

ICE-In case of emergency

by Amy Stewart

Before you begin

If there was an emergency, could you quickly locate the emergency numbers for your employees? Front-line supervisors should understand how to access this information quickly using the correct protocol, including emergency-telephone numbers. Describe your system for an employee-emergency event. Lead by example: Enter your emergency contacts in your mobile phones. In addition, validate that your employees and co-workers have emergency numbers in their mobile telephones. Ensure that the phone numbers for the local fire, law enforcement and emergency medical professionals, as well as the emergency management agency, are easy to locate on or near your work phones.



Introduction

How many participants know whom to call in case of emergency? If you suddenly became unconscious, who would know how to get to your emergency-contact person and where would you keep the information? Do you have a mobile telephone? Do you have In Case of Emergency (ICE) programmed into your phone? When you respond, being prepared for emergencies reduces confusion.

How many of you agree that emergencies only happen to other people? What factors determine whether or not you are prepared? We challenge you to look at preparing for events with alternative strategies and to take safety home.

Small group discussion

If the group is not large enough for small group break-outs, discuss the three group concepts in a large group. If the group is too large, give two groups the same set of questions.

Group one – What is ICE?

ICE provides emergency personnel with contacts in emergency situations. Police, fire and other emergency personnel check cellular telephones if the injured are incapable of providing the necessary medical information.

List the types of emergency events and how we consider or address the situations. In addition, how do we discuss the information with friends, neighbors, co-workers or loved ones? If you have not discussed these topics in your circle of influence, now is the best time to link with someone in this small group.

Group two – Why and how do we use ICE?

ICE helps emergency personnel quickly learn about a person's medical history. It takes minutes instead of hours to contact the next of kin. Give examples. Demonstrate to each other how it works for you and test your mobile telephones.

- On your cell phone, enter the letters ICE. Then type in your contact's name, followed by his or her phone number. An example would be ICEjohndoe 555-555-5555.
- List both day and evening numbers.

Group three – Who do you choose for ICE?

- You could choose a family member, neighbor or a friend. So they know, discuss this with those you choose to be ICE contacts.
- Provide your ICE contacts with an updated list of your medical conditions. Include allergies, current medication and previous medical procedures. Also include a phone list of family members, your primary care physician and a main work contact.

Large group discussion

Using a spokesperson from each group, summarize your discussion and how others may learn from the discussion. Based on current studies, clarify your answers.

Group one (Answers)

Survey the employees' answers. Ask the participants what are the best examples of how ICE can help others by saving lives or improving communications? Repeat that ICE is an abbreviation for In Case of Emergency.

Group two (Answers)

Summarize the examples of why and how we use ICE. ICE helps emergency personnel quickly learn medical history. It takes minutes instead of hours to contact the next of kin. For example, here is an ICE phone number: ICEjohndoe 555-555-5555.

Group three (Answers)

Summarize the type of relationship that you designate a primary number and the other as a secondary number. For example, your numbers may be for a spouse, partner, parent, sibling, neighbor, caregiver or a co-worker. Why is it better to have more than one number? How does your workplace promote and support these relationships?

What can you do?

Add ICE immediately to your cell phone. This can save lives and time. If you add more than one ICE contact, then include them in numeric order. For example, you may have ICE1 for your primary contact, ICE2 for your second contact, etc. Plan ahead and be proactive. Spread the word about ICE to your family members, friends and co-workers so they can also use this tool.

Presentation methods and strategies

Through group discussion, employees will better understand what to do in the event of an emergency. Prompt them to strengthen relationships before an emergency response situation occurs. Peer-to-peer feedback and employee suggestions help clarify the importance of emergency communications. This applies on and off the job.

When appropriate, the discussion leader will offer feedback on employee suggestions. The leader will prepare response and recover scenarios where it is applicable.

Group action

List the strengths, roles and responsibilities of your safety or crisis team/committee. Track the team members' progress as they become certified in related areas – from first aid to ham-radio operations.

An emergency-response training program for employees may include procedures, rules and guidelines for preventing emergencies, emergency preparedness, response and recovery. Continue with the refresher and follow-up training by interacting with community members and emergency responders.

For more ICE information, check with your local police and fire departments. Tell your employees to program ICE on all mobile telephones - at home and work.

Quiz - Circle T for true and F for false.

1. ICE stands for In Case of Emergency. T F
2. You should list day and evening phone numbers. T F
3. Mobile telephones are a good source for ICE information. T F
4. We can take safety home. T F
5. You can add ICE to your cellular phone right now. T F

Answers: 1.T; 2.T; 3.T; 4.T; 5.T.

References

Web sites

ICE PowerPoint presentation (American Society of Safety Engineers): <http://www.asse.org/newsroom/safetytips/docs/icepowerpoint32608.ppt>

State EMS Board's Position on I.C.E.: http://www.publicsafety.ohio.gov/links/EMSP_ICE%20and%20BMV%20Next%20of%20Kin.pdf

Amy Stewart is a certified safety professional. She has more than 20 years of experience designing fleet-safety training and emergency-response programs. She presents at the National Safety Council and is a professional member of the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE). She also serves as a member of the Society of Ohio Safety Engineers Patterns for Progress committee. In addition, she chairs the Ohio Trucking Safety Council.

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