

Emergency Readiness: Can We Reach Supplies and Call for Help?

Todd Jerome Jenkins | v1.0 | Reviewed October 6, 2026 | Discussion + field checks

Why this matters

Supplies on an inventory are not always available where work happens. A locked office, changed gate or failed radio can defeat the plan. Check access and communication on the shift that will need them.

Objective: Show that required supplies and emergency-help arrangements are usable at today's work location.

Key hazards or failure points

Missing or expired supplies; inaccessible kits; dead batteries; no coverage; an outdated address; absent responders; delaying evacuation to collect belongings.

Practical controls

- Match emergency arrangements to the current site plan, task and shift. Identify the supply owner, designated response roles and backups. Brief temporary workers and late arrivals on relevant arrangements.
- Keep required supplies accessible and maintained under the site inventory and actual equipment instructions. A personal go-bag can support personal preparedness; it does not replace employer emergency arrangements.
- Provide the call method, location details and responder access information. Plan an appropriate communication backup where the usual method may fail. Do not delay an evacuation to retrieve supplies or belongings.

Verify It in the Field

Have a worker show the actual kit location and access method. The responsible person compares contents, package condition and expiry with the approved list and instructions. Record any missing or unusable item.

Check phone or radio power and coverage through an agreed normal contact. State the current location and access instructions and compare them with the plan. Never call 911 merely to test the equipment.

Confirm designated response coverage and backup for this shift. Check who replenishes supplies after use and who corrects a failed communication method. Record actual results, owner and completion time; keep personal medical needs private.

Stop and reassess

Hold affected work when required response equipment, communication or coverage is unavailable. Reassess after a shift, location or access change. In an actual emergency, follow the plan and get help; do not remain in danger to complete a readiness checklist.

Ask the crew

1. Who can reach and open the kit on this shift?
2. How would we get help if the usual phone failed?
3. What changed since the last readiness check?

Before work: verify access, communication and coverage.

Sources: OSHA 1910.38, 1910.151 and 1926.50; NYC emergency go-bag guidance.

Free next step: [JHA/JSA planning & field-verification worksheet](#)

Expanded guidance, references, supervisor check and attendance record accompany this talk.