

EMERGENCY EVACUATION DRILLS

With the exception of Group H, S and U occupancies, all other IFC regulated occupancies require one or more annual emergency evacuation drills. An emergency evacuation drill is defined as *an exercise performed to train staff and occupants and to evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness in carrying out emergency evacuation procedures*. An emergency evacuation drill is an exercise to familiarize employees or occupants with the building's fire safety and evacuation plan and is conducted to ensure the plan is properly implemented (see Figure 4-3). Deficiencies or limitations of the plan are commonly identified during these drills, and these findings should be used to improve the fire safety and evacuation plan. [\[Ref. 405.2\]](#)

The frequency of emergency evacuation drills and the required participants are set forth in IFC Table 405.2 (see Table 4-1). This table establishes the number of times within a year that emergency evacuation drills are required and specifies who is required to participate. For example, IFC Section 404.2 requires a fire safety and evacuation plan for Group B occupancies with an occupant load of 500 or more persons or more than 100 persons are located above or below the lowest level of exit discharge. Under the provisions in Table 405.2, plant employees must participate in an emergency evacuation drill annually. [\[Ref. 405.2\]](#)



FIGURE 4-3 An evacuation of a multistory Group B office building

When an evacuation drill is planned, the event should be scheduled to occur at different times and under varying conditions to simulate unusual conditions that could occur. Records documenting particular aspects of the drill, such as the person who supervised the event, its date and time, the method of initiating the event, the number of persons evacuated and the time to complete the evacuation must be maintained for review by the fire code official. In some jurisdictions, the fire code official is required to be notified before such an exercise is performed. [\[Ref. 405.4, 405.5, 405.6 and 405.7\]](#)

TABLE 4-1 Fire and evacuation drill frequency and participation (IFC Table 405.2)

Group or Occupancy	Frequency	Participation
Group A	Quarterly	Employees
Group B ^c	Annually	Employees
Group E	Monthly ^a	All occupants
Group F	Annually	Employees
Group I	Quarterly on each shift	Employees ^b
Group R-1	Quarterly on each shift	Employees
Group R-2 ^d	Four annually	All occupants
Group R-4	Quarterly on each shift	Employees ^b
High-rise buildings	Annually	Employees

- a. The frequency shall be allowed to be modified in accordance with Section 408.3.2.
- b. Fire and evacuation drills in residential care assisted living facilities shall include complete evacuation of the premises in accordance with Section 408.10.5. Where occupants receive habilitation or rehabilitation training, fire prevention and fire safety practices shall be included as part of the training program.
- c. Group B buildings having an occupant load of 500 or more persons or more than 100 persons above or below the lowest level of exit discharge.
- d. Applicable to Group R-2 college and university buildings in accordance with Section 408.3.