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HAVE YOU EVER INTENTIONALLY EVACUATED YOUR CLUB?

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What does your staff do when the fire alarm sounds? Do they react or stand around awaiting directions? Do they know their roll call assembly area?

Recent events, including the Boston bombings, chemical plant explosions, floods, tornadoes and numerous wildfires should provide the motivation to start, review or even to enhance your plans. Some of these situations may be geographically impossible and other situations implausible, but you have to address what could happen at your club.

Where does one start?

My last PCS article asked questions on [How Do You Approach Safety](#). This article deals with a related integral step: roll call planning.

You and your staff are the local experts. You have a situational awareness, a knowledge borne of years at your facility, yet sometimes you just need additional guidance on what to do.



HAVE YOU DETERMINED YOUR ROLL CALL AREAS AND PROCEDURES?

What are the employee evacuation routes? (By ensuring that the employees know their egress routes, you will be able to determine what is done for the members.)

Are your roll call areas far enough away from where the first responder's vehicles will gather?

Are your roll call areas the same for day time and night time evacuations?

Who has the listing of the employees on duty?

Will you separate the employees by department?

Who can call for an evacuation?

What events will trigger an evacuation?

What about the other various departments (Tennis, Pool, Grounds, Pro shop, etc.)?

What are the various employee duties when the alarm is triggered?

Does any specific machinery need to be shut down?

Prevailing wind direction can be a concern.

Shelter-in-place plans should be also discussed.



COORDINATION WITH FIRST RESPONDERS

As a fire fighter once shared, "My job is to put out fires! That task is delayed if we have to conduct a search and rescue."

Do you have a diagram of the building? Does it list the locations of all the rooms? What about rooms in the subbasements? Are all the rooms named?

Do your first responders have a copy of this diagram? Have they been walked through your facilities?

APPLICABLE FEDERAL OSHA GENERAL INDUSTRY REGULATIONS

If you need additional motivation to develop your plans, recognize that your club can be cited and significant fines can be levied against you, and you, as the General Manager, could be held liable and criminally prosecuted, potentially facing jail time.

Means of **Egress** - every employer is covered. These regulations apply to workplaces in general industry except mobile workplaces such as vehicles or vessels. Egress (best described as the way to, through and away from an exit) can not be compromised. 29 CFR 1910.34 through 1910.39

Written and oral **emergency action plans** - An emergency action plan must be in writing, kept in the workplace and be made available to employees for review. However, an employer with 10 or fewer employees may communicate the plan orally to employees. 1910.38(b)

Written and oral **fire prevention plans**. A fire prevention plan must be in writing, be kept in the workplace and be made available to employees for review. However, an employer with 10 or fewer employees may communicate the plan orally to employees. 1910.39(b)

Fire extinguisher training - If fire extinguishers are available for employee use, it is the employer's responsibility to educate employees on the principles and practices of using a fire extinguisher and the hazards associated with fighting small or developing fires [1910.157(g)(1)]. This education must be provided annually and when a new employee is first hired [1910.157(g)(2)].

Medical and First Aid - In the absence of an infirmary, clinic or hospital in near proximity to the workplace which is used for the treatment of all injured employees, a person or persons shall be adequately trained to render first aid. Adequate first aid supplies shall be readily available. 1910.151(b)

GO BAGS		Courtesy of The University Club of New York	
<p>General Manager John P. Dorman, CCM and Director of Security Eric Bergendahl</p> <p>All items are in a Back Pack, readily accessible for all department heads/safety team members to grab and go.</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Band-Aids/first aid supplies • Pen, pencil and a pad of paper • Whistle • Gloves – medical style; imperious to bodily fluids • Flash light – with extra batteries that are rotated on a quarterly basis • Radio – with extra batteries that are rotated on a quarterly basis • Reflector • Glow stick 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 – Quarters (for use in pay phone) • Water • Sheet/space blanket • Tape • Supply of dust masks • Garbage bag • Scissors • Building information including stair ways • List of emergency contacts (for example, Police, Fire, EMS and local hospitals) 		
<p>Another required item is a print out of all employees present that day</p>			

SUPPLIES

Do you have a GO BAG?

The best example of a club's emergency supply satchel that I have seen is The University Club of New York's GO BAG (General Manager John P. Dorman, CCM and Security Director Eric Bergendahl).



CONDUCTING DRILLS

Before you can trigger the alarm and conduct a drill, the staff has to be educated on the roll call areas and physically walked through all the details. Recognize that every staff member reacts how they have been trained.

A post-event review is essential.

Over the years, I have assisted with the development of numerous plans and have watched evacuations at city and country clubs. Obstacles are always evident the first time and you must ensure that the same mistakes are not happening the second time around.

During one drill an entire department did not evacuate. Numerous false alarms had occurred and the department head told the staff to work through the horn.

Sometimes, by doing a drill you find the club's equipment to be lacking. It was the second time that this same employee did not show up after the alarm had been sounded and the club evacuated. The person could not hear the alarm over the machine noises in the laundry department. This was solved by installing a horn outside the laundry room.

When your plan has evolved, you can challenge the staff's reaction by blocking a stair tower or an exit door. Night time evacuations and roll call procedures are even more challenging.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Most of the above questions address club house evacuations, but what about rallying the outdoor staff in case of lightning?

If you can hear thunder, you are in range to be hit by lightning.

What are your plans for the employees who work outdoors? Or those who work by themselves?

What about persons driving tractors - are they wearing hearing protection? Is it possible that they may not hear the horn due to their ear muffs?

What are their check-in procedures? Who do they contact?

What is done for members on the course? (Don't forget those hitting balls on the range, either.)

COMMUNICATIONS – IN THE EVENT OF A REAL EMERGENCY

Recognize that a calamity may interfere with telephone service and text messages. Cell towers may be affected, first responders may not be able to get to you, you may not be able to get out, or get back and the list goes on.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

How many false alarms do you have to experience before you take action?

I am constantly amazed at the stories I hear about what has happened at clubs. Don't think that something can't happen at your operation.

Those who know me know that if it involves employee safety, I think differently and it's time you do, too.

References: Occupational Safety and Health Administration Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 29 General Industry Standards 1910

Alan E. Achatz, CCM, CHE is a former club manager who assists clubs with safety matters including emergency action planning & implementation, crisis management, OSHA compliance, behind the scenes safety audits and food safety. Alan has written extensively about safety concerns for clubs. He may be reached at 716-565-9122 or at www.clubssafetyolutions.com

