OSHA’s Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) requirements can be extremely costly to implement, but there are ways to save tens of thousands of dollars on the employee emergency evacuation system part of their requirements, which is also known as an employee alarm system.

What is an employee alarm system? According to OSHA’s Employee Alarm System standard 29 CFR 1910.165, “An employee alarm system can be any piece of equipment and/or device designed to inform employees that an emergency exists or to signal the presence of a hazard requiring urgent attention.”

Normally installing an emergency mass notification system to meet this OSHA standard requires running thousands of feet of wire. With the labor cost involved, the cost of installing this wire is significantly more than the cost of the equipment needed for the system.

This cost can be greatly reduced by installing a wireless notification system instead of a wired system. Plus, installation time can be reduced to a day or two for a complete working system.

• Eliminate running wires
• Save thousands of dollars
• Install in a day or two
The heart of the system is a wireless PA (public address) device that is placed around various locations of a building or property. This is what enables personnel to broadcast an emergency message without having to run wires everywhere.

The PA system consists of a receiver unit with antenna that receives transmissions, amplifies them, and then sends them to attached PA horn speakers. Each receiver location can be set to different volume levels depending on the environment.

- Single receiver with 2 speakers.
- One speaker is located inside the warehouse and the other is located outside for the loading dock.
- Speaker volume is set to 50% for the warehouse environment.

- Single receiver with 1 speaker.
- The speaker is located inside the cafeteria area.
- Speaker volume is set to 25% for the restaurant environment.

To activate this emergency notification system, there are a couple of options available. For one, the transmitter sending the message can be in the form of a portable 2-way radio, mobile vehicle radio, or base station intercom that can be used to make live voice announcements from anywhere. These announcements can be used to make guided evacuations or to tell employees to take cover if bad weather is approaching.
The second option is to use a device called the MURS Voice Notification Wireless Monitor that broadcasts a previously recorded message when someone presses a button. Two messages can be recorded with two separate buttons to activate them.

Another benefit of a wireless PA system over a wired system is that handheld two-way radios can be used to make announcements. So no matter where emergency personnel are, they can make announcements. Even if they are up to two miles away or more with the use of external antennas. If a wired PA system is already in place, a Wireless PA System Interface device is available that will receive transmissions from radios and then broadcast those transmissions over a wired PA system.

These wireless PA units are available in both UHF and VHF frequencies so they can be used with existing two-way radios. The VHF model has several frequencies that do not require an FCC license.

One more benefit of a wireless system is that the VHF MURS Wireless PA version of these units can also be programmed to receive automatic transmissions from NOAA Weather Radio so employees instantly know when bad weather is approaching.

So when an employee emergency evacuation system needs to be implemented, a wireless system can be quickly installed without all the hassles and expense of installing a wired system.

These units can be purchased at www.IntercomsOnline.com