

CHOOSING AN EVACUATION LOCATION

Fire and Life-Safety Group (FLS)

(Copied and revised from the guidelines prepared by CU-EH&S.)

These are a list of things to keep in mind when selecting a location or locations for occupants to gather when their building is evacuated. This location should be determined well before an emergency occurs.

Try to Locate Evacuation Point:

- Uphill and upwind from building. Be aware that buildings can be evacuated due to hazardous materials release, fire and smoke, or potential incendiary device.
- At a clearly visible location that is easy to describe in plans and to responders.
- At a safe distance from the building (Preferably 150 - 200 yards away).
- Away from secondary risk factors, such as dumpsters (which may contain a secondary explosive device), gas mains or gas lines, high voltage wires or transfer points, and sewer main access covers.
- Close enough to access routes to facilitate vehicular evacuation.
- In a location that is easily accessible.

Try to Avoid:

- Blocking access routes or staging areas responders will use.
- Hydrants or utility shut-off valves / access points.
- Crossing major traffic arteries unless there is a traffic light or other traffic control measure.
- Other risk / danger areas such as gas mains or gas lines, high voltage wires or transfer points, sewer main manhole covers / access.
- Structures that may be at risk of collapse due to blast or other building damage, such as high unsupported walls, large windows, towers, or antennas.
- Channeling those who are evacuating into confined areas, such as tunnels and dead-ends or terrain that may cause people to trip. Both situations can cause crushing.

Consider:

- Those who are hearing, mobility, and developmentally impaired and who may have special needs.
- Ways to account for those who have evacuated the building and to transfer evacuees to indoor shelters as they become available.

- Radio / cell phone availability. Try not to position evacuation points in areas where communications are impaired or not accessible.

- The possibility of a criminal act. If a criminal act occurs (e.g., a bombing, shooting or arson), responders are to control the area and maintain the integrity of the crime scene.