

ISO 14001 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE (4.4.7)

In order to be in conformance with this provision of ISO 14001 an organization must be able to answer the overall question: “**How do you plan and respond to emergency situations?**”. In order to answer that question three specific tasks must be addressed under the Emergency Preparedness and Response section of the standard. First, the organization must identify the possibilities for accidents and emergency situations. Second, the organization must prepare emergency preparedness and response procedures. Third, the organization should evaluate and revise as appropriate the procedures.

The Emergency Preparedness and Response section of the standard applies to the entire organization. This section of the standard is not limited to the Significant Environmental Aspects. The process here should include, as a minimum, the following steps:

- A. inventorying hazardous substances;
- B. identifying potential accident scenarios;
- C. modeling potential distribution patterns; and,
- D. evaluating potential impacts.

Once the above process has been completed the organization should develop procedures to potentially eliminate the incidents. In addition the organization should develop procedures to respond to the potential accidents. The emergency response procedures should be periodically tested.

Questions That Need To be Answered:

The following questions will need to be answered in order to determine whether the Emergency Preparedness and Response Section meets the intent of ISO 14001:

1. Has the organization evaluated its operations with respect to potential emergency situations and accidents?
2. Has the organization developed procedures to respond to such potential emergency situations and accidents?
3. Does the organization periodically test the procedures?