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Educational messages/safety tips

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For public assembly buildings and nightclubs

Every day, millions of people wake up, go to work or school, and take part in social events. But the unexpected happens: an earthquake, a fire, a chemical spill, an act of terrorism or some other disaster can have lasting effects - people may be seriously injured or killed, and devastating damage can occur. People entering any public assembly building need to be prepared in case

Should you enter?

- **Take a good look.** Does the building appear to be in a condition that makes you feel the main entrance wide and does it open outward to allow easy exit? Is the outside area cluttered with materials stored against the building or blocking exits?

Before you enter

- **Have a communication plan**
Identify a relative or friend to contact in case of emergency and you are separated from friends.
- **Plan a meeting place**
Pick a meeting place outside to meet family or friends with whom you are attending the event. In an emergency, be sure to meet them there.

When you enter

- **Locate exits immediately**
When you enter a building you should look for all available exits. Some exits may be in back of you. Be prepared to use your closest exit. You may not be able to use the exit you are closest to.
- **Check for clear exit paths**
Make sure aisles are wide enough and not obstructed by chairs or furniture. Check to make sure the exit door is not blocked or chained. If there are not at least two exits or exit paths are blocked, this is a violation to management and leave the building if it is not immediately addressed. Contact a fire marshal to register a complaint.
- **Do you feel safe?**
Does the building appear to be overcrowded? Are there fire sources such as candles, cigarettes or cigars burning, pyrotechnics, or other heat sources that may make you feel unsafe? Are there safety systems in place such as alternative exits, sprinklers, and smoke alarms? If you have any concerns, ask a fire marshal for clarification on your concerns. If you do not feel safe in the building, leave immediately.

During an emergency

- **React immediately**

If an alarm sounds, you see smoke or fire, or other unusual disturbance immediately an orderly fashion.

- **Get out, stay out!**
Once you have escaped, stay out. Under no circumstances should you ever go back building. Let trained firefighters conduct rescue operations.

Source: NFPA Public Education Division

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