

OSHMed Health Magazine

by



DROPPING THE BALL THE MOST COMMON FIRE SAFETY MISTAKES

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Dropping the Ball: The Most Common Fire Safety Mistakes by Business Owners

Business owners make a plethora of mistakes that put their company at increased risk of starting a fire in their workplace.

Fires in commercial buildings are sadly an all-too-common occurrence. Many of these fires could have been prevented if businesses took fire safety more seriously. Business owners make a plethora of mistakes that put their company at increased risk of starting a fire in their workplace. Not addressing these issues can put managers and their employees at risk and fixing them often does not require extensive effort. Here are the most common fire safety mistakes business owners make and how to prevent them.



Skipping Regular Inspections

Most cities and municipalities require businesses to get an annual fire safety inspection. However, some businesses either forget to get one or the city

doesn't do a good enough job enforcing the requirement. Skipping fire safety inspections often isn't intentional. Company owners and their teams get busy, and the inspection slips their minds. However, this does not diminish the safety risk. Regular inspections are the best way to catch fire safety issues before they become a problem.

Some businesses have not done a fire safety inspection for years. The obvious danger in avoiding regular fire safety inspections is if the sprinkler system, fire alarm, smoke detectors or extinguishers are not in good working order, they will not be able to prevent a fire from spreading. Businesses should have a fire safety professional check their system at least once per year, but doing so twice per year is recommended to be safe.

After the inspection, companies will get a report from their inspector on the status of the fire protection systems, stating what works well and what needs to be fixed. Keep this report for two to five years for record-keeping purposes. This will allow future inspectors to know what some of the past issues were and the steps the business took to fix them. Conducting annual fire safety inspections is a simple step that business owners can do to protect their team and their building from a fire. It is the most common mistake business owners make in fire safety and also the easiest to fix.



Poorly Maintained Signs and Lighting

Working in a commercial space for the majority of the week, one might think every worker knows how to get in and out of that building. However, things change when a fire starts, and smoke starts filling the building and limiting visibility. When a fire is raging, often the only things visible are the fire lights and exit signs. But exit signs and fire lights with dead bulbs or that are not connected to the emergency power are all too common. Replace unilluminated exit signs and fire lights and test them once a month. Testing them is easy and only requires the press of a test button to ensure it is connected to the emergency power source. If any issues arise, call a fire safety professional to replace the sign.

Dirty Smoke Detectors

Smoke detectors, like anything else, accumulate dirt, dust and grime. Smoke

detectors get dirty, and dirty smoke detectors don't work very well. Business owners frequently forget to clean their smoke detectors, making them less likely to detect smoke quickly. A dirty head will not respond when it needs to and will not alert the fire department of a fire. The longer it takes for a smoke detector to detect a fire, the more danger there is. Check smoke detectors every six months and clean out or replace any dirty heads.

Obstructed Exits and Sprinklers

Obstructions are common in businesses, such as a warehouse or industrial businesses, that have to store a large number of materials. However, materials and equipment cannot obstruct any exits or sprinklers. Nothing is supposed to be stored within 18 inches of a fire sprinkler head because it can disrupt the flow of the sprinkler. Obstructing exits makes it harder for a lot of people to get out of a building quickly during a fire. This issue is

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A Lack of Action Plan

What should be done when there is a fire? Most business owners don't have a plan for how to get everyone out of the building in a calm and orderly fashion. Business owners who work in a commercial space should have a written emergency action plan for employees. This ensures everyone knows what the exit routes are and what procedures are in place.

An emergency action plan should cover what employees and employers need to do to make sure everyone is safe during an emergency fire. This action plan should also include directions on when equipment needs to be shut down and other fire suppression procedures. Management should review the emergency action plan with employees at least once per year. The emergency action plan should follow OSHA standards.

Fires on commercial properties are common, but the good news is most reasons why fires happen are preventable if inspections are taken seriously and issues are quickly addressed. Businesses should avoid these common fire safety mistakes, and they will be better equipped when an emergency happens.

If you would like to prepare your company for the event of an fire or any Occupational Safety & Health Hazards, our platinum supporter OSH-Med

international offers the ideal solution for you and your company. OSH-Med has branches in Windhoek, Ongwediva and Walvis Bay. In addition they have a mobile unit, which offers their services and training country wide in Namibia and beyond. You can contact OSH-Med international via the following:

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Sponsor needed for fuel of the E.M.A. nonprofit organisation fleet

Since 2019, E.M.A. is **“there when you need us”**. Alone in 2023 the nonprofit organisation has assisted over 1,000 patients. Most of these emergency calls are so called **“pro bono”** (free) calls, where the patient does not have medical or cannot afford private emergency medical services.

E.M.A. Rescue Service is a Community Service and registered nonprofit organisation. At E.M.A. non-profit organisation, our mission is simple - to make Emergency Care available for everyone. Our goal is to offer Emergency Care free of charge for those who cannot afford a private ambulance service and to assist the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to provide emergency medical assistance.

Access to emergency & rescue services is essential for the health and well-being of people. The World Health Organisation (WHO) made it a human right for everybody to have access to emergency care.

- It Can Save Their Life - In the event that someone falls, has a heart attack, stroke or another emergency happens while at home, at work premises or in the street.
- Minimises Devastating Consequences and Promotes Independence - We do not want to leave patients in a vulnerable situation where they have to wait long for Emergency Services. In the event that an emergency happens, the devastating consequences are minimised since E.M.A. has proven to be there within a few minutes. Time is of the essence when it comes to emergencies.
- Emergency Preparedness as being prepared can reduce fear, anxiety, and



losses that accompany disasters where E.M.A. assists.

Over the years, E.M.A. has seen an increase of the need of their services. While it was a linear increase in 2020 to 2022, E.M.A. had an unexpected increase in the need for their services in 2023, (see annual statistics). This increase in emergencies has also increased the need for fuel. In addition, fuel price increases of over 12% has greatly increased the costs of maintaining the services.

Annual Emergency Statistics:

*start November 2019

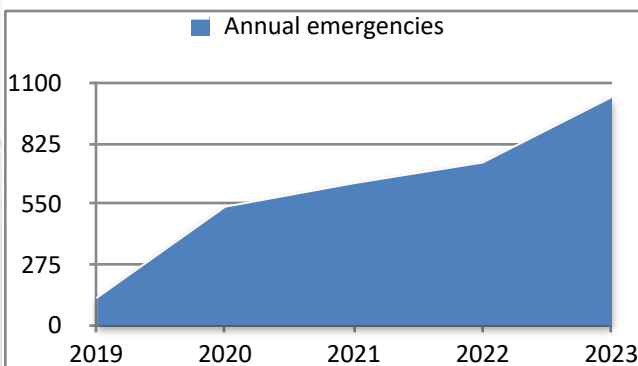
in 2019 we had 124 emergencies

in 2020 we had 539 emergencies

in 2021 we had 646 emergencies

in 2022 we had 740 emergencies

In 2023 we had 1,037 emergencies up till 13.11.2023



Due to the fuel price increases and the high rise in emergencies, the organisation faces an ever-increasing challenge of high costs for our fleet. "Fuel is crucial to our mission, as without fuel, we cannot come to our patients." So Fabian Martens, 1st Chairman of the E.M.A. nonprofit

organisation says, further "Our Emergency Ambulance, First Responder and Advanced Life Support - Paramedic are there when you need us at emergencies to rescue someones' life as a dedicated community service in Windhoek currently."



"With the ongoing increase of fuel prices and other costings, the nonprofit organisation kindly asks you for your support of fuel or other resources towards to our organisation. The sponsorship of companies and private persons towards our organisation is vital for our patients and for us.", Fabian Martens commented on the current increased costing situation.

E.M.A. urges and kindly asks companies and individuals to support the good cause of the organisation, that they can continue assisting the community in case of an emergency.

The nonprofit organisation can be reached via:

email: ema-support@osh-med.pro or fabian@osh-med.pro

Telephone: 061 302 931





(CC/2016/09040)

Advanced care specialists

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Mail : admin@westcarenam.com / admin@wfcmedical.com

Our vision

To be the leader in providing quality medical and clinical care enhancing the well-being of patients.

Our mission

- To provide competent, quality medical care;
- To provide appropriate, relevant and affordable medical support services;
- To contribute to the health of all Namibians;
- To provide an environment that enables all staff to develop their full potential;
- To maintain efficient and cost-effective processes and procedures; and
- To apply the highest ethical standards

SERVICES

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We offer an equipped isolation unit plus 10 private en-suite rooms meeting all our patients' needs. We offer:

- short-term post-surgical care,
- infections and specialized wound care,
- pain management,
- IV therapy,
- cardiac monitoring,
- nutritional counselling,
- restorative rehabilitation
- doctors-on-call (24-hour service)

We care for patients recovering from orthopedic surgery, strokes and respiratory and pulmonary failure. Our patients are cared for by specialized nursing staff and physician monitoring.

Frail Care/Palliative Care and Hospice services

Our long-term frail, palliative and hospice care patients receive the best of care. 24/7 nursing staff are here to attend to their every need.

Clinics

Highly-trained nursing staff perform primary health care services at our clinics.

A travel nurse is available every week day performing special services for insurance companies



Good sleep, strong heart: seven tips for a restful night

A relaxing, stress-free break brings energy and also strengthens the heart. Tips to promote good sleep.

1. Cool, quiet space

The ideal room temperature at night is 18 degrees. Your bedroom should be well ventilated, quiet and as dark as possible. This signals to the body: the active time is over, now body and mind can rest.

2. Mini break at lunchtime

A nap should not last longer than 20 minutes. Better set an alarm. If you sleep too much during the day, you need less at night. But sleeping at night is healthier. For older people, six hours is often enough.



3. Plan enjoyment

A late, opulent meal causes problems for digestion, which makes for a restless night. Even in small doses, alcohol also worsens sleep. It's best to avoid caffeine from midday onwards.

4. Maintain evening ritual

Routines help you calm down. If possible, always go to bed at the same time. Vary a maximum of 30 minutes. Rituals such as prayer, meditation and breathing exercises have a supportive effect. And the goodnight cigarette? Better not!

5. Switch off in good time

You should turn off electronic devices an hour before going to bed. For two reasons: The blue screen light prevents the body from producing enough sleep hormones. Exciting films, news and emails can also cause stress, which makes it difficult to fall asleep and stay asleep.

6. Get some fresh air

If you sit on the sofa a lot, you won't be tired in the evening. Idleness is poison for the body. That's why Prof. Dr. Dr. Anil-Martin Sinha: "Move around - even if it's just ten minutes outside the door or on the balcony - even with a walker. This increases the quality of sleep enormously!"

7. Enjoy waking moments

If possible, keep the lights off, avoid looking at the clock and stay in bed. Getting up and maybe eating a little something is bad. Then your body thinks the night is over. This makes it twice as difficult to fall asleep again. Relax, think of something beautiful and concentrate on your breathing. That calms you down.



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Emergency Call



Important information to give:

- **Where** is the emergency?
- **What** happened?
- **What** kind of injuries?
- **How many** injured person
- **Waiting** for further question

Emergency Numbers:

Ambulance services:

E.M.A. Rescue Service

9112

Fire Brigade:

Windhoek

061-21 1111

Police:

NamPol

10 111

City Police (Whk)

061-302 302

MVA Fund

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(all numbers are from GRN or non-profit organisations)



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