

# COMMON SENSE RULES TO UNCOMMON EVENTS

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## ABSTRACT

Katrina, Rita, 9-11; these names are synonymous with disasters that drastically affected the face of our nation. This is not necessarily a research paper about how to prepare for natural or man-made disasters of that magnitude, but many of these common sense tips, that you can put in place today, will help you prepare for localized flooding, the loss of your transmitter, and a myriad number of other uncommon events that happen around the country, day after day, in one form or another. Some of these tips cost little or nothing; some involve major expenditures; your budget, motivation, and desire to 'be ready' are the driving factors that will generally help you to successfully survive any number of disasters with your station or network intact.

## IT COULD NEVER HAPPEN TO ME

There are many different types of uncommon events that can affect you now and in the future. Some of them are:

- Terrorism
- Accidents
- Natural disasters
  - Earthquakes
  - Hurricanes
- Robbery/Thievery
- Chemical
- Nuclear
- Radiation
- Violence in the workplace
- Explosions
- Fire
- Cyber-attack

It is hard to estimate which disasters are best to prepare for, so the optimal step is first, to look in and around the areas where you work and evaluate historical data about events that have disrupted the normal living conditions of that area. Having an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) and a generator may not be enough to get you through most disasters but it definitely a good start. Some other quick and easy steps you can take today are the publication of a staff phone roster and establishing phone trees so if some important information must be passed to the staff while they are at home, each person knows who will be calling them and then who they have to call afterwards. Other ideas that are in some cases, easy to set up are the creation of generic broadcast materials, use of off-site storage, alternate broadcast locations, portable broadcast kits that are located off-site, silence alarm systems, support agreements, and maintaining good will with other companies and associates; all of which can go a long way to easing your worries if you and your company should experience any type of uncommon event listed below, or possibly some event we have yet to imagine. What follows are some of the more dramatic uncommon events that have effected our live recently.

## 9-11

On September 11, 2001 suicide bombers flew commercial jets into the North and South Towers of New York City's World Trade Center, one into the Pentagon just outside of Washington DC, and a fourth crashed to the ground in Pennsylvania. The explosions at the World Trade Center brought both towers to the ground.

After the loss of the North Tower, five of New York City's FM stations lost their transmitters and their antenna facilities. WKTU, WPAT, WKCR, and WNYC lost their main transmission facilities, while WQCD lost its auxiliary transmitter. WNYC alone lost two 10 kW transmitters, Studio-to-Transmitter Link (STL) receivers, and all of their environmental and power control equipment. The 360-foot broadcast tower that graced the top of the North Tower was also home to nine television antennae. One was an RCA wide-band antenna that was put in place in the 1980s and held the elements for WNYC, WKTU and WPAT.

In the aftermath of 9-11, the effects were localized and global; twenty percent of the US population personally knew of someone involved in the tragedies of that day. In reaction to the attacks, Clear Channel Radio unofficially released a list of approximately 150 songs that were considered inappropriate to air at the time.

## NATURE

The tsunami of 2004 struck with devastating effects on December 26, 2004. An earthquake estimated to be 9.15 on the Richter Scale, shook the land under the Indian Ocean just off the west coast of Indonesia for almost 10-minutes; most earthquakes only last seconds. The subsequent waves, some as high as 50 feet, caused by the earthquake swept outwards in all directions. Countries far-and-wide eventually felt the effects of the tsunami; some as much as 5,000 miles from the epicenter. From Thailand in Southeast Asia, to South Africa, few were spared the effects of the tidal waves. After the waters had receded and people started to pick up the pieces of their lives, over 280,000 had perished in the deadliest tsunami in recorded history. The International Monetary Fund estimates the damage to be over \$8-billion.

On Thursday, August 25, 2005, Hurricane Katrina makes its first landfall in Florida as a Category 1 hurricane. On Monday, August 29, at 6:10 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) Hurricane Katrina makes its second landfall near Buras, Louisiana. Even before Hurricane Katrina made its way to the Gulf Coast, major broadcast groups started putting their contingency plans to work. When Hurricane Katrina made landfall this second time, its average winds were as high as 125 miles per hour. Four hours later, Hurricane Katrina would make it's third landfall close to Pearlington, Mississippi with winds of 120 miles per hour. By two o'clock that afternoon, officials in New Orleans confirmed the breach of the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal. That same day, President Bush declared Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama major disaster areas under the authority of the Stafford Act. The Stafford Act is meant to bring orderly and systemic federal assistance to state and local governments in the aftermath of natural disasters. By the next day, August 30, 80-percent of New Orleans is flooded or underwater; the looting had already begun and hundreds of radio stations, not to mention television stations, were off the air. On Wednesday, August 31, Louisiana's Governor Kathleen Blanco ordered all of New Orleans evacuated.

On Sunday, September 18, 2005, thousands of tourists jam the highway leading from the Florida Keys as they flee oncoming Tropical Storm Rita. Two days later, Rita leaps from a tropical storm to a Category 3 hurricane with winds up to 110 miles per hour; Rita's strength increased as it passed between the Florida Keys and Cuba drawing energy from the warm sea

waters of the Straits of Florida. Moving faster and with winds speeds climbing, Hurricane Rita is classified as a Category 5 hurricane the very next day with winds up to 175 miles per hour. Hurricane Rita now threatens those surrounding the Gulf of Mexico. Having begun the recovery from Hurricane Katrina, the Gulf Coast region, especially Louisiana and Texas, prepare for the worse from the oncoming storm. On Thursday, September 22, Texas officials order evacuations days in advance of Hurricane Rita; the officials ever mindful of the overwhelming problems caused by Hurricane Katrina when it passed through New Orleans weeks before Hurricane Rita. The next day, Hurricane Rita weakens to a Category 3 storm but still threatens refinery towns in Texas. Friday quickly turns into Saturday, September 24. Hurricane Rita roars ashore at 3:30 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time at the Texas-Louisiana border causing coastal floods, fires and widespread power outages after shutting down a major portion of the U.S. fuel supply. With a 15-foot storm surge and 120 mile per hour winds, Hurricane Rita hits hard leaving a wide path of destroyed home, flooded streets, closed ports and ships tossed about, while rescue and relief efforts ramp-up once again for the victims of Hurricane Katrina and now for those affected by Hurricane Rita. Many radio and television stations remain on the air; some barely; others were silent.

In a recent press earlier this year, the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) announced that Gulf Coast broadcasters will be honored for their public service efforts before, during and after Hurricane Katrina. There ceremonies will take place at the 8<sup>th</sup> annual NAB Education Foundations (NABEF) 'Service to America' Celebration to be held on June 12 in Washington DC. NABEF will also pay tribute to local broadcasters nationwide that contributed to raising over \$200 million used to aide victims and communities affected by the storm. The Service to America Awards are sponsored and produced by NABEF with major support from Bonneville International Corporation and the A Gulf Coast broadcasters will be honored for their public service efforts before, during and after Hurricane Katrina at the 8<sup>th</sup> annual NAB Education Foundations (NABEF) 'Service to America' Celebration on June 12 in Washington DC. NABEF will also recognize local broadcasters nationwide for raising over \$200 million to aide victims and communities impacted by the deadly storm. The Service to America Awards are sponsored and produced by NABEF with major support from Bonneville International Corp. and the NAB. Some recent recipients are: First Lady Barbara Bush, Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, boxing legend Muhammad Ali, former President Jimmy Carter and First Lady Rosalyn Carter, and former First Lady Nancy Reagan.

## **PLANE HITS TOWER**

On Sunday, December 19, 2004 a small plane on approach to Fullerton Municipal Airport in Orange County, California crashes into the main radio tower used by KFI, 640 AM. A husband and wife perish in the crash. KFI's 760-foot tower was toppled; broadcasts from KFI are interrupted temporarily. On the ground, no one was injured. The cause of the crash was not immediately known, but for years pilots said this airport was a challenge to in and out of, no matter how skilled the pilot. KFI, a talk and news radio station that serves Southern California, was only off the air for about an hour after the accident

## **ANTHRAX AND PANDEMICS**

With the nation still reeling from the attacks on the 9-11, five letters dated exactly one week after those attacks enter the US postal system. All five are mailed to media outlets; ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, the New York Post, and to the American Media publication, the National Enquirer. In the ensuing weeks, other letters are mailed, including one to Senators Tom Daschle and Patrick Leahy. By December of 2001, the letters seem to stop coming. During the entire period, twenty-two people came down with anthrax infections. Of those, half developed the most dangerous type, inhalation anthrax. Five perish from inhalation anthrax; one in Connecticut, one in New York City, two in Washington DC and the fifth in Florida. To date, the investigation is still ongoing with little hope at the moment of identifying the culprit in these attacks.

The threat of someone, or some persons, using anthrax and other biological weapons against American media companies prompted many networks and group owners to take preventative measures and put staffs on alert for most anything suspicious. Many that worked in the mailroom of a number of radio stations started wearing protective gloves and masks as part of their daily routine, especially after the anthrax related deaths and after traces of anthrax were found in mail sent to the offices of television news anchors Tom Brokaw and Dan Rather. CBS/Infinity and ABC Radio Networks stopped mail delivery for one day in October following the first incident at the NBC office of Tom Brokaw. CBS/Infinity Radio started sorting all of its incoming mail in a separate building where the mail was limited to a secured area where the staff used special equipment to process the mail.

While there were increasing reports that anthrax was detected on pieces of mail sent to Congress and about 20 federal buildings in Washington DC, including the Voice of America, stations took precautions and set up policies and procedures to protect employees. Many of us in the media began following the same procedures

established by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) and the FBI specifying how mail should be processed. The USPS and FBI recommended careful examination of all mail for signs of tampering, suspicious contents, poor handwriting, excessive postage, unusual odors, and a strange or unusual return address or no return address. To maximize the protection, many media companies across the nation bought protective gear that matched that used by the USPS while other radio stations simply took a wait-and-see approach to changing any mail processing procedures.

NPR also followed the postal service guidelines and continually evaluated the situation on a day-to-day basis to determine and further needs. NPR also began asking listeners to send email and faxes instead of letters; that way the networks exposure to the risk of biological materials was minimized. At Emmis Communications, they left the decision to each of its affiliate stations on how they would handle the mail from their listeners. As mentioned earlier, some stations and networks, like CBS/Infinity, rearranged their mail processing procedures and confined the sorting of all incoming mail to one area. In some cases, they also kept those that processed the mail on an early morning shift so if something contaminated was within the processing area, exposure would be limited to a small number of employees.

By early 2006, anthrax seems to have faded from the minds of most while the world turns its eyes towards Asia worries about a possible pandemic from the avian, or bird flu. It's official designation is H5N1 and primarily effects birds, but it has been transmitted to humans. The first human infected with bird flu was discovered in Hong Kong in 1997. Since then, there have been more than 100 cases of bird flu infecting humans and more than 60 fatalities. Over 150-million birds have died, either from the disease, or have been killed in an effort to keep the disease from spreading to humans. While bird flu had been isolated to Asia, this year started with a few cases in Europe too. Some say the media coverage granted to the issue of the bird flu has reached the level of hysteria while others, included many from the medical professions, feel the potential for the virus to change into a more serious threat to humans is also real. Should the bird flu become transferable between humans, then the potential for a global pandemic are real. At this point, it is prudent to keep the public informed so media coverage of the bird flu is also necessary. Medical personnel do not have all the answers about bird flu, but people are taking notice of this possible threat.

As of this writing, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are working with the state and local health officials to devise plans to deal with a possible outbreak of the bird flu in the United States. While these are being developed, there is also a general plan in the

work for dealing with this threat on a national level. Sharing information is the best action by media outlets at this point; those companies with international operations are wise to plan their strategies now.

## **VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE**

We will spend a bit more time on this subject as it does seem to be the one issue that broadcasters and engineers need to attend to most. We start with a definition of workplace violence; it is any violent act, including physical assault and any of threat of assault, directed toward persons at work or on duty. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), violence is a substantial contributor to occupational injury and death; homicide is now the second leading cause of deaths on the job. In the United States, there is an average of 20 murders and 18,000 assaults weekly in the workplace; that is 800 homicides occur in the workplace each year. The majority of the murders are robbery-related crimes. As one can guess, nonfatal assaults result in millions of lost workdays and cost workers millions of dollars in lost wages. There is no reason for these statistics to be considered as an acceptable cost of doing business either. Just because you have chosen a specific career path, there is no reason to expect death or injury as an inevitable outcome of your profession. When most hear the statistics for workplace violence, many admit shock after realizing that so many are affected by it. The bottom line is that companies must continually evaluate, measure the potential for assault on the job, and then take practical measures to protect workers from any potential attack.

Workplace violence is generally clustered in certain occupations. Many would simply assume that it is police and security personnel that confront the most violence on the job. While that is partially true, there are many others that are in high-risk categories for workplace violence. For example, the retail and service industries account for more than half of workplace homicides and 85 percent of all nonfatal assaults in the workplace. Taxicab drivers have the highest risk of workplace homicides of any occupation while workers in the health care industry, community services, and those in retail run the greatest risk of encountering nonfatal assaults.

Risk comes with most any workplace; chances for violence do increase where employees are dealing with the public, where money exchanges hands, and where there is a delivery of goods and services. Other factors include:

- Having a mobile workplace like a taxicab or police cruiser.

- Working with unstable or volatile persons in health care, social services, or in criminal justice.
- Working alone or in small numbers.
- Working late at night or during the early morning hours.
- Working in high-crime areas.
- Security services like guarding valuable property or possessions.

Without a doubt, violence in the workplace is the huge concern for employees and employers. "Going postal" is probably the most common phrase used to describe someone who becomes violent in the workplace. Really, it can happen to anyone, anywhere, and in any profession, and represents only one facet of what is technically defined as workplace violence. Violence it is not limited to postal employees or corporate offices, but in every imaginable workplace; from the police station to the ice cream truck selling treats to your neighborhood kids. Some jobs that have the most risk for violence in the workplace are performed by the people you come in to contact everyday. According to the US Justice Department, some of the most dangerous and violent work situations occur in these occupations:

- Police, prison- and security-guards
- Cab drivers
- Mental health workers
- Teachers
- Bartenders
- Gas station attendants and convenience store clerks
- Bus drivers

Looking at this list again is really a bit shocking when you realize teachers are in almost as much danger as prison guards and they face greater chances for violence at work than the average convenience store clerk or bartender.

Conflict amongst employees, whether they are managers or not, is also a source for many violent incidents. Many mistakenly feel there are only two ways to deal with a conflict; fight about it or ignore it. If one were to stick with only these two possibilities, either can be a recipe for trouble. Companies must work towards good management of conflict; if not, the

conflict will likely lead to hitting, poking, or slamming some day. Everyone's goal is to avoid being involved in such incidents, or being caught in the vicinity and being harmed. We can all avoid problems like this if we know some of the signs to look for:

- Carrying weapons to work or flashing a concealed weapon.
- The use of thinly disguised threats or constant conflict with supervisors.
- Depression or mention of suicide.
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Groundless or exaggerated complaints about work, co-workers or supervisors sometimes on the verge of paranoia.
- Use of intimidation or bullying.
- Sudden displays of hopelessness or any other unexplained change in behavior that is negative.

If you spot these traits in any employee or co-worker, report the activity to the appropriate person; if nothing else, the company may be able to give the person some necessary help through whatever resources are available, including the Employee Assistance Program, or EAP. Many companies offer access to the company's EAP through their sponsored health care. According to the US government's Office of Personnel Management, every Federal agency has an Employee Assistance Program. The goal of the program is to restore employees to full productivity. EAP does this by providing free, confidential short term counseling to identify the employee's problem and, when appropriate, make a referral to an outside organization, facility, or program that can assist in resolving the issue. It is still the employee's responsibility to follow through with any referral, and it is also their responsibility to make any financial arrangements for any treatment. This assistance is also available for employees who have a drug or alcohol problem and are seeking rehabilitation assistance. Managers and supervisors must be familiar with the EAP, to make referrals and recommend EAP assistance to employees. Participation is voluntary and, ultimately, it is the employee's decision on whether to participate.

Strategies for the prevention of workplace violence include policies and systems that govern cash-handling, management of the physical separation of workers from customers, and providing for good lighting, security devices and services, and providing employee training on how to deal with potentially violent situations. Any

program geared towards the prevention of workplace violence needs to include a system for documenting incidents, procedures to use in the event of an incident, and promote open communications between employers and workers. Prevention strategies are not simply a management decision; workers and employers alike must work together to assess the risks for violence in the workplace and decide on what actions to take to reduce those risks.

Common cash-handling policies in retail settings include procedures such as using locked drop boxes or safes, only carrying small amounts of cash, and posting signs that limited cash is available. As cashless transactions in taxicabs and retail stores becomes more the norm through the use of credit and debit cards, this will reduce the opportunities from robbery and in the long run reduce the average numbers of violent attacks experienced while people are at work. This method can be adapted to most any setting where cash is exchanged between workers and customers.

Physical separation of workers from customers, clients, and the general public through the use of bullet-resistant glass or other enclosures is recommended for media companies and for retail stores, especially in places like local radio and television stations, gas stations and convenience stores, hospital emergency rooms, and social service agency claims areas. The height and depth of counters are also important considerations in protecting workers, since they provide physical distance between workers and potential attackers. Consideration must be given to the ease of conducting the company's business, but management must be mindful that a safety device that increases frustration for workers or for customers, clients, or patients will be self-defeating.

Visibility and lighting are also important considerations when designing the work environment. Making high-risk areas, like the company's reception desk, visible to more people and installing good external lighting outside should decrease the risk of workplace assaults. In conjunction with the lighting, the safety of the building's entry and exit points needs to be assessed. The number of doorways, the ease of access to work areas due to unlocked doors, and the number of rooms where potential attackers can hide are issues that must be addressed in any evaluation and plan. This has ramifications that will lend themselves to the proper planning of designs for future buildings, parking lots, landscaping, and the placement of trash collection, and the outdoor transmission and storage facilities that workers must use during their shift.

Numerous security devices can reduce the risk of worker assault and facilitate the identification and apprehension of perpetrators. These include closed-circuit surveillance cameras, alarms, two-way mirrors,

card-key access systems, panic-bar doors locked from the outside only, and trouble lights or geographic locating devices in taxicabs and other mobile workplaces. In police departments around the country, body armor and other personal protective equipment have been used to reduce the effects of workplace violence. For example, the lives of thousands of police officers have been saved by Kevlar® vests.

Many work for smaller companies that may not be able to afford a security department, much less even a security guard other than possibly a receptionist at the front door. The idea of security may not even be a big concern to management or staff. The law, however, does require companies to provide at least a measure of security and safety to employees. If you have little or no control over how security is designed and managed at your workplace, then it is up to you more than ever to take responsibility for your own personal safety and security while at work. This means being aware of possible dangers, remaining alert to signs of impending trouble, and having a plan to deal with any situation.

Staffing plans and work practices included in occupational and safety codes for many states. They provide basic guidelines on how companies can set up their own procedures in handling regular situations, like how to escort guests around the broadcast station that are in the building for a tour. Increasing the number of staff on duty may also be needed for any number of service and retail settings. For example, security guards or receptionists can be used to screen workers and guests entering the workplace; they can also control access to specific work areas too. Work practices and staffing patterns during normal operating hours and after-hours must be carefully reviewed for the increased risk of assault they pose to workers. Policies and procedures for assessing and reporting threats let employers track and assess threats and violent incidents in the workplace. These policies must clearly indicate a zero tolerance of workplace violence and they must provide steps to follow when incidents are reported and also steps to follow when handling an incident. Policies should not only be readily available to the entire staff, but also include guidance on recognizing the potential for violence, methods for defusing or de-escalating potentially violent situations, and instruction about the use of security devices and protective equipment. Steps for obtaining immediate medical assistance and for obtaining psychological support following any violent incident must also be addressed.

Training employees to respond to violence in the workplace in a nonviolent manner helps reduce risk that volatile situations will turn into physical violence. Training that addresses hazards associated with specific tasks or worksites and relevant prevention strategies is also important. Certainly, any training provided is not the only prevention strategy available so it must be

considered simply as component in a comprehensive approach to managing and reducing violent incidents in the workplace. In any training your company provides, emphasis should be put up the proper use and upkeep of any protective equipment, adherence to administrative policies, and constantly increasing the knowledge of the entire staff and maintaining their awareness of the risk of violence where they work.

Additional information about violence in the workplace is available on the Internet, in a number of books available in stores and libraries and it is always available from NIOSH by writing or visiting their website; you can also call NIOSH at: 1-800-35-NIOSH (6-4674).

## **SAFETY AT WORK**

Since we spend the majority of our careers in our offices or assigned work areas, it is important to take measures that will help assure our continued safety. Here are some ways to provide for security in your office and in those of your fellow employees:

- Keep valuables and money with you all the time or out of sight; preferably locked up otherwise you may end up the victim of a theft.
- Verify the identification of any vendors, repair personnel, or delivery staff that want enter your building and never share proprietary information with them unless there is a reason.
- Always park in well-lit and populated areas. When leaving work at night, remain alert and proceed slowly; keep your keys in your hand for quick entry into your car (keys can be used as a weapon too), and see if you can get someone to walk you to your car. Usually any security staff on duty will enjoy the moment to walk around and to have someone to chat with.
- If you're working late, make arrangements with someone else who is also working late to check-in with each other regularly.
- Lock the rest room door at night whenever possible. If there are no locks on them, suggest to management that they get them installed.
- If you work in your own enclosed office, ask to have a deadbolt lock and possibly a peep hole installed so you can see who is outside your door.

These same strategies can be used when we consider violence in the workplace that is caused by outside forces. In recent years, incidents of family, or domestic, violence have been played out in the areas where people work; even incidents of stalking. Here are a few more facts to think about:

- More than 45 percent of all stalking cases involve disruption within the workplace, usually with devastating effects on the company and the quality of life for the employees.
- The US Department of Justice estimates that boyfriends and husbands commit thirteen thousand acts of violence against women in the workplace every year.

Following the precautions mentioned above can go a long way in protecting you, and your coworkers, from being a part of a violent incident where you work.

## **FCC: PUBLIC SAFETY AND HOMELAND SECURITY**

During emergencies and crises, it is imperative that communications be available for public safety, health, defense, and emergency personnel. One of the major responsibilities of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is to ensure our national communications network is available during any emergency. The FCC must not only consider commercial communications, but they also must work to maintain communications for the general population and provide for their needs. Our national telecommunications infrastructure must be reliable, interoperable, redundant, and if it fails, it must be quickly restored. A great deal of the work the FCC produces either directly or indirectly affects national security and the ability of our emergency telecommunications network to provide seamless reliability to the public and private sectors. In order to effectively accomplish its mission of promoting homeland security, network protection, interoperability, redundancy, and reliability, the FCC has these objectives:

- Evaluate and strengthen measures for protecting the Nation's communications infrastructure.
- Facilitate rapid restoration of the American communications infrastructure and facilities after disruption by a threat or attack.
- Develop policies that promote access to effective communications services by public

safety, public health, and other emergency and defense personnel in emergency situations.

## **EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM**

The Emergency Alert System (EAS) was established by the FCC in November of 1994 as a replacement to the Emergency Broadcast System (EBS). EAS is a tool the President and others can use to warn the public about any situation they consider an emergency. Though the EAS and its predecessor have never been used for this purpose, the design of the system was to provide the President with a means to address all American's rapidly during a national emergency. Through the EAS, the President has immediate access to the nation's population through thousands of broadcast stations, cable systems and participating satellite programmers.

What you hear occasionally heard on your favorite station is simply a script that says, "This is a test of the Emergency Alert System; this is only a test." This is part of the weekly EAS test that each station runs. While the weekly test does not require the broadcast of this script, listeners and/or viewers will likely hear an 8-second data signal that contains the information needed to test the EAS. Monthly tests have also been developed locally and usually contain individualized data that is specific to that part of the region the EAS is serving. These procedures have been in place since the first day of 1997 for all AM, FM and television stations. It was not until two years later that all cable systems with more than 10,000 subscribers became part of the EAS.

Incorporating digital technology, the EAS also provides state and local officials with a way to rapidly disseminate important emergency information targeted to a specific local area, even if the station has no personnel on-duty at the time. Another advantage of this digital signal is that specially equipped consumer products, like radios, personal data assistants (PDAs), pagers, televisions, and other devices, can decode EAS messages and automatically power-up so private citizens can obtain the messages they are interested in receiving. Besides those benefits, the EAS provides redundancy to broadcasters as that it mandates that all stations monitor at least two independent sources guaranteeing the audience will immediately receive any emergency notifications. Furthermore, the tests are shorter making the likelihood of any real emergency announcement stand out during a normal broadcast and more likely catch the attention of the audience. A final benefit to the EAS is that it can also broadcast emergency messages in any language that is used by the broadcasters or cable network.

The EAS was designed in cooperation with the FCC, broadcast and cable systems, local and national emergency management, companies from the alerting

equipment industry, the National Weather Service and the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA).

Earlier this year the Society of Broadcast Engineers (SBE) instituted the SBE-EAS Exchange. This was done on the behest of those who wanted a forum dedicated only to the discussion of issues related to the Emergency Alert System (EAS). SBE membership is encouraged to participate on the EAS Exchange, but it is not required. Participants can discuss equipment issues, the latest related FCC activity, share EAS failures and success stories, or any other communication about AES. More information about the forum is available at the SBE website. At the SBE website, you will also find the 'EAS Self Inspection Checklist for Broadcasters and Cable Systems.'

## **DHS READY CAMPAIGNS**

This final section addresses the roles of the Department of Homeland Security and the Ad Council; both of which play major roles in disaster preparedness. What follows are their recommendations on what we can do now to prepare for the next uncommon event.

The creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is considered one of the most significant changes to our government since 1947 when President Truman brought all the Armed Forces of the United States under the Department of Defense. After the terrorist attacks on 9-11, President George W. Bush created the DHS to bring 22 domestic agencies under the coordination of one department to protect the country from threats. DHS's first priority was to protect the nation against further terrorist attacks. DHS is also responsible for protecting Americans and enhancing public services like assistance during natural disasters, working to ensure safe and secure borders, welcoming lawful immigrants and visitors, providing aid in determining and granting US citizenship, and promoting a free-flow of commerce.

### **Ready**

There are things that can be done to prepare for the unexpected and to help maintain a measure of control should an emergency arise. Just as we take steps to prepare for many of our everyday activities, there are simple steps to take in order to be prepared for any emergency that might arise. The best protection is to be well informed and prepared.

Everyone must play a role in emergency preparedness. Here are some things that individuals can do:

- Stay informed about serious threats.

- Keep emergency phone numbers near the phone.
- Develop a detailed household communication plan to follow in the event of an emergency. Choose an out-of-town friend or relative to be your family contact. All family members should know how to get in touch with the contact.
- Assemble a disaster supply kit in an easy-to-carry container. The kit should include: a battery-operated radio, flashlights, extra batteries, non-perishable food, water, duct tape, scissors, plastic sheeting for doors and windows, first aid kit, prescription medications, toilet articles, a change of clothes for all family members, and sleeping bags.
- Keep a half tank of gas in your car at all times in case you are told to evacuate immediately.
- Check with school officials to determine their plans for an emergency and procedures to reunite children with parents and caregivers.
- Be prepared to do without normal services that may be disrupted - electricity, telephone, natural gas, gasoline pumps, cash registers, ATM machines, and Internet transactions.
- Enroll in a first aid or AED/CPR course at your local American Red Cross chapter.

### **Ready Business**

The DHS's 'Ready' campaign is designed to educate the public, on a continuing basis, about how to prepare for a national emergency, even a possible terrorist attack. 'Ready Business' is an extension of that campaign and is meant to educate owners and managers of small and medium-sized businesses on how to prepare their employees, operations and assets for the possibility of an emergency. To publicize this message, the DHS created new public service announcements (PSAs) specifically targeted to America's businesses. These announcements were created to raise the business community's awareness of the need for emergency planning and to motivate businesses into developing an emergency preparedness plan. The radio and television announcements say that not only the time and effort put in to making a business successful will help give a business owner(s) peace of mind, but also being prepared for all types of emergencies will give them a comfortable feeling of security too. They also state that maintaining an emergency preparedness plan is easier and more cost-efficient than imaginable and that by visiting [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov), business owners can get more



information on preparing their business for an emergency.

America's small businesses form the backbone of the nation's economy and provide nearly 45 percent of the nation's payroll. As long as small businesses are prepared to survive and recover from emergencies, the nation and our economy will be more secure. Ready Business, an extension of Homeland Security's successful Ready campaign, is designed to educate owners and managers of small to medium-sized businesses about preparing their employees, operations, and assets for emergencies.

While small businesses employ a large percentage of our population nationwide, many of these businesses are not prepared for potential disasters. Being prepared will help businesses get back on track quickly in the aftermath of a potential disaster. The faster these businesses get back on track, the less our citizens, our nation and our economy will suffer.

There are a number of steps business can take to prepare for an emergency or terrorist attack. From the Ready Business campaign come the following measures businesses can take today. Some are free, while others may cost a bit. Here is the list of things you can do now at no cost:

- Make a plan to stay in business by knowing what types of emergencies may befall your company, and creating a continuity plan for each one.
- Prepare two versions of each plan, one for if you need to evacuate the building, and one for if you need to shelter-in-place and be sure to have stockpiles of all necessary emergency and medical supplies.
- Involve employees of all levels in the creation of the plans and take into account any employees with physical disabilities, or special needs.
- Practice your plans regularly.
- Create a plan detailing the system you will use to get your office running after a disaster strikes.
- Review your insurance policies to make sure they are up-to-date and cover all conceivable emergencies. If they don't, update them immediately.
- Be sure that all your equipment and facilities are inventoried and secured.

- Know how extended utility interruptions will affect the physical assets and security of your company.
- Be sure to emphasize to your employees the need to be prepared at home as well as in the office.
- Meet with your insurance provider to review current coverage.
- Create procedures to quickly evacuate and shelter-in-place. Practice the plans.
- Talk to your people about the company's disaster plans. Two-way communication is central before, during and after a disaster.
- Create an emergency contact list including employee emergency contact information.
- Create a list of critical business contractors and others whom you will use in an emergency.
- Know what kinds of emergencies might affect your company both internally and externally.
- Decide in advance what you will do if your building is unusable.
- Create a list of inventory and equipment, including computer hardware, software and peripherals, for insurance purposes.
- Talk to utility service providers about potential alternatives and identify back-up options.
- Promote family and individual preparedness among your co-workers. Include emergency preparedness information during staff meetings, in newsletters, on company intranet, periodic employee emails and other internal communications tools.

If you have some money to invest, but you are looking for some solutions that will cost less than \$500, here are a few ideas:

- Buy a fire extinguisher and smoke alarm.
- Decide which emergency supplies the company can feasibly provide, if any, and talk to your co-workers about what supplies individuals might want to consider keeping in a personal and portable supply kit.

- Set up a telephone call tree, password-protected page on the company website, email alert or call-in voice recording to communicate with employees in an emergency.
- Provide first aid and CPR training to key co-workers.
- Use and keep up-to-date computer anti-virus software and firewalls.
- Attach equipment and cabinets to walls or other stable equipment. Place heavy or breakable objects on low shelves.
- Elevate valuable inventory and electric machinery off the floor in case of flooding.
- If applicable, make sure your building's HVAC system is working properly and well-maintained.
- Back up your records and critical data. Keep a copy offsite.

Hopefully there is a little more capital on hand and you, or your company, are able to invest more than \$500. Should that be the case, here are ways for you to invest that money wisely:

- Consider additional insurance such as business interruption, flood or earthquake insurance.
- Purchase, install and pre-wire an uninterruptible power supply (UPS), or at least a generator to the building's essential electrical circuits. Provide for other utility alternatives and back-up options.
- Install automatic sprinkler systems, fire hoses and fire-resistant doors and walls.
- Make sure your building meets local standards and codes. Consider a professional engineer to evaluate the wind, fire or seismic resistance of your building.
- Consider hiring or contracting a security professional to evaluate and/or create your disaster preparedness and business continuity plan.
- Upgrade your building's heating and air conditioning system to secure outdoor air intakes and increase filter efficiency.

- Send safety and key emergency response employees to trainings or conferences.
- Provide a large group of employees with first aid and CPR training.

### **Ad Council**

Working in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security are numerous other federal agencies, but despite all the advances made in promoting emergency preparedness across the country, most Americans have yet to take the basic steps to prepare. In searching for new and ingenious ways to encourage all Americans to prepare themselves, their families and their communities, DHS has also sponsored public service advertisements, produced by the Ad Council, not only as part of the DHS 'Ready Business' campaign, but also as part of the nation-wide 'Ready' campaign. The goal of the ads produced for the 'Ready' campaign is to encourage American citizens to prepare for and respond to potential terrorist attacks and other emergencies. The particular focus of these ads is on encouraging parents to develop a family communications plan.

Thankfully, many Americans are taking steps to prepare. They desire more information on emergency preparedness and are willing to respond to specific calls for action. They want expert advice on emergency preparedness and are specifically looking for:

- Clear, concise, simple steps that they can take to be better prepared in advance of a man-made or natural disaster.
- Specific information about what to do in an emergency.
- Assurance that preparedness can make a difference.

The purpose of these, and other ads, is to raise awareness about emergency preparedness. They also educate and empower Americans to prepare for and respond to potential terrorist attacks and other emergencies. This includes asking individuals to take three key steps:

- Get an emergency supply kit.
- Make a family communications plan.
- Be informed about the different types of emergencies that could occur and their appropriate responses.

With all this in mind, it is only natural that one of the common sense rules in dealing with uncommon events is having an emergency preparedness plan.

Throughout this paper we have addressed some of the uncommon events that could strike at most any place at anytime. You have read about some of the ways to prepare yourself, and your workplace. This paper was not meant to be an all-inclusive study of 'what can happen' and 'how to prepare,' but more of a paper to get each reader thinking more about disaster and emergency preparedness and to prompt one-and-all in to planning and preparing for the next uncommon event by using some common sense.