

Building and Fire Safety

Pakistan

Made in Asia

Good practices on the way to a sustainable textile and garment sector

Emergency action committee to prevent and fight fires

M/S. JB Industries

550 Employees

Knitwear

M/S. JB Industries

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The Challenge

In the textile industry, there is a special risk of fires. Almost all materials being used are flammable. Fires are often caused by negligence and in particular by bad housekeeping. The real concern in cases of fire is how to evacuate the employees and how to fight the fire. In 2012, Pakistan gained sad notoriety by the fire at Ali Enterprises and their difficulties to evacuate the employees.

Since then, international buyers are even more attentive with regard to building and fire safety in Pakistan. JB Industries aimed at initiating a program to prevent fires, evacuate the employees and fight fires when they occur.

The Initiative

In 2006 JB Industries introduced an **Emergency Action Committee** to improve health and safety of its workers as well as the efficiency of emergency actions. The committee is responsible for preventing fires, fighting fires and train staff on how to evacuate in cases of emergencies. To ensure the capacity of the Emergency Action Committee in decision making and ability to act, the heads of departments and the owner actively participate in the monthly meetings and support the decisions.

To **prevent fires**, the Emergency Action Committee assessed fire risks within the factory, observes them regularly and rectifies hazards instantly, always searching for permanent solutions. Every identified risk and every action taken has to be reported. The fire risks at JB industries are related to electrical equipment and the electrification system. Both are observed by the department under surveillance of an electrician. A further source of danger, combustible dust, is removed by a heavy duty suction machine and monitored regularly on a weekly basis.

In **case of a fire**, the employees have to be evacuated and the fire has to be fought. The evacuation plan is regularly reviewed by the Emergency Action Committee, escape routes and emergency exits are secured. Every new employee gets an introduction into the evacuation plan. Monthly fire drills are conducted to ensure smooth evacuation in cases of emergencies. Furthermore, JB Industries started to train its employees on how to fight and extinguish fires. JB Industries purchased its own fire engine and emergency water tank to fight fires. It has two fully equipped fire cabinets and the fire fighters of JB industries can rely on 36 fire hydrants and 96 fire extinguishers.

The Benefit

An outbreak of fire causes a serious threat on the health or even life`s of the employees, it destroys machines and property. The Emergency Action Committee prevents fires before they arise. Fire protection is in the self-interests of the owners and it also improves trust between buyers and suppliers.

The fire risk management helps JB industries to maintain good relations to the brands. Buyers want to assure that their suppliers comply with national regulations and international standards to reduce their reputational risks and to make sure that they can meet the lead times. An effective fire risk management gives such assurance.