BOMB/TERRORIST THREAT

Introduction

This bomb/terrorist threat procedure has been prepared to provide guidance to County of Monterey facilities in the event of a bomb or terrorism threat is received or a suspicious object is discovered on County premises.

The paramount concern must always be for the safety of personnel and for the public. A secondary, but important, aspect is the effect on employees’ morale and the disruption of productivity. Advance planning reduces the potential for panic and injury and is the best assurance that proper action will be taken.

Questions on this policy should be referred to the County of Monterey Risk Management Division.

Policy

All County of Monterey facilities shall include procedures to ensure a safe evacuation of all personnel during a bomb or terrorist threat.

Questions on this policy should be referred to the County of Monterey Risk Management Division.

Background

Bomb and or terrorism threats and actual bombings have increased in recent years and have created a need for practical procedures to be followed. The majority of bomb threats are actually the work of pranksters, the mentally disturbed, or those who harbor ill feelings toward a person or institution. The seriousness of the threat must never be underestimated.

Persons or terrorist organizations that commit actual bombings usually select their targets for political or personal gain. Their intent is to injure or kill, damage or destroy the building, and to obtain credit for disturbing governmental services.

Responsibility

It is the primary responsibility of law enforcement to handle incidents involving bomb and or terrorism threats to conclusion, coordinating the protective and technical skills of related agencies and emergency responders.

It is the ultimate responsibility of the person in charge of the facility to decide whether evacuation is necessary, and if so, to see that is appropriately conducted. Law enforcement will advise and assist as deemed appropriate.
It is the responsibility of the Emergency Communications Center (911) to make appropriate dispatches to law enforcement and fire agencies and make notifications. These include, but are not limited to, the Watch Commander, the Communication Supervisor, and in the case of a court facility, the Court Executive Officer or person in charge.

**IMPORTANT POINTS to be aware of and listen for during the questioning process** see Bomb Threat Call Procedures on page 20.

**Notification**

Division Receiving Call:

- Notify the manager or supervisor immediately following receipt of the call and the documentation of all information received. Do not create panic by informing everyone in the office that you have received a threat.
- Notify the Emergency Dispatch Center; dial 9-9-1-1 or pull the panic lever located at the front desk.

The manager must decide if there is time to contact the County Administrative Officer (CAO) or his/her designee for direction or if immediate evacuation is in order. In the event that the manager decides to evacuate before contacting the CAO he/she shall ensure that all floors, and surrounding offices have been notified of the incident with a recommendation to evacuate.

**Bomb Evacuation**

The decision to evacuate a building is based on either the assumption that a bomb has been placed, there is a credible threat of terrorism or the fact that an unknown device has been discovered in the building. The time of detonation is, therefore, very important. The CAO/Department Head or designee in consultation with Law Enforcement Officials must make the assessment of the threat.

If personal belongings, such as purses and briefcases, are located close in proximity to employees and can be readily retrieved, employees should take these items with them as they leave the building. These items pose a problem to searchers. However, if these items are not readily retrievable (i.e. the employee is on the first floor and her purse is on the third floor) they should not be retrieved and the employees are to exit the building immediately. **Safety comes first.**

Words and phrases such as BOMB, EXPLOSION, BLOW-UP, etc. can produce panic. To clear people from the building use more acceptable phrases such as, “Please clear the building immediately; we have an emergency.” Repeat as often as necessary. Floor Coordinators and/or Supervisors will use the Megaphones to alert everyone to evacuate as soon as the an emergency evacuation has been declared by CAO, law enforcement or
incident commander. Employees must follow the evacuation map and report to designated relocation area or be instructed relative to where they should go or what is considered a safe distance from the building.

**Search for a Device**

- Must be done with assistance of personnel familiar with that particular area.
- If a suspicious device is located and the facility has not been evacuated, that decision should be re-assessed.
  - A suspicious device should not be disturbed.
  - The bomb squad will be called in to handle the device.
  - If a device is located, the County Emergency Coordinator should be notified.
- The Sheriff’s Department shall retain overall command of the facilities and work cooperatively with the police department of jurisdiction.

**Suspicious Objects**

If a suspicious object or material is located, **DON’T TOUCH IT; DON’T MOVE IT! DO NOT USE CELL PHONES OR RADIOS!** In all instances when a suspected object is located, the area is to be evacuated immediately. Await instruction from emergency responders.

Notification must be made to all search crews that an object has been found by the Incident Commander (Monterey County Sheriff’s Office Patrol Watch Commander). If no evacuation has been undertaken to this point, the decision to evacuate the area should be made by the Incident Commander.

No one should be permitted to re-enter the building until the Incident Commander gives clearance. The CAO or his/her designee shall work with the Incident Commander and assist in the effort to maintain order and public safety.

**Building Re-Entry**

If a device or other hazardous object or material has not been found after a thorough search and a reasonable time has passed, the decision to allow evacuated persons back into the building will be left to the official in charge of the facility, after consultation with the Incident Commander.

Allow at least 15 minutes after the time of probable detonation to re-enter or as determined by the Incident Commander.

A critique should follow within 24 hours to determine deficiencies and recommend improvements in procedures. The CAO, County Administration staff, and the responding agencies should participate in a critique of the incident.
BOMB THREAT
CALL PROCEDURES

Most bomb threats are received by phone. Bomb threats
are serious until proven otherwise. Act quickly, but remain
calm and obtain information with the checklist on the reverse
of this card.

If a bomb threat is received by phone:
1. Remain calm. Keep the caller on the line for as long as
   possible. DO NOT HANG UP, even if the caller does.
2. Listen carefully. Be polite and show interest.
3. Try to keep the caller talking to learn more information.
4. If possible, write a note to a colleague to call the
   authorities or, as soon as the caller hangs up, immediately notify them yourself.
5. If your phone has a display, copy the number and/or
   letters on the window display.
6. Immediately upon termination of the call, do not
   hang up, but from a different phone, contact your Supervisor
   immediately with information and await instructions.

If a bomb threat is received by handwritten note:
- Call your Supervisor
- Handle not as minimally as possible

If a bomb threat is received by e-mail:
- Call your Supervisor
- Do not delete the message.

Signs of suspicious package:
- No return address
- Excessive postage
- Stains
- Strange odor
- Strange sounds
- Unexpected Delivery
- Poorly Handwritten
- Misplaced Words
- Incorrect Titles
- Foreign Postage
- Restrictive Notes

DO NOT:
- Use two-way radios or cellular phone; radio signals
  have the potential to detonate a bomb.
- Evacuate the building until law enforcement arrive
  and evaluate the threat.
- Activate the fire alarm.
- Touch or move a suspicious package.

WHO TO CONTACT:
1. Contact your Supervisor > Manager >
   Director
2. Call CAO at 755-5113 > Risk Manager at
   796-3006 > Safety Officer at 784-5686 >
   Facilities Manager at 750-3628
   Sheriff Sgt. at 755-5405 Cmd. 755-3858 or 9-911

BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST

Date: ___________________________ Time: ___________________________

Time Caller Hung Up: ___________________________

Phone Number where Call Received: ___________________________

Ask Caller:
- Where is the bomb located?
- When will it go off?
- What does it look like?
- What kind of bomb is it?
- What will it explode
- Did you place the bomb? Yes No
- Why?
- What is your name?

Exact Words of Threat:

Information About Caller:
- Where is the caller located? (background and level of noise)
- Estimated age:
- Is voice familiar? If so, who does it sound like?

Other points:

Caller’s Voice
- Accent
- Angry
- Calm
- Clearing Throat
- Coughing
- Cracking voice
- Crying
- Deep voice
- Deep breathing
- Disguised
- Distinct
- Excited
- Female
- Laughter
- Lisp
- Loud
- Male
- Nasal
- Normal
- Ragged
- Rapid
- Raspy
- Slow
- Slurred
- Soft
- Stutter

Background Sounds:
- Animal Noises
- House Noises
- Kitchen Noises
- Street Noises
- Booth
- PA System
- Conversation
- Music
- Motor
- Clear
- Static
- Office Machinery
- Factory Machinery
- Local
- Long Distance

Threat Language
- Incoherent
- Message read
- Taped
- Irrational
- Profane
- Well-spoken

Other Information:
_____________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________