A disorganized sheltering can result in confusion and/or injury. This checklist, appropriate for any type of organization, will help you prepare for, conduct, and evaluate your next sheltering drill.

**PREPARATION**

* Review your Emergency Action Plan and ensure it has:
* Identified conditions under which sheltering-in-place would be necessary; be sure to identify conditions which would require everyone to shelter in their immediate location as opposed to a predetermined assembly area
* Written sheltering procedures
* Identified a clear chain of command and designated those authorized to order sheltering or a facility shutdown
* Identified personnel with special and/or functional needs who may need assistance sheltering and one or more people assigned, including backup personnel, to assist them during an emergency – Organizational leaders are encouraged to become aware and educate themselves on best practice compliance and realistic accommodations for accessibility
* Procedures for assisting staff and visitors, particularly those who do not speak English
* Identified systems in place to notify and account for building occupants during off-hours
* Identified key staff members to perform critical shut down operations or other duties before sheltering
* Procedures to account for staff during a sheltering situation
* Recommended types and amounts of safety and first aid equipment to have onsite
* Procedures, shelters and routes are marked on floor plans that are posted throughout the facility
* Shelter and assembly areas are well marked
* Ensure routes were chosen to protect staff, visitors, and contractors from additional hazards and that they will not hinder emergency response efforts
* On an annual basis, at a minimum:
* Inspect all routes to ensure they are free of obstructions and debris
* Test all back-up and safety systems such as emergency lighting and communications systems
* Provide emergency response training to safety wardens and staff
* Conduct a sheltering drill

**CONDUCTING THE DRILL**

* If the premises consist of multiple buildings on the same site, conduct drills for one building at a time
* If you will be activating any alarms during your drill, contact emergency services or other agencies to notify them of the date and time you will be conducting the drill in order to prevent their unintentional activation
* If you are in a multi-tenant building, be sure to notify other occupants in advance that you will be conducting a drill
* If your facility has unique hazards or requires special access procedures for first responders, you may wish to include them in your drills periodically
* Consider the current weather – unless you are testing procedures relevant to a particular weather event, avoid potential hazards by conducting your drill during temperate conditions
* Assign observers
* Give prior notice that you are conducting a practice drill – this can be an announcement at the time of the drill such as, “We are conducting a shelter-in-place drill. Please move to your assigned shelter location immediately.”
* Consider testing alternate plans by using one of the following strategies:
* Have observers to block main routes, so that alternate routes are tested
* Establish a scenario in which a primary shelter location is unavailable so occupants have to go to a secondary or alternate location

**MONITORING AND OBSERVING THE DRILL**

* Record the date, start time, end time, and name of the individual in charge
* Check only those items that were observed or demonstrated during the drill
* Notification systems, alarms, and communication tools functioned as expected
* Individuals with assigned roles and responsibilities practiced their skills
* The drill tested procedures for wheelchairs or other mobility devices
* Safety equipment was located and tested
* Staff, visitors, and contractors used the designated routes and sheltered in the designated areas
* Staff, visitors, and contractors carried out procedures as appropriate for the situation
* Accountability procedures were practiced
* Pay attention to any of the following:
* Communication difficulties
* Issues with any of the exits, fire doors, or routes
* Difficulties for any occupants, particularly children or those with special and/or functional needs
* Inappropriate or unnecessary actions such as gathering personal items, using elevators, or locking doors

**FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES**

* The Emergency Response Team and any observers should conduct a debrief to share observations and identify gaps and/or opportunities for improvement
* Document the drill and keep the records for at least two years – you may wish to use the [Drill/Exercise History Form](http://www.readyrating.org/Resource-Center/Emergency-Planning/drillexercise-history-form-sample?utm_source=AnonOnPageLink&utm_medium=Link&utm_term=AnonUser&utm_content=ResourceLinks&utm_campaign=AnonOnPageLink) or[After Action Report](http://www.readyrating.org/Resource-Center/Emergency-Planning/after-action-report-sample?utm_source=AnonOnPageLink&utm_medium=Link&utm_term=AnonUser&utm_content=ResourceLinks&utm_campaign=AnonOnPageLink)