

CHAPTER 16

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

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Appendix A—Sample Emergency Preparedness Plans

CHAPTER 16

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

1601. General Statement. County departments must provide for the safety of persons, property, and County facilities in case of an emergency. Department heads are responsible for ensuring that employees are trained and prepared to respond to an emergency or a threatening incident.

1602. Emergency Preparedness Plans. Each department is required to develop and maintain an Emergency Preparedness Plan. At a minimum, the Plan is to have the following components:

- a. Emergency Evacuation Plan, which contains a list of department employees, designates escape routes, assigns monitors that confirm all employees and visitors are evacuated, and designates an assembly area.
- b. Emergency reporting (e.g. calling 911, contacting supervisor or department head).
- c. Bomb threat procedures.
- d. Fire response procedures.
- e. Earthquake response procedures.
- f. Medical emergency procedures.
- g. Intra-and inter-departmental communications during an emergency.
- h. Provisions for contacting and coordinating emergency responses with the department responsible for the facility and/or its' security, e.g. General Services, or landlord in leased facilities.

A sample plan is located at Appendix A.

.1 Plan Components Unique to a Department or Facility. Departments having unique situations, such as the potential for hazardous material spills or the like, must include response guidelines in the Emergency Preparedness Plan. Departments that handle large amounts of cash must have guidelines for responding to a robbery threat. Departments in facilities with elevators must have guidelines for responding to being trapped in the elevator.

.2 Plan Development Assistance. The Risk Management and General Services Divisions will assist departments in developing, testing, and evaluating an Emergency Preparedness Plan, and in designing training drills. Departments storing and/or using hazardous materials should consult with the Environmental Health and Fire Departments. Local police departments will assess facility security and provide guidelines for responding to a robbery and other potential threats. Any security modifications to a facility must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate entity, e.g. General Services.

.3 Plan Format. The Plan should be divided into tabbed sections to allow for ready access to pertinent information. It is recommended that the Plan be in a brightly colored binder for easy identification.

.4 *Employee Access to Plan.* Each employee is to receive a copy of the Emergency Preparedness Plan. The Plan should be kept at-hand and the employee should take the Plan with them when evacuating a facility.

1603. Employee Training. All department employees are to be trained on each component of the Emergency Preparedness Plan. Pending formal training, the Plan should be reviewed with new employees at the time of hire. New employees are to be shown fire extinguisher and first aid kit locations and are to be walked through the department's evacuation route.

1604. Department Safety Officer. The Department Safety Officer (DSO) is responsible for training department employees on the procedures in the Emergency Preparedness Plan, ensuring that evacuation plans are posted, maintaining a list of employees requiring assistance if the facility is evacuated, and functions as the department's point of contact during an emergency. The DSO also coordinates emergency response drills.

1605. Incident Response Teams. Departments may designate specially trained employees to respond to specific types of emergencies, such as medical emergencies if trained in first aid and CPR, or responding to customer or employee threatening behavior if trained to handle these situations.

1606. Inter- and Intra-department Communications. Departments in facilities housing multiple departments, and departments located in a large complex, will coordinate and determine a method for ensuring all affected departments and the General Services Division are notified of an emergency or threatening situation in another area of the facility/complex. It is recommended that a building/complex committee be established to coordinate and establish the communications method.

1607. Evacuation Drills. One evacuation drill should be conducted at each County facility annually. Department Safety Officers are responsible for coordinating these drills, and for coordinating the drill with entity responsible for the facility's operation, e.g. General Services.

1608. Evacuation Assembly Areas. Departments will coordinate with the entity responsible for the facility, e.g. General Services, to establish evacuation assembly areas.

SAMPLE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

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This sample plan must be tailored to your department or facility to reflect established emergency procedures.

REPORTING EMERGENCIES

GENERAL INFORMATION

Promptly and accurately reporting an emergency is often the key to how well that emergency is handled. A delay in calling for help, or providing insufficient or inaccurate information, can sometimes make the difference between life and death.

POLICE, FIRE, OR MEDICAL EMERGENCY

For emergencies, you be the judge. If you think that it is an emergency, dial 911. Remember, on most County telephone systems, you must first dial “9” (9-911).

Be prepared to provide emergency dispatchers with the following information:

- The type of emergency (fire, accident, injury, etc.)
- Scope of the emergency (number of people involved, size of problem, etc.)
- Location of the emergency. Be as specific as possible. Give the name of the city, the address, the name of building or business, the floor number, room number and any information that best describes the location.
- Your name and the phone number you are calling from so that someone can call you back if more information is needed.
- Any other details that the emergency responders may need to know.

Be prepared to stay on the line until the emergency operators state that they have all the information they need. It may seem to you that they are wasting time asking a lot of questions, but they are not. In many situations, the responding agency is notified while you are still on the phone with the emergency dispatcher.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

GENERAL INFORMATION

If you are directed to evacuate a building or if the fire alarm is activated, follow the Emergency Evacuation Plan procedure in this section.

Why Evacuate

There are a number of reasons to evacuate a County facility. The most obvious is when a fire threatens the safety of the occupants. Other reasons may include the threat of toxic fumes from chemical spills affecting the building, bomb threats when there is enough information to believe it is not a hoax, or when the building may have been damaged by a strong earthquake.

When To Evacuate

Evacuations may be initiated in several ways:

- Fire alarm—evacuation should begin immediately without questioning whether or not it is a false alarm.
- Spontaneous evacuation in response to an observed emergency.
- Department head or designee's request to evacuate.

When Not To Evacuate

There may be situations where it is more dangerous to leave the building than it is to stay inside. An example might be a toxic cloud that is passing by outside. In situations such as these, take appropriate measures (such as shutting off the ventilation system and closing doors and windows) and stay inside.

Know Your Emergency Exits

Learn the location of all exits from your work area and building and practice an evacuation on your own to find out where exits lead. Be aware of all available exits in the event the regular one(s) become unusable. County buildings are required to have an evacuation plan posted with exits clearly indicated.

Evacuation Assembly Area

Each County department/facility has a designated evacuation assembly area. Refer to the evacuation procedure. Once the evacuation order is given, proceed directly to the assembly area, check in with the Department Safety Officer (or other designated monitor) and remain there until told to do otherwise.

Evacuation Drills

You are expected to participate in evacuation drills. These drills are conducted to familiarize you with the emergency exits and evacuation procedures for your facility. They also help to identify problem areas such as alarms that may not be functioning properly or obstacles that might hamper evacuation.

Fire Alarms

In case of fire, the alarm can be activated at the fire alarm pull stations. When the alarm sounds, all employees and visitors will exit through the nearest fire exit. When the fire alarm sounds elevators will return to the first floor and are placed out of service.

AISLES AND EXITS

To make sure you will be able to use exits during an emergency, follow these guidelines:

- Aisles and exits must be free of obstructions.
- Storage of any kind is not permitted in the aisles, even on a temporary basis. This is especially true of boxes, files, furniture etc.
- Storage is not permitted on stairs or in stairwells.
- Chairs, trash cans and other furnishings are not allowed in exit ways.
- Exits will be clearly identified with "EXIT" signs. If an exit sign is not properly lit, report it immediately to your supervisor for maintenance.
- Electric cords and telephone/computer cables must not lay across aisles where they may present a tripping hazard.

Fire doors must not be wedged open. This is especially true of the doors in stairwells.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

- When the alarm goes off, all staff and visitors will immediately evacuate the building.
- All staff and visitors will immediately evacuate the building when announced by the department head, his/her designee, or emergency personnel.
- Evacuate from your current location. **DO NOT GO AGAINST THE FLOW OF PEOPLE EXITING.**
- Evacuate through exits closest to where you are located. Review and be familiar with the enclosed maps that show the evacuation routes for the office and emergency equipment locations.
- Stairs should be used to reach the first floor to exit the building.
- **DO NOT USE THE ELEVATOR!**

- If a person is injured, disabled or otherwise unable to use the stairs, they should wait in the stairwell for assistance from emergency personnel.
- All staff are to report to (assembly area) until otherwise notified by emergency personnel.
- During an evacuation, all staff are considered on duty and are to remain at the assembly area until given a specific task or released by the department head, his/her designee, or emergency personnel.

EVACUATION WHEN ALARM IS NOT ACTIVATED

In cases when the alarm is not activated, the department head or his/her designees will be notified of any emergency situation and will have the authority to authorize evacuation.

MONITORS

Every section/area in the department will have two assigned monitors. The monitors will:

- Direct people to an alternate exit if the planned escape route cannot be used.
- Assure that all persons are evacuated from work spaces and stations and common areas within their assigned section.
- Confirm that all persons in their assigned section are accounted for at the designated meeting area and report same to the department head or his/her designee.

If the situation allows, employees will check out with their section monitor when leaving the building during an evacuation.

STAFF ASSIGNMENTS

Department Head, Designees, and Monitors

- Advance notification of an evacuation exercise must be provided to the appropriate entity, e.g. General Services.
- Have the evacuation announced over the public address system. If the location of the cause for the evacuation is known, include in the announcement the area(s) to avoid during evacuation.
- Monitors are responsible for ensuring all staff and visitors have evacuated. The following areas must be checked:
 - < Office spaces and work stations
 - < Conference rooms
 - < Restrooms
 - < Break rooms
 - < Stairwells

- If any staff or visitors remain in the stairwells because they are unable to use the stairs, this information will be reported to emergency personnel.
- Once staff is assembled at the designated meeting area and everyone is accounted for, the department head or designee will report the roll call results immediately to the on-site emergency commander (usually fire personnel or County security). Report if any staff or visitors are waiting in the stairwell for evacuation assistance.

All Staff

- Take your Emergency Preparedness Plan binder with you. Anyone's copy of the employee list can be used for taking roll call and for logging any assignments individuals or groups may be given to do.
- Take your pocketbook, purse, identification, car keys, etc.

EVACUATION PLAN MAP

* DENOTES FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

+ DENOTES FIRST AID KITS

~ DENOTES FIRE ALARM PULL STATIONS

DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEE LIST

INTER-AND INTRA-DEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Departments in facilities housing multiple departments, and departments located in a large complex, must coordinate and determine a method for ensuring all departments are notified of an emergency or threatening situation in another area of the facility/complex.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS

This department has established e-mail as the communications link to other departments in this facility. Each department has three contact names. These people are e-mailed when an incident occurs in another department, and are charged with the responsibility of determining the appropriate action to take.

INTRA-DEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS

If the fire alarm is not activated and the department head or designee is ordering building evacuation, the announcement will be made over the public address system and the assigned monitors for each area will be contacted via e-mail and will verbally transmit the order to the employees and visitors in their assigned area.

BOMB THREAT PROCEDURES

GENERAL INFORMATION

The two most common reasons for bomb threats are:

- The caller has definite knowledge or believes that an explosive or incendiary device has been or will be placed and he/she wants to minimize personal injury or property damage. The caller may be the bomber or just someone else who has become aware of such information.
- The caller wants to create an atmosphere of anxiety and panic that will possibly result in a disruption of the normal activities at the facility.

BOMB THREATS BY PHONE

Most bomb threats are made by phone. Since most County facilities lack a central switchboard, any employee who receives calls directly could receive a bomb threat. All employees must know how to properly respond to a bomb threat.

If you receive a bomb threat by phone, you should:

- Remain calm and keep the caller on the line as long as possible.
- Ask to have the message repeated. Try to remember the exact wording and write it down.
- Ask the caller where the bomb is, when it is going to explode, what does it look like, what kind of bomb it is, why did they put the bomb in your building, and what is their name and address. This information is vital in trying to identify the caller and the location of the bomb.
- Inform the caller that the building is occupied and the detonation of a bomb could result in death or serious injury to many innocent people.
- Pay particular attention to peculiar background noises such as motors running, background music, and any other noise that may give a clue as to the location of the caller.
- Listen closely to the voice (male, female, adult, child), voice quality (calm, excited), accents and speech impediments.
- Determine the caller's mood—angry, calm, irrational, etc.
- Immediately after the caller hangs up:

Call 911 and report the threat.

Notify the department head or designee of the threat and your actions.

DEPARTMENT HEAD RESPONSIBILITIES

The department head or designee must:

- Obtain details from the person who received the threat.
- Designate someone to meet arriving law enforcement officers.
- If the threat occurs in a court occupied building, notify the appropriate Sheriff's Department court coordinator.
 - Superior Court—1415 Truxtun: (phone #)
 - Superior Court—1215 Truxtun: (phone #)
 - Outlying Courts Buildings: On site Sheriff's personnel
- Notify the County Administrative Office of the threat.
- Meet with arriving law enforcement officers and follow their instructions regarding any search of the building and/or evacuation requests.
- Inform the County Administrative Office of any significant new information.
- Notify the County Administrative Office when the building is being re-occupied.
- Prepare a full report of the sequence of events and actions taken. Forward a copy to the County Administrative Officer.

EVACUATION

The department head and the County Administrative Officer, or their designees, are the only persons with authority to evacuate a County building due to a bomb threat and should be notified immediately. The decision to evacuate will be based on the amount of details available and whether it appears to be a legitimate threat or a prank. The evacuation signal will be different from the fire alarm, and the fire alarm should never be used as a signal to evacuate in case of a bomb threat. If an evacuation is needed follow the Emergency Evacuation Plan.

- Leave doors and windows open to let the blast wave escape.
- Take your briefcase, purse, lunch bag, etc. with you to minimize the search.
- Conduct a quick visual check for any suspicious objects or anything out of the ordinary and report it to the Department Safety Officer once outside.
- The Department Safety Officer will work with police to keep anyone from re-entering the building.

BOMB SEARCH

If a search is required, volunteers that are familiar with the facility must do it. The police will help, but they do not have the resources to do it alone.

- Do not touch any suspicious object—leave removal and disposal for the bomb squad.
- Report the object to your supervisor or the Department Safety Officer or emergency personnel.
- Use normal phones for communication – *radios and cellular phones can detonate a bomb.*

EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE

GENERAL INFORMATION

All County facilities are located in areas prone to earthquakes. The degree to which your facility will be affected by the next earthquake will depend on several factors, including the distance from the epicenter, the soil type, the type of construction, and how well the occupants are prepared. Most County buildings are designed to withstand considerable shaking. However, a significant earthquake will most likely do some damage. The damage done by an earthquake generally encompasses most of the scenarios addressed in this Plan (medical emergencies, fires, hazardous materials, etc.).

Because earthquakes occur without warning, they can be very frightening. It is important to know how to respond properly to an earthquake in order to minimize panic and confusion. Since the normal emergency response systems will be overloaded in a significant earthquake, plan to be self-reliant in the early stages of the emergency.

BEFORE THE EARTHQUAKE

- Mentally prepare yourself for an earthquake disaster.
- Check all work locations for potential earthquake hazards and have them eliminated.
- Identify safe locations: under sturdy tables, desks, or against inside walls (doorways are not ideal). Outside safe locations include open areas away from buildings, trees, light poles and overhead electric wires.
- Identify items to fix: tall book shelves and file cabinets that are not secured and are over 4 feet in height, light fixtures that are not supported by diagonal wires, etc.
- Practice your plan. Physically place yourself in safe locations.

DURING THE SHAKING

The following are basic actions to follow during an earthquake.

- Remain calm. Staying calm makes it easier to act appropriately.
- If you are indoors, stay there. **DO NOT RUN OUTDOORS.** Most deaths and injuries occur as people leave buildings. Get under a desk or table or stand in a corner of an interior wall. In a significant earthquake, movement will be very difficult. If you cannot get under something sturdy, crouch down against the corner of the wall and cover your head with your hands.
- If you are outdoors, get into an open area away from trees, buildings, walls and power lines.
- In a high-rise building, stay away from windows and outside walls. Do not use elevators (elevators must not be used until inspected by service personnel after the earthquake).

- If driving, pull over to the side of the road and stop, but not under overpasses or power lines. Remain inside the vehicle until the shaking is over.

AFTER THE SHAKING

All employees should be prepared to assist as necessary. While employees are not expected to take on any tasks that may endanger their safety, they may assist with first aid to the level of their training and with other tasks vital to a smooth emergency response. Remember that during disasters, all County employees become disaster service workers.

Care for the injured. Immediately check for injuries among fellow workers and render first aid as needed. You may also have clients or visitors that will need your help. Seriously injured persons should not be moved unless they are in danger of further injury. Know where your first aid kits are located. Each worksite must have at least one kit.

Assess the situation—check for:

- Fires and fire hazards, especially gas leaks and damaged electrical wiring.
- Building cracks and damage. Check all overhead items for possible collapse such as suspended ceiling tiles, light fixtures and heating ducts and grills.
- Check to see if exits are still usable and not blocked by falling equipment or furniture.
- Make sure exit doors are operable.
- Available resources such as manpower and equipment.

EVACUATE IF DIRECTED

For most minor earthquakes, you do not need to evacuate the building, especially if there are no immediate signs of damage. If directed to evacuate, follow the Emergency Evacuation Plan. Watch out for objects that may fall off the outside of the building such as bricks and window glass.

PREPARE FOR AFTERSHOCKS

A series of aftershocks of varying magnitude and duration usually follow every earthquake. Although these aftershocks are generally not as strong as the main quake, they can result in additional damage or injuries.

Any building that shows signs of structural damage should be evacuated until a building inspector or structural engineer can check it.

Additional damage to building contents can be minimized by removing heavy items from high places, securing unstable objects, and placing breakables in a safe location.

OTHER DO'S AND DON'TS

- ◆ *Don't* light matches or operate electrical equipment in areas where gas leaks are suspected.
- ◆ *Do* use portable radios for emergency information.
- ◆ *Don't* use telephones unless it is to report emergency information.
- ◆ *Do* cooperate with fire, police, and emergency response team personnel.
- ◆ *Don't* drive unless necessary. Keep the streets clear for emergency vehicles.

ELEVATOR EMERGENCIES

GENERAL INFORMATION

In rare cases an elevator malfunction will constitute an emergency. The most common emergency is becoming a trapped passenger—the elevator door will not open and allow you to exit. Although being trapped can be alarming to the occupants, it is generally not life threatening.

WHAT TO DO IF TRAPPED IN AN ELEVATOR

- **NEVER ATTEMPT TO PRY THE ELEVATOR DOORS OPEN.** This may cause the elevator to drop.
- Stay calm. All the County elevators have built in safety features to prevent them from running when it is unsafe.
- Calm other passengers in the elevator and assure them they are safe.
- Try pressing and holding the "*door open*" button. If the door opens and the elevator is level at a floor, exit the elevator and notify the Department Safety Officer.
- Try activating the "*emergency stop*" switch from **on** to **off** and back to **on**. You should hear a bell when the switch is turned to the **off** position. Press a floor button and hold the "*door open*" button. The elevator may move when you return the emergency stop switch back to the **on** position.
- Try pushing the elevator doors closed. If the doors are open even slightly, the elevator will not run.
- All County elevators are equipped with phones or an emergency switch and instruction for their use. Most other elevators are equipped with a telephone, you simply pick up the receiver and someone will answer without dialing, or dial the number listed in the elevator and report the building and elevator in which you are trapped.
- Again, remain calm. You are in no immediate danger. The County has elevator mechanics on contract; one will be contacted and dispatched immediately to your location. ***Do not attempt to exit the elevator that is not level with the floor without an elevator mechanic. Injury can result; stay inside.***

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND SOMEONE TRAPPED IN AN ELEVATOR

There is an alarm button in all elevators that will signal that someone in the elevator requires assistance. From the elevator lobby, it will usually be heard as a ringing bell. If you hear this alarm signal:

- Locate the elevator and ask the occupants if they are okay.
- Have them perform the steps "**What To Do If Trapped In An Elevator**".

- Report the elevator with trapped persons and advise the Department Safety Officer.
- Remain outside the elevator and maintain communication with the occupants. Talk to them and reassure them until the elevator mechanic arrives. ***Do not attempt to help them exit an elevator that is not level with the floor—injury can result.***
- If the situation is out of control, (i.e., the occupants are panicked or there is a potential for medical problems), do not hesitate to calling 911.
- **NEVER ATTEMPT TO PRY THE ELEVATOR DOORS OPEN.** This may cause the elevator to drop.

FIRE AND SMOKE

FIRE AND SMOKE HAZARDS

Fire produces extreme heat, toxic gases, and smoke. Most deaths are directly attributed to the inhalation of the gases and smoke. Even small amounts of gases and smoke can be fatal and must be avoided.

FIRE SCENE PRIORITIES

- *Evacuate* Remove anyone in immediate danger.
- *Report* Dial 911, sound the alarm.
- *Confine* Close off the room/rooms that are burning.
- *Extinguish* Attempt only if trained and it can be done safely.

EVACUATE THE PEOPLE

Remove anyone who may be in immediate danger from the fire or smoke. Depending on the size and type of fire, this may involve evacuating a very small area or an entire building. Life safety is always the number one priority. Stay low (crawl if necessary) to avoid breathing the smoke.

REPORT THE FIRE

If there is a building fire alarm, activate it immediately upon discovering fire or smoke. This will also alert other occupants in the building that they should start to evacuate. Always dial 911 and report the emergency.

CONFINE THE FIRE

Most fires start small but can rapidly become out of control. Close doors and windows in the area to prevent the spread of fire and smoke to other parts of the building.

EXTINGUISH THE FIRE

Extinguishing a fire should be your last priority. You should attempt it **ONLY** if the fire is small and you have been trained how to safely use a fire extinguisher. Before you try to put out the fire, alert the building occupants of the danger and report the fire by call 911.

LOCATION OF FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Fire extinguishers are located throughout the facility. Know where the fire extinguishers are located in your work area.

FIRE EXTINGUISHER OPERATION

There are four steps to operating a fire extinguisher.

P.A.S.S. Pull - Aim - Squeeze - Sweep

- Pull the Pin. A small pin inserted through the handle of the extinguisher prevents accidental discharge. It is held in place by a small plastic strap that will break easily when the pin is pulled.
- Aim the Nozzle. Aim the hose/nozzle at the base or edge of the fire. Don't aim at smoke or high flames.
- Squeeze the Handle. Squeeze the handle to discharge the extinguishing agent.
- Sweep the Nozzle. Sweep the nozzle from side to side, pushing the fire away from you

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Keep the following safety precautions in mind when attempting to extinguish any fire:

- Be sure you have first reported the fire.
- Make sure that you know how to use the extinguisher.
- Stay between the fire and an exit. Leave yourself a way out in case the fire gets out of control.
- Never turn your back on a fire you think is out—it may re-ignite.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS EMERGENCIES

GENERAL INFORMATION

There is always the possibility of a hazardous materials incident in a County facility. Fortunately, such incidents are rare and would seldom be of a large scale. Nonetheless, hazardous materials must be properly handled and the potential to cause injuries taken seriously.

PREVENTION

A key element in working safely with hazardous materials and preventing accidents is to have a thorough knowledge of each of the materials used at your worksite. If required, the department has a comprehensive written Hazardous Communication Program (HCP) that includes container labeling, Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), and training.

Many chemicals are stored in sufficient quantity to require the preparation of a Hazardous Materials Management Plan that requires documentation of safe storage. Storage sites subject to this requirement are inspected by fire departments.

REPORTING THE EMERGENCY

Report a hazardous materials emergency in the same manner as other emergencies. If the situation poses a life hazard or potential for fire or explosion, dial 911.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Only employees with specific training should attempt to respond to a hazardous materials incident. Generally, employees are not adequately trained to handle incidents that are life threatening or pose the threat of a fire or explosion. The preferred approach is to leave such response to the fire department and its hazardous materials incident teams.

EMPLOYEE ACTIONS

- Remove anyone who is in immediate danger. Anyone who may be in immediate danger from a hazardous materials incident should be moved to an area of relative safety. (NOTE: This should only be attempted if it does not endanger your life or the lives of others around you).
- Follow procedures. Departments that use/work with hazardous materials should have written procedures that address their safe use and what to do in an emergency. Depending upon the type of material involved, the degree of hazard and the level of training employees have received, it may be appropriate that they handle small spills or leaks that do not present a life threatening risk or threat of fire or explosion.

In all cases, use good common sense and judgment. If you have questions or do not fully understand the hazards of the materials you are working with, ask your supervisor.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

GENERAL INFORMATION

Medical emergencies may include either injuries or illness, and involve employees, clients or visitors. Regardless of the nature of the medical emergency, prompt intervention by a trained first aid provider can save lives and prevent needless suffering.

There are many County employees who have taken varying levels of first aid training. These employees should be immediately told of any medical emergency. Employees may render initial first aid while waiting for the arrival of medically trained personnel. Those who choose to render first aid should do so to the level of their training.

FIRST AID AND CPR TRAINING

This section is designed only as a quick overview of employee responsibilities in case of an injury or illness; it is not designed to provide medical advice or take the place of formal first aid training. First Aid and CPR classes are available to employees. For more information, contact the County Risk Management at 868-3868 to sign up for one of the Medic First Aid/CPR Classes.

REPORTING MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Report all medical emergencies to a medically trained individual. Report potential life threatening emergencies immediately by dialing 911. Report the situation to the dispatcher, who will decide on the appropriate response.

Any injury to an employee must also be reported to the employee's supervisor.

EMERGENCY FIRST AID SUPPLIES

There is a first aid kit at every work site that at a minimum contains supplies to treat minor injuries.

FIRST AID TIPS

Survey the scene for hazards. Ensure your personal safety first. Eliminate any potential hazards that threaten your safety or that of the victim. If your personal safety cannot be ensured, wait for trained emergency response personnel.

Treat life-threatening conditions first. Refer to the ABC's of CPR.

Airway—is something blocking it?

Breathing—is the victim breathing?

Circulation—is there a heartbeat or pulse?

Other potential life-threatening conditions include severe bleeding, unconsciousness, and shock.

- For severe bleeding, apply direct pressure to bleeding wounds.

- Keep the victim(s) comfortable—lay them down and cover them if they are cold.
- Don't move victims unless their safety is threatened if they remain.
- Do not give an unconscious or semi-conscious person anything to drink.
- Do not let victims see their wounds.
- Reassure victims, stay with them.
- Remain calm.

AMBULANCE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONSE

Whenever a medical emergency is reported by dialing 911, an ambulance and the fire department are dispatched. If others are there, have them meet the emergency responders and direct them to the scene. This is especially important when the medical emergency occurs inside a large building.

Upon their arrival, the ambulance and fire department emergency medical team will take over the care of the injured person. They will usually ask you some questions about the care provided and the circumstances of how the emergency occurred.

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Many County employees are on the front line in providing services to the County's citizenry. Frequently, these employees are enforcing State law, County ordinances, or County policy—which means that employees are often telling citizens that they cannot do what they want, are citing citizens for non-compliance, or are having to add monetary penalties because the citizen missed a payment due date. As a result, employees may have to deal with angry citizens. Rarely do these situation turn ugly, but the potential is ever present.

Employees that regularly deal with customers are required to have customer service training that includes a component of dealing with difficult customers. This module is available in the County's Management and Leadership Training Program. Suggestions for dealing with difficult customers are below; however, this is not a substitution for formal training.

DEALING EFFECTIVELY WITH DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS

- Deal with EMOTIONS first:

Ask *open-ended* questions and listen to bring out the customer's feelings. Open-ended questions start with: "Why, When, What, How, Who, Which one, and Describe how..." Open-ended questions create expanded answers, provide background information, and lower the customer's emotional level.

Give empathetic feedback.

Summarize the customer's feelings. "I know that you are upset and feel that this is unfair."

- Deal with the PROBLEM:

Ask *closed-ended* questions to determine the specifics of the customer's problems. Close-ended questions start with: "Did, Have, Is there, Do you, Will you, Can you..." Close-ended questions create fact-based information, one-word answers, and focus on facts rather than emotions.

Show the customer the law, ordinance, or regulation you are enforcing.

Suggest alternatives that will solve the problem.

Agree on a solution and follow through.

Do something extra, if possible.

In all cases, speak in a calm, quiet voice.

5-STEP PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING ANY CUSTOMER PROBLEM

Step 1 - Acknowledge the customer

Step 2 - Assess the situation

Step 3 - Affirm your understanding

Step 4 - Analyze alternatives

Step 5 - Agree on a plan

By affirming your understanding, you will again defuse any negative emotions the customer may be feeling. Ask the customer what can be done to solve the present situation.

DEFUSING VIOLENCE

There are five steps to defusing potentially violent situations. They are:

1. Understand the mind-set of the potentially violent person.
2. Take the moral “high road.”
 - Establish an atmosphere of cooperation.
 - Do not display anger, fear, or anxiety.
 - Tell the person that this is his or her time and you’re willing to respect that.
 - Talk in a calm voice, lower and slower than your counterpart. YOU set the example.
 - Understand that angry outbursts on the part of that person can have a positive effect. It allows the aggrieved person to vent his or her negative feelings and to begin to defuse.
 - Be absolutely truthful in any discussion with the person. To lose credibility at this stage can be catastrophic.
3. Listen to the aggrieved party and allow a total “airing” of the grievance without comment or judgment.
 - Offer the person a private place to talk.
 - Ask the person to be seated but you take your seat first if possible.
 - Ask the party if you can take a few “brief notes” to help you retain the information.
 - Maintain eye contact—it is a sign of respect and it indicates that the person is getting your full attention.
 - That person’s perceptions are his or her reality. Do not argue with those perceptions.
 - Do not downplay the importance of the person’s concerns, however seemingly insignificant they are to you.
 - If you talk at all, ask questions that call for long, narrative answers. This does two things: It assures the aggrieved party that you want to hear all he or she has to say and it assists in the defusing process.
4. Allow the aggrieved party to suggest a solution.
 - A person will more readily agree to a resolution that he or she helped formulate.
 - Assure the person that you will act on any injustices he or she has suffered—then make absolutely sure you do just that.
 - It may surprise you that the person’s suggestions may be very reasonable.
5. Move toward a win-win resolution.
 - Saving face (dignity) is paramount. Even people facing severe disciplinary action may just want to be heard and “get on with life.”
 - As you make a concession, ask his or her to do likewise. Try to get “something for something.” In the overwhelming number of cases, the person just wants fairness.

Source: Larry J. Chavez, Article taken from scenario #1 of the Workplace Violence Awareness for Managers course.

SECURITY PRECAUTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Any serious incident that involves, or could involve, the health, safety, or welfare of employees and members of the general public, or causes or could cause serious or extensive damage to County-owned or leased buildings and facilities, must be reported immediately to the Risk Management Division by the department head or designee. The report is to describe the incident/occurrence and the actions taken by the department. For report content details, see the Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 12.

EMPLOYEE BADGES

This facility requires employees to wear a County-issued badge at all times when in the building or on the premises. Employees forgetting their badge must wear a temporary badge. Report lost badges immediately.

VISITOR BADGES

Visitors are not required to wear a “visitor” badge, nor are visitors required to “check-in”. As such, employees should be particularly observant of visitors’ behavior and actions. BE SECURITY CONSCIOUS.

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR

BE SECURITY CONSCIOUS. Employees must report any suspect behavior of employees or visitors to their supervisor immediately. Suspect behavior may include loitering with no apparent business in the building, accosting employees or other visitors, and making remarks of a rude or angry nature. Also be observant of persons loitering outside of the building or in cars.

ENTRY CODED CARD ACCESS DOORS

This facility has key coded entrance access and department access. Only authorized employees may obtain access. BE SECURITY CONSCIOUS. Do not allow anyone to follow you into the building after hours or into restricted access areas. Do not loan your key card to anybody. Report lost key cards immediately.

REPORTING WORK PLACE VIOLENCE

Violence and threats of violence in a County workplace is unacceptable, will not be tolerated, and is subject to criminal prosecution. Incidences of violence or threats of violence must be immediately reported to Risk Management on the forms provided in the Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 1, Exhibit G.

Do not hesitate to enlist the aid of your supervisor if a situation appears to be getting out of control. Do not hesitate to call security or law enforcement if you in any way think that you are in danger.