

Tabletop Exercises



Scenario 2 – Gas Leak

PHASE 1

You are the manager of a small newsagent which employs 4 people, including yourself. One Tuesday, at approximately 10am, you are at work when one of your employees mentions that they think they can smell gas.

What should you do?

What are the immediate steps you should take?

What should you be careful not to do?

Tabletop Exercises



PHASE 1

Possible answers:

- Open doors and windows
- Check appliances to see if the gas has been left on unlit or if a pilot light has gone out
 - If so turn the appliance off
 - If not call the gas emergency service
- Turn the gas supply off at the meter
- DON'T turn any electrical switches on or off
- DON'T smoke, use matches, or naked flames

Think about:

- Do you have a Business Continuity Plan for situations such as this?
- Do you want to close the shop at this stage? How will you inform your customers of the situation?

PHASE 2

It is now 10.15am. You have checked the appliances in your building but cannot find any obvious source of the leak. You suspect that the leak may be coming from a gas main just outside the shop. You have telephoned the National Gas Emergency Service and are waiting for them to arrive. The staff are becoming extremely agitated, demanding to know what is going on and if it is safe for them to be at work. Customers wandering into the shop are complaining of the smell and people are beginning to avoid the shop altogether.

What would be your next steps?

How would you deal with the staff?

How would you deal with the customers?

Tabletop Exercises



PHASE 2

Possible answers:

- Take the staff out of the building if possible to somewhere they can wait completely away from the smell of gas
- Remain calm and reassure them that the situation is under control
- If you have not already closed the shop you must do so now
- Contact your insurers

Think about:

- Do you have a prearranged evacuation point where your staff could go?
- How will you inform customers arriving at the shop of the situation? Do you want to place a sign on the door?
- Do you have items in the shop which could potentially cause a hazard in relation to the gas leak? If so, what should you do about these?

PHASE 3

It is now 11.30am. The gas emergency services have arrived and have ascertained that the gas is coming from a faulty gas main directly outside the building. Your premises will be out of action for at least 48 hours while the faulty main is fully repaired and made safe again.

What steps would you take over the next 48 hours and beyond to deal with the situation?

What could you have done differently to prevent this situation affecting you as much?

PHASE 3

Possible answers:

- Inform customers of the situation
- Find out when the shop can reopen, inform your customers, and aim to stick to this date
- Make sure you receive frequent updates from the engineers carrying out the repairs on their progress
- Make sure you communicate these updates to your staff, and if necessary, your customers

Think about:

- How would you ensure that you do not lose customers?
- How would you ensure that customers arriving at the shop are made aware of the situation?
- What can you do about customers and suppliers who may be trying to phone the shop? Do you want to transfer the calls to an alternative number? Record an answerphone message?
- What will you do about the prearranged orders from suppliers which will be arriving at the shop every day?
- How can you protect your reputation as a business and ensure that it does not suffer as a result of this incident? How can you minimise any loss of reputation that may occur?
- Can you afford the loss of income you will suffer?
- What will happen to your staff during the period of closure?
- Do you want to inform the media of the situation to prevent negative publicity?
- Do you have the necessary insurance to cover you?