you are out of the building.
 - leave building via designated or nearest safe exit
 - proceed to nominated assembly area and remain there until advised by Emergency Services that it is safe to return
- If the building does not have an alarm system, evacuate the building and call the Fire Brigade on 000
- Evacuate to Assembly Area and remain there until accounted for
- Do not re-enter the building until the 'all clear' is given by the appropriate Emergency service or building representative

Always ensure that Emergency Services are aware that evacuees are safe.

"It is vital that all commercial, industrial and residential building owners and managers continue to maintain their ESM and fire protection systems throughout these current restrictions," says Stuart Yarnall, General Manager of Fire Equipment Services (FES).

"We acknowledge that site access to conduct essential safety measures services may be challenging at this time, however please be assured that our highly qualified and accredited technicians are following all Department of Health and Human Services advice regarding good hygiene practices, physical distancing, health monitoring as well as all other OHS matters once on-site."

"Keeping your people and assets protected is FES' ongoing priority and we will continue to provide these essential services to you throughout this period."

Fire Equipment Services (FES) delivers a range of training courses and consultancy services in emergency management and fire safety. For training, assistance or advice on protecting your people, property and assets, contact FES on 1300 855 163 or service@fes.com.au

<https://www.fes.com.au/>

For Media Comment:

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