

3-21-24 CFDMC Member Meeting Minutes & Presentations

Participants: See attached attendee list

Welcome: Eric Alberts, CFDMC Vice Chair, welcomed everyone. He reviewed the webinar rules. In person and webinar attendees introduced themselves.

Lessons Learned from the Signature Healthcare Brockton Hospital Fire: The presenters, Clair Sears and Melissa DeMayo, shared their experiences and lessons learned (see attached presentation).

Questions & Answers:

- Did they have an issue with employees not wanting to stay or come in to help? No, they had to turn people away wanting to come in and help.
- How many staff were travelers? Under 20%
- Have there been any structural changes made since the evacuation? No, they are working to bring the hospital up to code and focused on what insurance will cover. They will continue to train and drill on how to get out safely.
- Any recommendations on how to manage patients connected to battery-powered devices when they are outside of the facility, especially those that have limited capacity, while were waiting for EMS to arrive? They connected with EMS quickly
- How did they ensure accountability for staff leaving the building? They had no communication/mass notification and managers were responsible for accountability, using text department by department. The fire department made sure everyone was evacuated as well as hospital staff.
- Reunification/families - how was this done with other hospitals where they transferred to? Pediatric patients went with their families if they could, other hospitals set up Incident Command and shared information/fielded questions and the State set up a reunification line. Their case management and social work teams worked on this and assisted with reunification of belongings.
- How long did it take to evacuate? The first alarm went off before 7:00 a.m. and the last patient was evacuated at 3:18 p.m.

Power of Hello and De-escalation: Natasha Roman providing training on how to identify and de-escalate workplace violence (see attached presentation, handout and video).

Coalition Wrap-up:

- Other Announcements: Eric reminded everyone of the April 25th Full Scale Hospital Exercise. A member shared that facilities should look at redundancies for electricity as panels are custom made and they take possibly months to replace.
- Next Meeting: June 20th at DOH-Seminole Auditorium in Safnrod
- Meeting Evaluation (e-survey following meeting): Eric reminded all to please provide feedback so we can improve future meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Attendees:

| | | |
|------------|--------------|--|
| Rebecca | Adcock | |
| Eric | Alberts | Orlando Health |
| Marben | Aquino | DOH |
| Maria | Bledsoe | Central Florida Cares Health System |
| Stacy | Brock | DOH-Indian River |
| Avi | Bryan | City of Altamonte Springs |
| Yolanda | Buckles | Volusia County Emergency Manager |
| Courtney | Bushner | AdventHealth |
| Nathan | Carpenter | Brooks Rehab |
| Georgianne | Cherry | DOH-Volusia |
| Deborah | Collinge | DOH-Orange |
| Beverly | Cook | CFDMC |
| dsJohn | Corfield | Orlando Health |
| Megan | Cummings | |
| Melissa | DeMayo | Signature Healthcare/Presenter |
| Jemima | Douge | Poison Control |
| Lynne | Drawdy | CFDMC |
| Lynne | Drawdy | |
| Henry | Ebner | Community Health Centers |
| Melissa | Ell | HCA Lake Monroe |
| Molly | Ferguson | Community Health Centers |
| Amanda | Freeman | Orange County Office of EMS Medical Director |
| Eric | Gentry | |
| Aldair | Hernandez | |
| Amy | Johnson | AdventHealth New Smyrna Beach |
| Eli | Jordan | DOH-St. Lucie |
| Chris | Kammel | Martin Fire/Rescue |
| Samantha | King | DOH-Seminole |
| Georganna | Kirk | Florida CHC |
| Aaron | Kissler | DOH-Lake |
| Hillary | Klemme | AdventHealth Rocky Mountain Region |
| Ana | McDougal | DOH-Osceola |
| Jeanette | McGillicuddy | Signature Healthcare/Presenter |
| Clint | Mecham | Volusia County Emergency Manager |
| Matt | Meyers | |
| Missy | Middleton | |
| Jennifer | Mills | DOH-Lake |
| Jeffrey | Money | Brevard Fire Rescue |
| Erin | Mullen | |

| | | |
|-----------|-----------------------|--|
| Ana | Nieves | DOH-Brevard |
| Amanda | Nixon | Core Stress Solutions |
| Ken | Peach | Health Council of East Central Florida |
| Christina | Proulx | Cleveland Clinic Martin Health |
| Robin | Ritola | AdventHealth for Children |
| Natasha | Roman | Presenter |
| Michelle | Rud | HCA FL Osceola & Poinciana |
| AJ | Saunders- Johnston | AdventHealth |
| Claire | Sears | Presenter |
| Wayne | Smith | Davita |
| Leigh | Spradling | Parrish |
| Karen | Street | DOH-Brevard |
| Brittney | Traill | CFDMC Board Member |
| Shawn | Treloar | EMS Chief, Sanford Fire Department |
| Lynda | W.G. Mason | Northland Church |
| Erika | Westerhold | AdventHealth for Children |
| Lydia | Williams | DOH-St. Lucie |



Central Florida Disaster Medical Coalition (CFDMC) Member Meeting

March 21, 2024– 9 am to 12:00 pm



- ▶ Please place your phone on mute when not speaking
- ▶ Don't place your phone on hold
- ▶ Use either computer audio and mic, or phone, not both – this can cause feedback noise
- ▶ Use the chat feature to raise issues or ask questions
- ▶ We may need to mute all lines. You can unmute yourself by clicking the microphone icon



Eric Alberts, 2024 CFDMC Vice Chair

- ▶ Welcome & Announcements
- ▶ Introductions

Note:

*In person, please sign in at back of room

*For those on webinar, please submit your name/organization in chat

*For those on the phone, please email your name and organization to info@centralfladisaster.org

Lessons Learned from the Signature Healthcare/Brockton Fire Claire Sears





TIME FOR
A BREAK!

Power of Hello and De-Escalation

Natasha Roman, CISA, DHS





- ▶ Questions?
- ▶ Other Announcements?
- ▶ Next Meeting: June 20th (DOH–Seminole)
- ▶ Don't forget your feedback!

**Lessons Learned from the
Signature Healthcare
Brockton Hospital
February 2023 Fire & Evacuation**



SIGNATURE HEALTHCARE

Introductions

Claire Berube Sears, HEM, is the Emergency Management and Environmental Safety Program Manager at Signature Healthcare.

With a background in hands-on training and education with the American Red Cross, Claire began her work in healthcare in Boston in 2013.

At Signature, she is part of the Healthcare Quality team focused on safety and compliance and serves as Liaison Officer during continued engagement with regional, state, and federal partners.



Melissa DeMayo, MSN, RN, LNC is the Vice President of Quality and Chief Quality Officer at Signature Healthcare.

With her evolved experience as a clinical nurse, legal nurse, nurse educator, administrator and now, healthcare executive, Patient Safety, Risk Management, and Healthcare Quality have been the major focus of Melissa's 30-year career.



Disclaimers & Notes

- This information is presented to the best of our ability and recollection
- This presentation is meant to serve as a template for discussion of the event, not as a full and complete after-action report
- The information contained in these slides is confidential, proprietary, and private. It is intended only for the recipient/audience specified and is not meant to be taken as advice.
- It is strictly forbidden to use, circulate, or share any part of this presentation without prior written consent from Claire Sears, HEM, at Signature Healthcare (csears@signature-healthcare.org).
- All photos in this presentation are credited to Richard Smith (Paramedic - Bridgewater Fire, Retired) unless otherwise noted. Rich's work can be found at RSSPhotography.net



Agenda

- Introductions (5 minutes)
- Video (~2 minutes)
- Slide presentation (35 minutes)
- Questions



Video Presentation

<https://www.wcvb.com/article/video-shows-start-of-2023-brockton-hospital-fire/60166054>



Signature Healthcare Brockton Hospital





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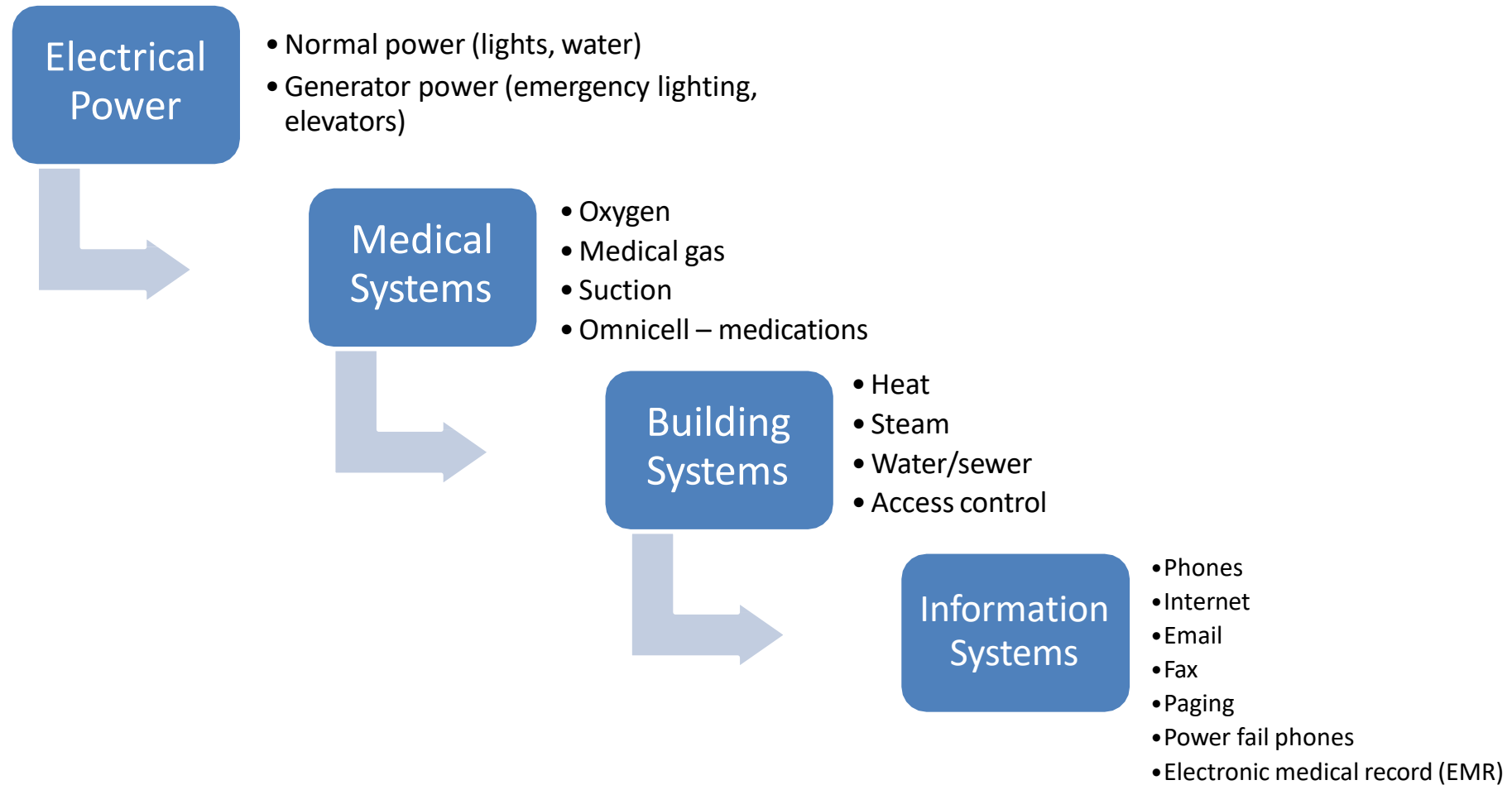
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Cascading Systems Failure





[View Analytics](#) [View Delivery/Confirmation Report](#)

Alert Information - Region 5 Hospital Notification - Brockton Hospital Code Black

Alert Identifier: XLSID_8e8t9ktpsxd7otgjbfs29fgwot

Alert Title: Region 5 Hospital Notification - Brockton Hospital Code Black

Alert Severity: Severe

Alert Sensitivity: N

Work Email Only: N

Delivery Mode:

Voice PIN Required: N

Confirmation Required: Y

Alert Owner Name: Dana Ohannessian

Organization: EOHHS

Alert Groups: Excel Spreadsheet Upload

Created Time: 02/07/2023 07:48:08

Alert Message: This is a Region 5 Hospital Notification. Brockton Hospital is on Code Black.

Uploaded File(s): There are no uploaded files

Alert Page

[Back To All Alerts Page](#)

Alert Information

Alert Identifier: XLSID_uefoxln9ib6agc7iar9xv89ywe
Alert Title: Brockton Hospital Evacuation Statewide Hospital Message
Alert Severity: severe
Alert Sensitive: N
Work Email Only: N
Delivery Mode:
Voice Pin Required: N
Confirmation Required: Y
Alert Owner ID: s267sw6lk6dk5301kt3pgt33823xrz7z
Alert Owner Name: Dana Ohannessian
Organization: EOHHS
Alert Group: Excel Spreadsheet Upload

[View Delivery/Confirmation Report](#) [Alert Analytics](#)

Created Time: 02/07/2023 08:38:20

Text Message:

Alert Message:

Brockton hospital is on code black and needs to evacuate. Please enter your bed capacity into the MDPH Web EOC COVID 19 data reporting. For assistance, please call 617-695-7830. Report by 8:45 am. Thank you.

The content of this field is sent out as an alert notification. It should not include sensitive or confidential information and must not exceed 1,000 characters.

Uploaded File(s): There are no uploaded files



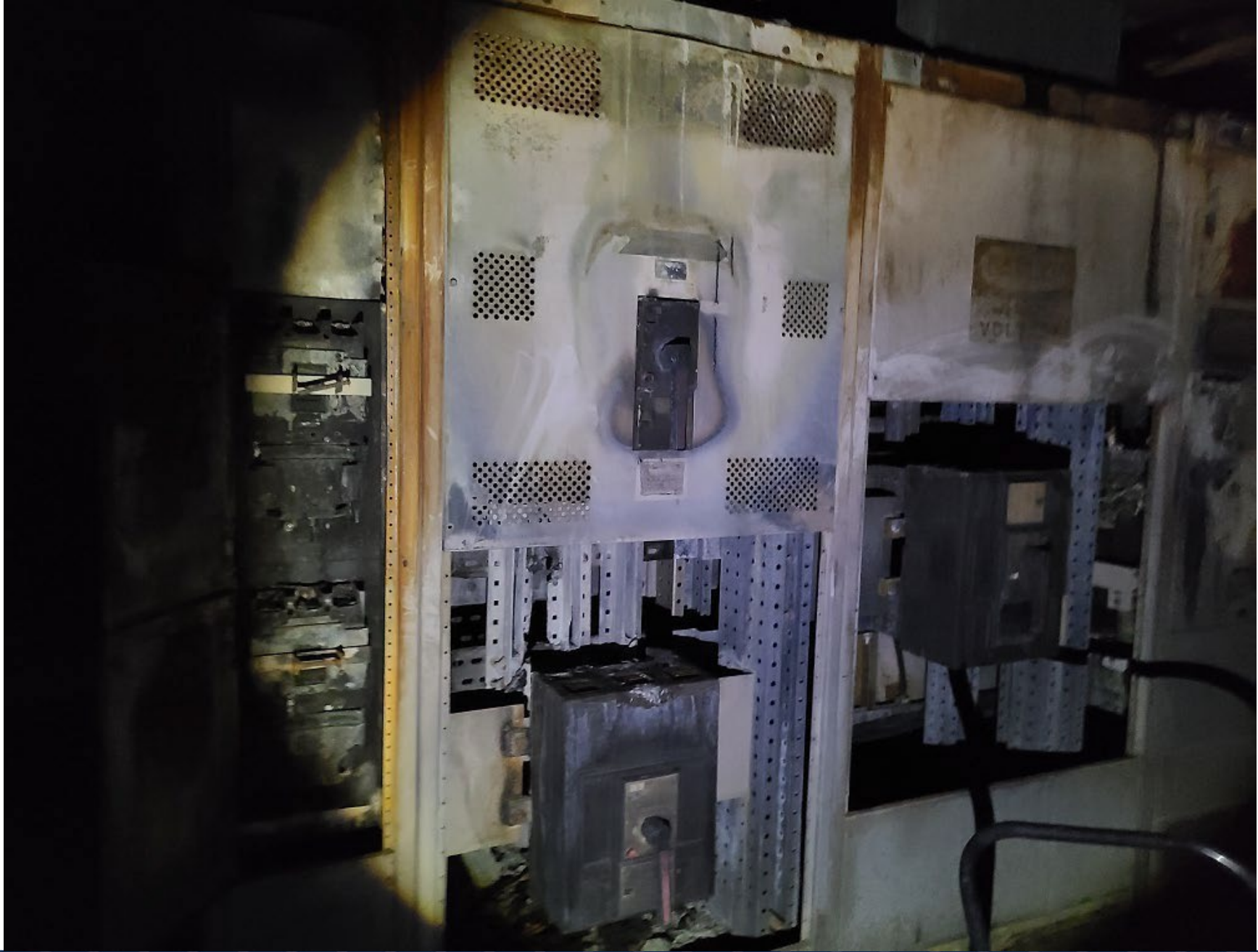


DANGER
HIGH VOLTAGE
AUTHORIZED
PERSONNEL ONLY

WARNING
STORAGE
NOT PERMITTED
IN THIS AREA



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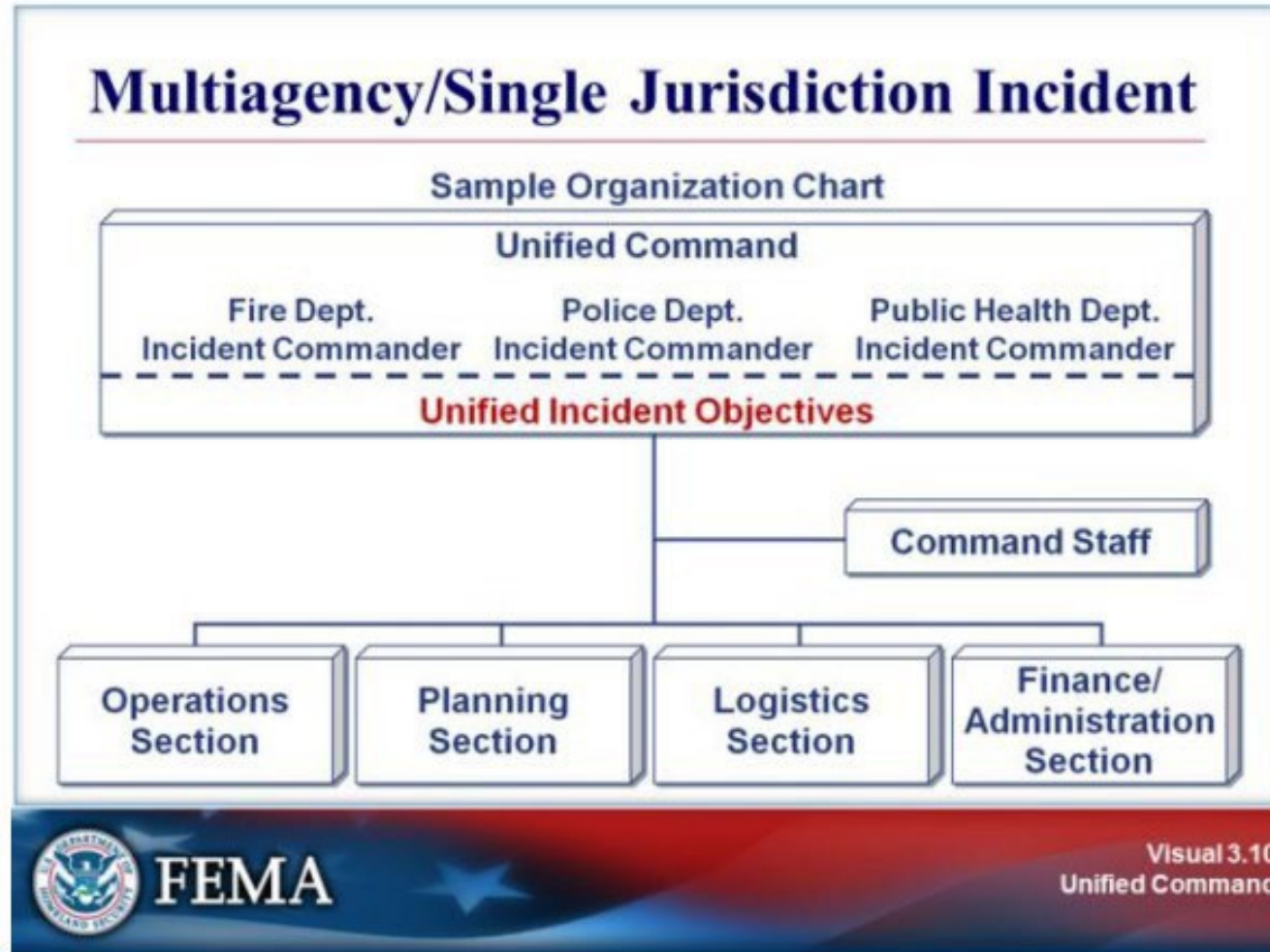


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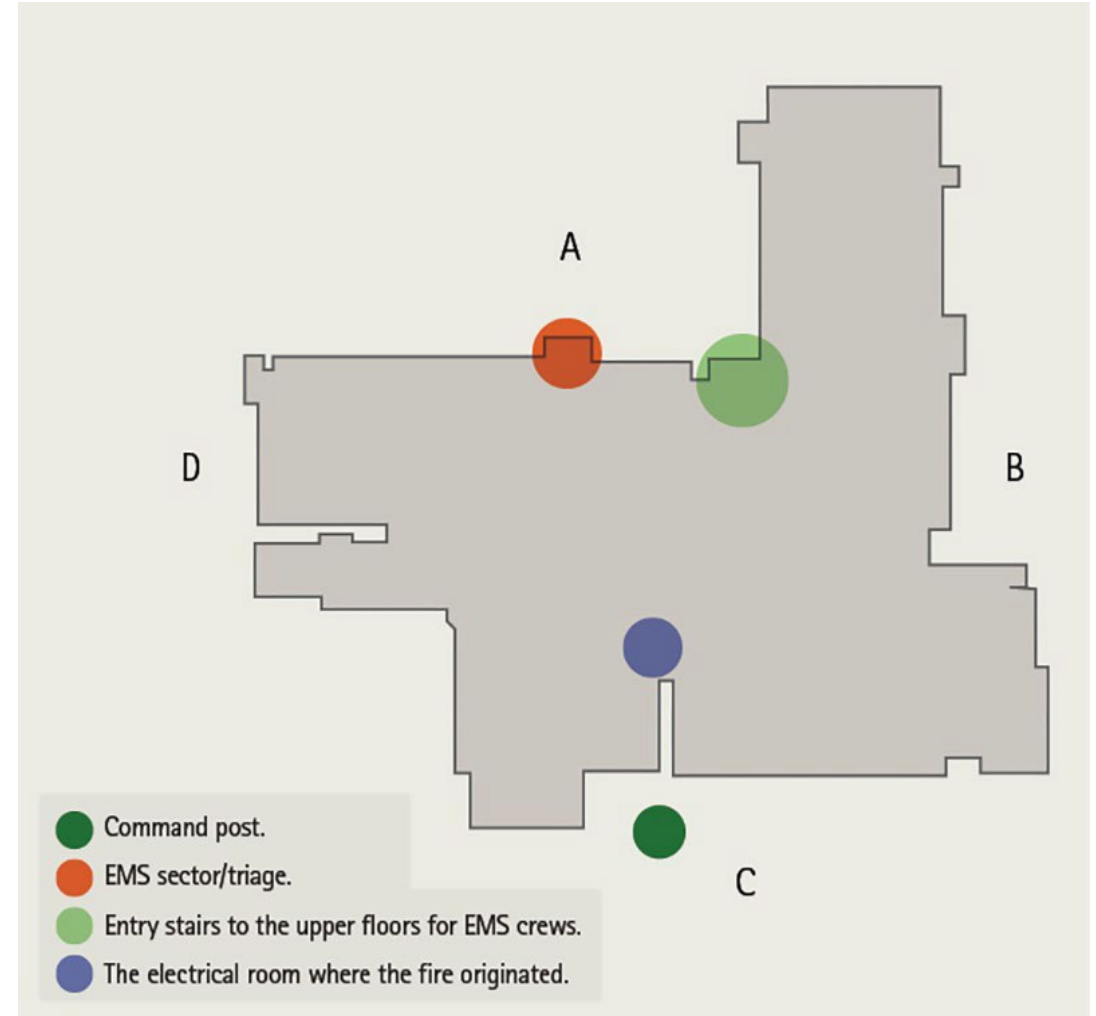
Integrated FD & Hospital Incident Command – Unified Command



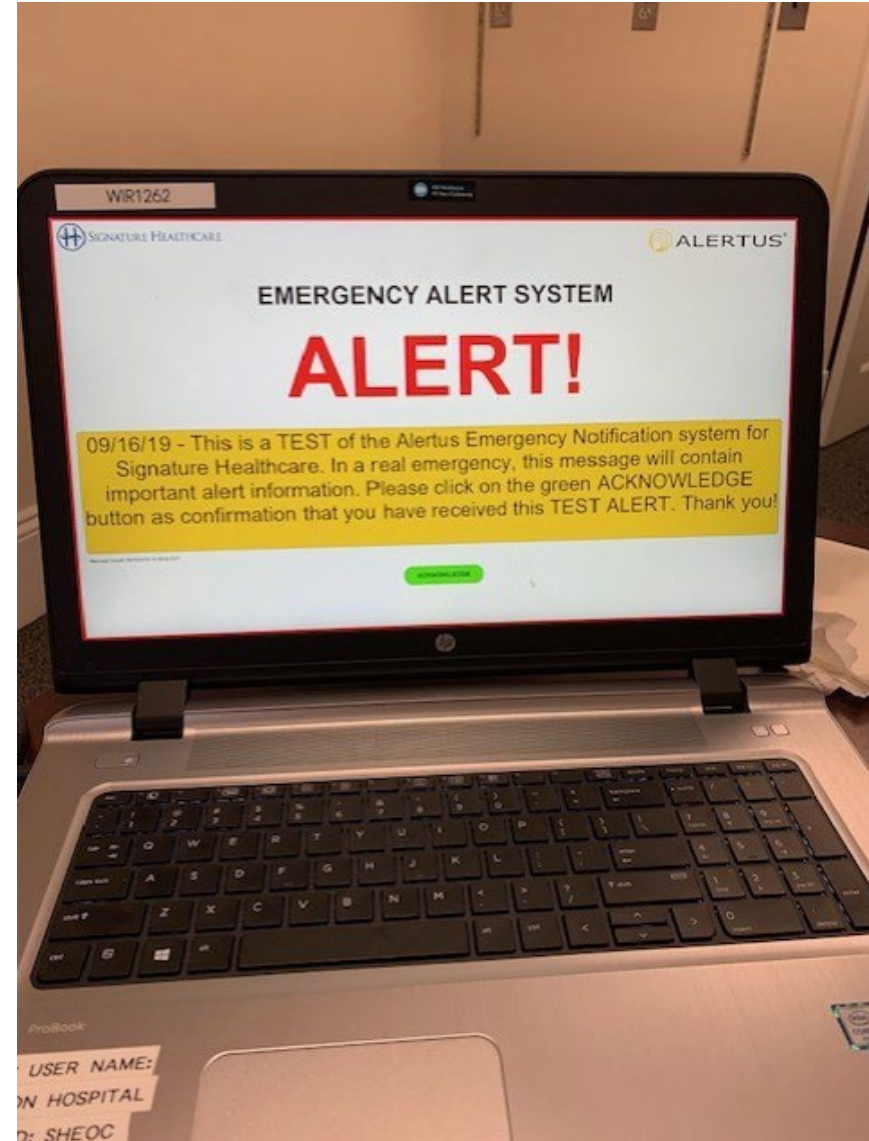
Firefighting Command Structure

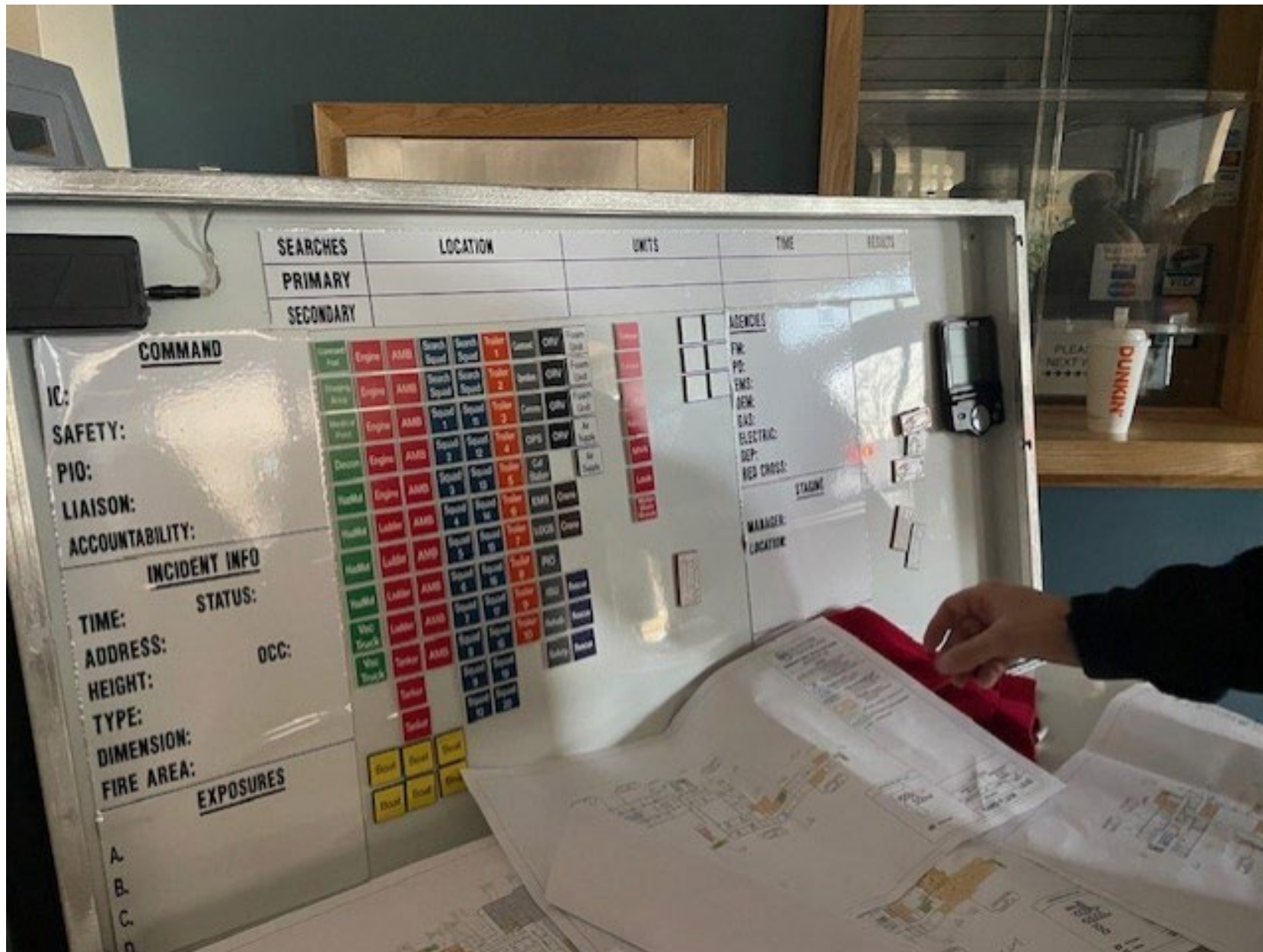


Two operating areas: one behind hospital for firefighting operations and one in front of the hospital for evacuation



Resources & Communication





External Resources - Fire/Rescue



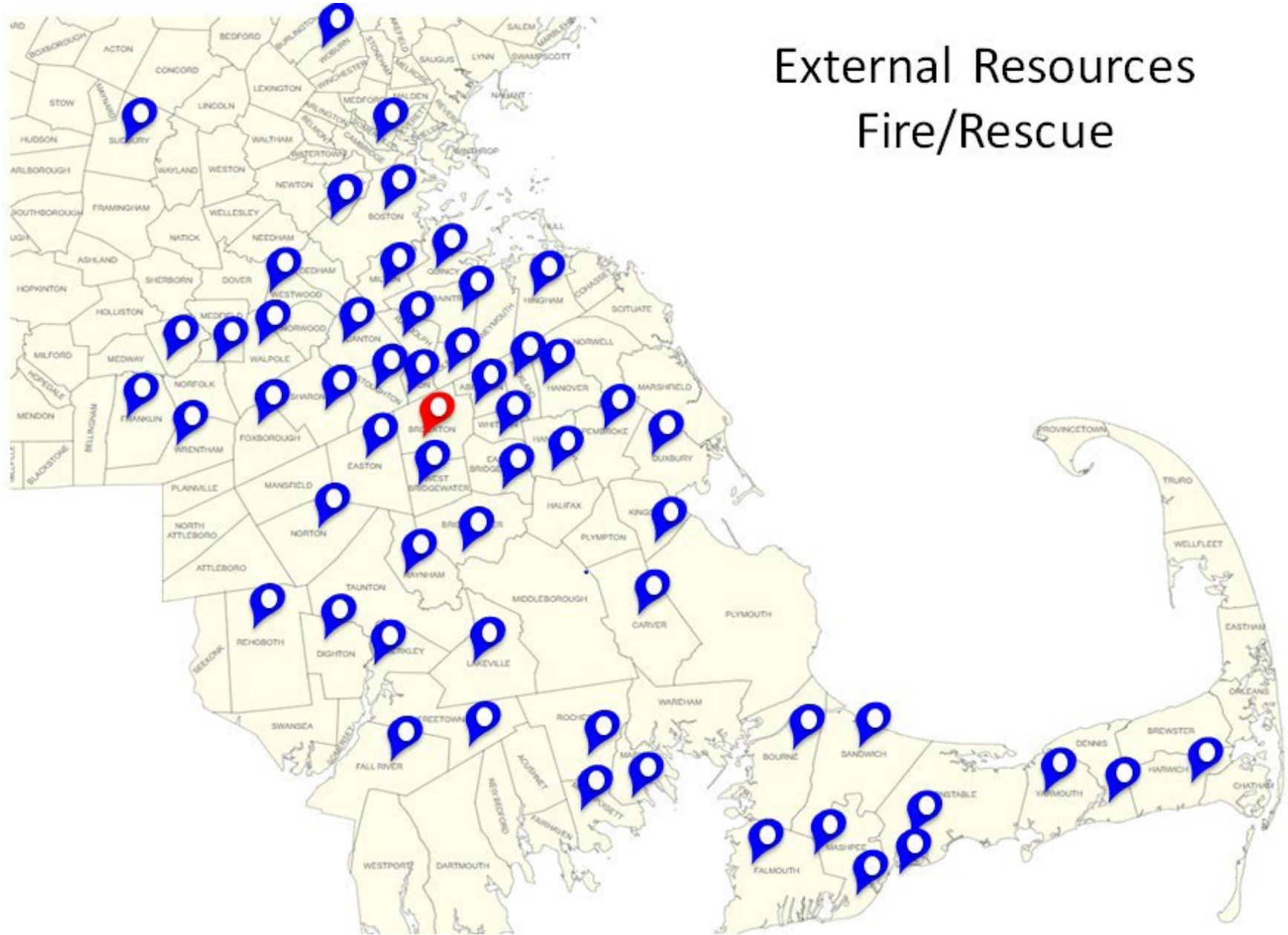








External Resources Fire/Rescue



External Resources - Fire/Rescue

- Abington
- Avon
- Berkeley
- Boston
- Bourne
- Braintree
- Bridgewater
- Brockton
- Brookline
- Carver
- Canton
- Centerville
- Cotuit
- Dennis
- Dighton
- Duxbury
- Easton
- East Bridgewater
- Fall River
- Falmouth
- Foxboro
- Franklin
- Freetown
- Hanover
- Hanson
- Harwich
- Hingham
- Holbrook
- Kingston
- Lakeville
- Marion
- Mashpee
- Mattapoisett
- Medfield
- Millis
- Milton
- Norton
- Osterville
- Pembroke
- Quincy
- Randolph
- Raynham
- Rehoboth
- Rochester
- Rockland
- Sandwich
- Sharon
- Somerville
- Stoughton
- Sudbury
- Tewksbury
- Walpole
- Westwood
- West Bridgewater
- Whitman
- Wrentham
- Yarmouth



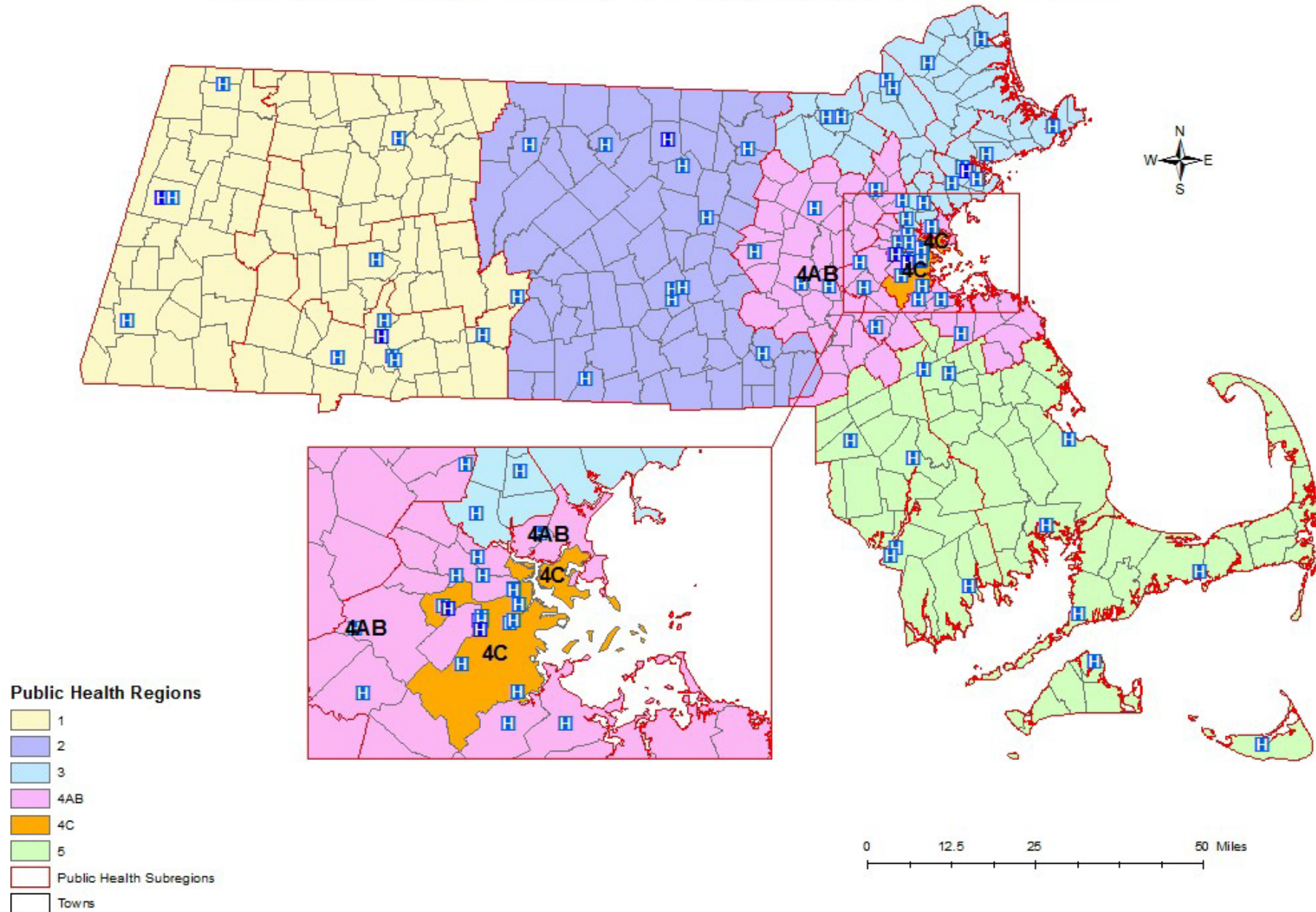
Evacuation Command Post



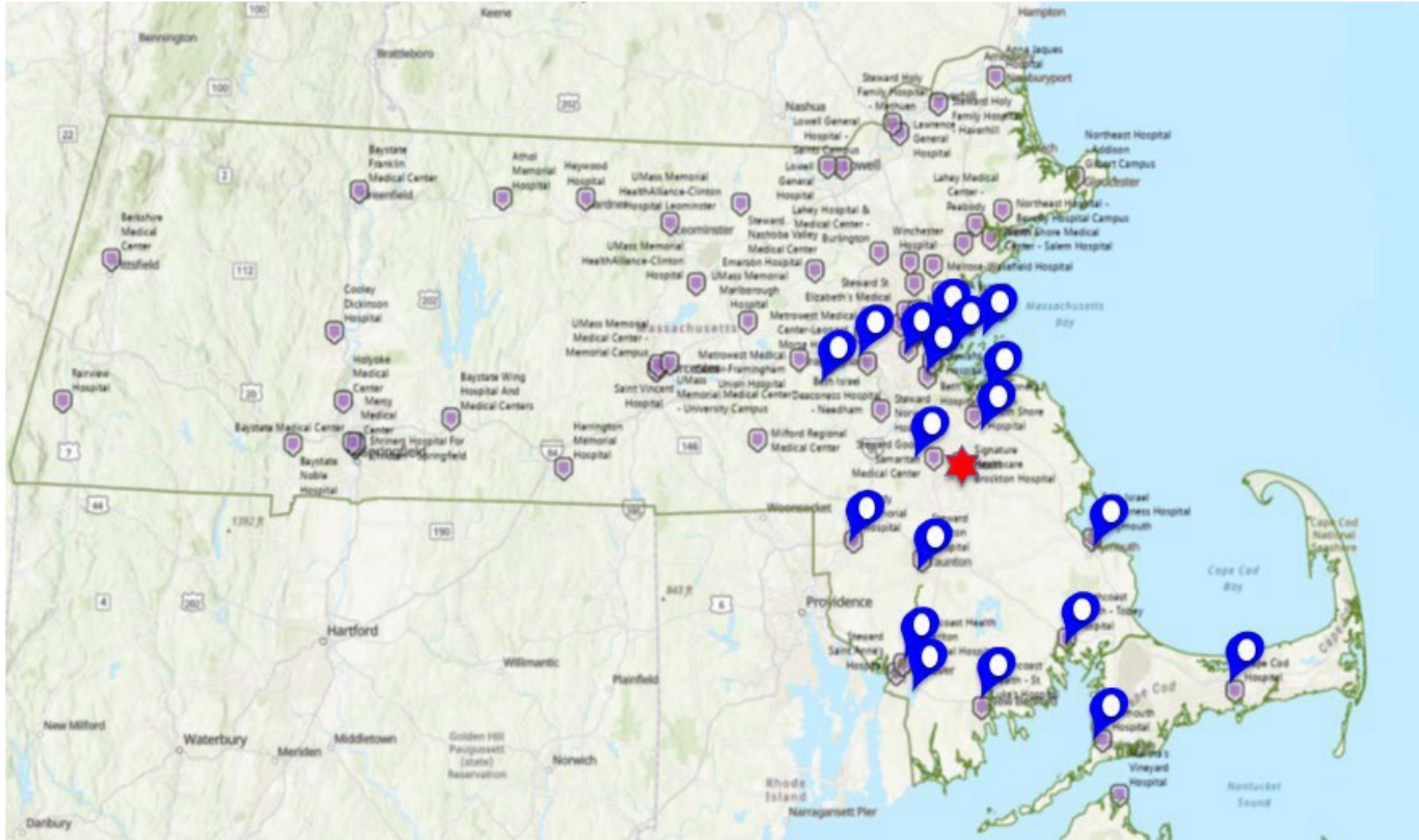




Massachusetts Hospital Preparedness Regions and Acute Care Facilities



Receiving Hospitals



Evacuation Entrance/Exit



Evacuation Entrance/Exit



Patient Evacuation





Patient Tracking





Firefighting Operations



HazMat Concerns



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HazMat Concerns

Media





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Social Media



Brockton Fire @Brockton_Fire · Feb 7

Under the direction of Brockton Fire Chief Nardelli & with the assistance of mutual aid we have evacuated the Brockton Hospital in an orderly fashion after a fire broke out this A.M. A 10th alarm was struck & we brought in 77 Ambulances
6 wheelchair vans 31 Engines & 7 Ladders.



WBZ | CBS Boston News and 9 others

14 140 449 91.4K



Gabrielle Caracciolo

@GabCaracciolo · Follow



#NOW @Brockton_Fire has called for a 10th alarm response to a fire at the Signature Healthcare Brockton Hospital. The fire is out now & ambulances are lined up evacuating patients. An update from officials is expected at 3pm @NBC10



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Hospital Incident Command



Recovery



Photo by Paul Connors/Media News Group/Boston Herald)



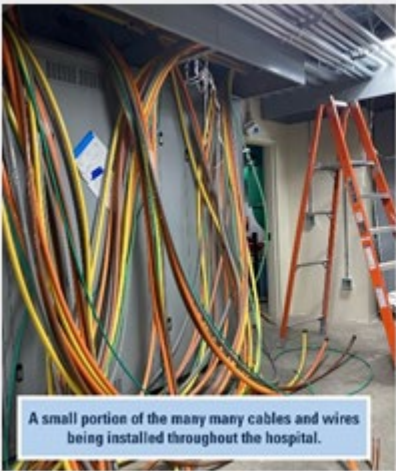
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Recovery



Photo by Paul Connors/Media News Group/Boston Herald)

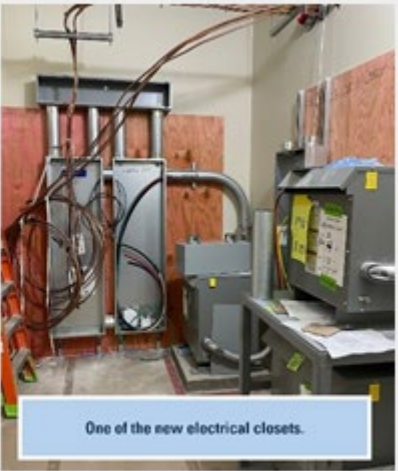
Recovery



A small portion of the many many cables and wires being installed throughout the hospital.



Emergency power being installed.



One of the new electrical closets.



Takeaways

- Prioritize patient and staff safety
- Empower staff to act
- Create, build and maintain relationships
- Ensure backups for systems
- Continuous readiness
- Save cell phone numbers
- Have hard copies of maps, checklists, census
- Align expectations of cascading response
- Drill to failure
- Plan for recovery



Thank you!

Please feel free to reach out with any questions you may have.

Contact:

csears@signature-healthcare.org

mdemayo@signature-healthcare.org



SIGNATURE HEALTHCARE

POWER OF HELLO & DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES

CENTRAL FLORIDA DISASTER MEDICAL COALITION

DEFEND TODAY, SECURE TOMORROW



Hospitals in the Past

- Very open public access
 - Numerous uncontrolled/unmonitored entries
 - Exterior doors left unlocked
- Traditionally limited security programs
 - Little or no control of visitors, contractors or vendors
 - No background checks on non-medical staff
 - Limited/no security personnel to deter or respond to threats
 - Limited emergency preparedness, security training and exercises to prepare staff
- Historically resisted becoming bastions of security
- Lacked violent crimes seen today



Hospitals of the Present

Despite growing threats, many hospitals still use open door policies practiced for decades

Hospitals targeted because they are considered a soft target, the availability of drugs, and open to the public 24/7:

Open door policy no longer practical

- Safety requires identity and access control for everyone
- New fire exits can prevent unauthorized hospital entry/exit undetected

Older open design facilities much more difficult to secure

Emergency preparedness program

99% of all hospitals have emergency operations plans

76% of large hospitals have active shooter response procedures

Gaps in planning include:

Clinic buildings not integrated into hospital emergency preparedness program and plans (i.e., emergency operations plan, codes, training, and mass notification system)

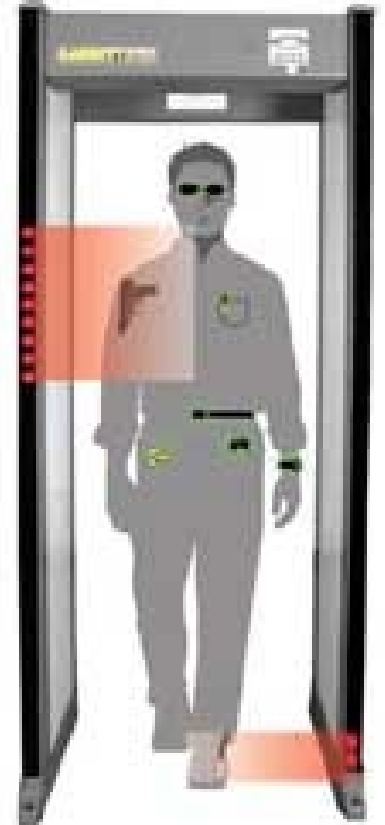


Bomb threat response management plan (telephone, suspicious mail, and vehicles)

Marty J. Smith
March 21, 2024

Security Risks

- Emergency Departments (EDs)
 - EDs are experiencing more violent attacks by patients, relatives or friends, often involving knives and guns. Increase in crime, hospitals are facing serious liability - the charge is usually inadequate security
 - Uncontrolled access into patient treatment areas
 - Limited or lack of full-time security personnel to deter and respond to threats
 - No ability to detect weapons before they enter patient treatment areas.
 - Lack of panic/duress alarm systems for staff to use when confronted with violent patients, family members, and other visitors
 - Night shift staffs often lack active shooter, armed individual, lock-down, and decontamination training; exercises not conducted on night shifts





Employee Vigilance through the Power of Hello



Marty J. Smith
March 21, 2024

Employee Vigilance through the Power of Hello

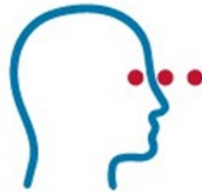


The OHNO approach – **Observe, Initiate a Hello, Navigate the Risk, and Obtain Help** – helps individuals observe and evaluate suspicious behaviors, empowers them to mitigate potential risk, and obtain help when necessary.

cisa.gov/employee-vigilance-power-hello



Observe



Stay **Vigilant** of your **Surroundings**.

SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIORS:

- Abandoning or placing an object and leaving the area
- Taking pictures/videos of personnel, facilities, security features, or infrastructure in an unusual or covert manner
- Attempting to enter a restricted area or impersonating authorized personnel
- Loitering at a location without a reasonable explanation
- Avoiding security personnel or systems
- Expressing threats of violence



Initiate a Hello



Acknowledging a risk can deter a potential threat.

DO OR SAY THE FOLLOWING:

- Smile, make eye contact, and introduce yourself
- “Hello, how are you?”
- “How can I assist you?”
- “Are you looking for something or someone in particular?”
- “I will be here in case you need help.”

Approaching a person viewed as suspicious has potential risks. In some situations, it may be more advisable to report the activity to those with the authority or training to intervene.



Navigate the Risk



Is the **Behavior** you Observed **Threatening** or **Suspicious**?

ASK YOURSELF:

- Do they appear to be legitimately patronizing the business or service?
- Is their clothing consistent with the weather or for the gathering of the day?
- Are they avoiding security?
- Are they asking questions about business functions or employee information?
- Are they causing you to feel threatened?

If you feel threatened, calmly walk away and call 9-1-1.



Obtain Help



Obtain **Help** from **Management** or **Authorities**.

PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO FIRST RESPONDERS OR SECURITY PERSONNEL:

- What is happening?
- Who is doing it?
- Where is it taking place?
- When did you observe it?
- Why are they here?

Call 9-1-1 for emergencies or if you feel in danger.



De-Escalation Series for ...



De-Escalation Series

RECOGNIZE
How You Can Notice the Warning Signs of Violence

Colleagues, friends, and family are often best positioned to recognize the warning signs of someone who may be on a path to violence.

People who resort to violence often differ by a combination of predispositions, personal or professional stressors, and assorted resentments.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- A person's behavior is often consistent over time. Changes in behavior may be a warning sign. Pay attention to any changes in behavior, such as mood, expressions, attitudes, or body language.
- Individuals are usually aware of their own stressors, but they may not be aware of how they affect others. If you notice someone who is stressed, try to help them in any way you can.
- People who resort to violence often have a history of aggression. They may have been violent in the past, or they may have been violent to others. They may have a history of aggression, such as mood, expressions, attitudes, or body language.
- Changes in behavior may be a warning sign. Pay attention to any changes in behavior, such as mood, expressions, attitudes, or body language.
- Individuals are usually aware of their own stressors, but they may not be aware of how they affect others. If you notice someone who is stressed, try to help them in any way you can.

When you notice the warning signs, you can help prevent violence in two primary ways. One applies to urgent situations where violence may be occurring or to imminence. The other enables you to help people by reporting your observations.

Clearly communicate the threat while seeking safety. This means that you should not be afraid to speak up. If you are in a situation where you feel that you are in danger, you should speak up. If you are not in a situation where you feel that you are in danger, you should report your observations to the appropriate authorities.

Before others can intervene, you should report your observations to the appropriate authorities. This means that you should not be afraid to speak up. If you are in a situation where you feel that you are in danger, you should speak up. If you are not in a situation where you feel that you are in danger, you should report your observations to the appropriate authorities.

Recognize the warning signs for someone on a path to violence, identify stressors, changes in baseline behavior, and observable behavioral indicators.

ASSESS
How to Navigate the Risk When Someone is Escalating

The assessment process determines whether an emergency response is needed, if de-escalation is possible, or if a more formal assessment is needed.

Begin with Assessment to Enable Assessment

- Awareness of potential signs or stressors
- Awareness of your response and ability to respond to stressors
- Awareness of the signs to identify a path to violence
- Ability to recognize a threat or a warning sign
- Ability to recognize a threat or a warning sign
- Ability to recognize a threat or a warning sign

When observing activity or behaviors that raise reasonable suspicion or concern, individuals should assess the situation to protect personal safety and the safety of those around them.

WHAT DOES AN ESCALATING PERSON LOOK LIKE?

Early Warning Signs

- Changes in behavior, such as mood, expressions, attitudes, or body language
- Changes in behavior, such as mood, expressions, attitudes, or body language
- Changes in behavior, such as mood, expressions, attitudes, or body language

Signs of Imminent Danger

- Threats, such as verbal threats, written threats, or threats made by actions
- Threats, such as verbal threats, written threats, or threats made by actions
- Threats, such as verbal threats, written threats, or threats made by actions

Be alert to any changes in behavior, such as mood, expressions, attitudes, or body language. If you notice someone who is stressed, try to help them in any way you can. If you are in a situation where you feel that you are in danger, you should speak up. If you are not in a situation where you feel that you are in danger, you should report your observations to the appropriate authorities.

Assess the situation to protect personal safety and the safety of those around you. Identify what an escalating person may look like and warning signs.

DE-ESCALATION
How You Can Help Defuse Potentially Violent Situations

De-Escalation

The use of communication or other techniques during an encounter to reduce, calm, or reduce the intensity of a potentially violent situation without using physical force or other actions of force.

De-escalation is a method to prevent potential violence. Individuals are encouraged to use purposeful actions, verbal communications, and body language to calm a potentially dangerous situation.

Your safety and the safety of others is the highest priority. Maintain a safe distance and avoid being drawn into an individual who is escalating or potentially violent. If there is a risk of harm, violence, remove yourself from the situation and seek safety.

Know your limits. Keep in mind that some individuals may be more adept at applying these techniques. Know your own limitations and boundaries and recognize that sometimes the best intervention is knowing when to seek additional help.

Obtain help. If you feel the individual or situation is escalating and violence may occur, call for help from your security staff or local law enforcement and move yourself to a safe location.

TIPS

- Use a calm, non-threatening tone.
- Use a calm, non-threatening tone.
- Use a calm, non-threatening tone.

De-Escalation encourages the use of purposeful actions, verbal techniques, and body language to calm a potentially dangerous situation. Safety is the highest priority, know your limits and obtain help immediately if needed.

REPORT
How to Engage Your Organization and Community

Reporting is critical to the prevention of workplace and community violence. Threats that are not known cannot be managed.

Reporting behaviors that raise concerns or an incident that is escalating plays an essential role in protecting yourself and others from a potentially violent situation by:

- Seeking help to prevent escalation
- Engaging your organization and community
- Seeking help to prevent escalation
- Engaging your organization and community
- Seeking help to prevent escalation
- Engaging your organization and community

There are two types of reporting:

- **Immediate Threats** - Immediate action and management of an escalating threat
- **Organizational Reporting** - Organizational reporting

Calling 9-1-1

If the person of concern is clearly threatening you or others, is a weapon of any kind is involved, or you feel that the threat of violence is immediate, move to a safe location and call 9-1-1.

The Public Law will need specific information to provide an appropriate response:

- The location of the incident
- The location of the person of concern
- The location of the person of concern
- The location of the person of concern
- The location of the person of concern

Report concerning behavior or an escalating incident through organizational reporting to enable assessment and management of an evolving threat, and 9-1-1 for immediate threats.



Recognize

People who resort to violence are often driven by a combination of **predispositions**, **personal or professional stressors**, and **assorted resentments**.



Stressors



Changes



Behavioral Indicators

When you notice the warning signs, you can help prevent violence in two primary ways; **communicating the threat** and **informing others**.



Communicate the Threat
Gun! Run! Bomb! Get Out!



Inform Others
Tell What You Have Seen Or Know



Behavioral Change Initiators



Behavioral Indicators

Speech

- Expression of suicidal tendencies
- Talking about previous violent incidents
- Unsolicited focus on dangerous weapons
- Paranoid thinking
- Overreaction to workplace changes

Feelings

- Depression or withdrawal
- Unstable, emotional responses
- Feeling either arrogant and supreme or powerless
- Intense anger or hostility

Behaviors

- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Violations of company policies
- Increased absenteeism
- Exploiting or blaming others





- **The assessment process** determines whether an emergency response is needed, if de-escalation is possible, or if a more formal assessment is needed.
- **Includes assessment of:**
 - the person(s) of concern
 - external and/or environmental factors
 - the assessor themselves
- **Encourages engagement with the organization** if a more formal assessment is necessary.
 - Specifically for cases of potential insider threats
- Reminds the reader that **their safety is priority.**



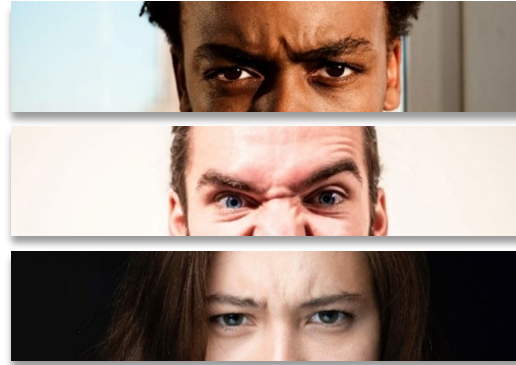
Assess

What Does an Escalating Person Look Like?



Early Warning Signs

- Change in baseline behavior or mood
- Pacing, ruminating, agitated gestures
- Staring through you
- Blocking others' movement
- Finger pointing
- Distracted or inability to focus



Signs of Imminent Danger

- Flushed, tightened jaw, clenched fists, shaking
- Rapid breathing, raised voice, nervous laughter
- Standing in a position to attack or defend
- Avoiding security systems or personnel
- Abandoning an object or package





What is Suspicious Activity?

- Suspicious activity is behavior that is reasonably indicative of criminal or terrorist-related activities
- Examples include someone:
 - Leaving a backpack in an unattended place
 - Trying to break into a restricted area
- A person's race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity must not be considered as factors creating suspicion
 - Reports based on appearance will only hinder law enforcement officers



Marty J. Smith
March 21, 2024

De-Escalate

Use **purposeful actions**, **verbal communication**, and **body language** techniques to help calm an individual who may be escalating.

Purposeful Actions

- Remain Calm
- Change the Setting
- Respect Personal Space
- Listen
- Empathize

Verbal Communication

Instead Of:

“Calm down.”

“I can’t help you.”

“I know how you feel.”

Say...

“I can see that you are upset...”

“I want to help, what can I do?”

“I understand that you feel...”

Body Language

Instead Of:

Standing rigidly directly in front of the person

Pointing your finger

Excessive gesturing or pacing

Faking a smile

Try...

Keeping a relaxed and alert stance off to the side of the person

Keeping your hands down, open, and visible at all times

Using slow, deliberate movements

Maintaining a neutral and attentive facial expression



What to Report

When Calling 9-1-1:

If the person of concern is directly threatening you or others, if a weapon of any kind is involved, or you feel that the threat of violence is imminent, retreat and **call 9-1-1**

The 9-1-1 call taker will need specific information to provide an appropriate response

-
- Your name
 - The location of the incident
 - The location of the person of concern
 - Your exact location
 - A description of the situation
 - Is the incident still in progress?
 - A physical description of the person of concern
 - The type and number of weapons, if any
 - The number of potential victims



Video: De-escalation Techniques





RECOGNIZE

How You Can Notice the Warning Signs of Violence

Co-workers, friends, and family are often best positioned to **recognize the warning signs** in someone who may be on a path to violence.



People who resort to violence are often driven by a combination of predispositions, personal or professional stressors, and assorted resentments.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER



- A person's behaviors and communications are often disclosed through nonverbal means. Pay attention to what people are saying through facial expressions, emotions, and body language.
- Individuals are unique and will likely not discuss intentions or needs in a uniform manner. Behaviors that some people find troubling or threatening may very well be someone's way of asking for help.
- People have bad days. They can become sad, argumentative, or angry; this does not mean there is intent to cause harm.
- Confirmation of a threat requires a solid understanding of context and a holistic assessment of the person's circumstances and stressors.
- When you report, you create an opportunity to prevent potentially violent situations.

When you notice the warning signs, you can help prevent violence in two primary ways. One applies to urgent situations when violence may be occurring or is imminent. The other enables you to help people by reporting your observations.

Clearly communicate the threat while seeking safety

If you recognize that a hostile act is occurring or is imminent, remove yourself from the situation and seek safety while communicating the threat and suggested response in a loud, clear voice (e.g., "Gun!" "Run!" "Bomb!" "Get Out!").

Inform others

If you recognize a warning sign and there is no imminent threat, inform others of what you have seen or know. Tell a supervisor, manager, security guard, or other employee or team member.

This document describes activities and behaviors that may be concerning or indicative of impending violence. Some of these activities while concerning, may be constitutionally protected and should be reported only when there are sufficient facts to support a rational conclusion that the behavior represents a potential threat of violence. Do not report based solely on protected activities, or on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, or a combination of only such factors. In addition, be aware that critical infrastructure owners and their operations may also be targeted based on these factors.



STRESSORS

Situations that cause strain or tension.

These can be positive or negative developments in a person's personal or professional life.

Examples include:

- Financial strain
- Illness or death among family or friends
- Addiction (drugs, alcohol, gambling, etc.)
- Break-up or divorce
- Employment actions (promotion, demotion, termination, etc.)
- Conflict with peers, co-workers, or managers
- Legal problems
- Transfer or relocation



CHANGES

Variation in baseline behavior.

Baseline behavior is an individual's normal mood and typical responses to everyday activities. Those most familiar with an individual will be able to notice a change in baseline behaviors.

Examples include:

- A person who is usually moody or socially isolated becoming excessively outgoing
- An outgoing person suddenly becoming socially isolated
- A normally hard worker that no longer cares about work performance
- Someone who develops beliefs or ideas that promote violence



BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS

Observable behaviors by peers.

Organizational members typically have some degree of familiarity with each other and are frequently able to spot changes in a peer's behavior.

Examples include:

- Disgruntlement toward peers
- Unwillingness to comply with established rules or policies
- Stalking, harassing, or bullying
- Making inappropriate statements or jokes
- Threats of violence, either verbally or written
- Fascination with previous incidents of workplace violence
- New or increased interest in weapons
- Asking about security outside of assigned roles and responsibilities

Observable physical behaviors.

It is difficult to determine a stranger's intent due to lack of familiarity. Individuals will have to rely on physical indicators of aggression to determine if a stranger is potentially hostile.

Examples include:

- Argumentative or uncooperative behaviors
- Clenched jaw and/or balled fists
- Pacing or restlessness
- Trembling or shaking
- Violating others' personal space
- Making specific threats to inflict harm to themselves or others
- Displaying or making threats to use a weapon



HELPFUL LINKS

Power of Hello:

cisa.gov/employee-vigilance-power-hello

CISA Insider Threat Mitigation Guide:

cisa.gov/publication/insider-threat-mitigation-resources

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 **RECOGNIZE**
 **ASSESS**
 **DE-ESCALATE**
 **REPORT**

These recognition approaches are options for consideration. This is not intended to mandate policy or direct any action.



ASSESS

How To Navigate the Risk When Someone is Escalating

The assessment process **determines whether an emergency response is needed, if de-escalation is possible, or if a more formal assessment is needed.**



Begin with Awareness to Enable Assessment

- Awareness of precipitating events or stressors
- Awareness of your response and ability to manage your emotions
- Awareness of the situation to determine if you should engage, whether a simple “hello” will deter a threat or a more purposeful action to de-escalate the situation is required, or immediate notification to law enforcement or security is necessary



When observing activity or behaviors that raise reasonable suspicions or concerns, individuals should assess the situation to protect personal safety and the safety of those around them.

WHAT DOES AN ESCALATING PERSON LOOK LIKE?

Early Warning Signs

- Changes in a co-worker’s baseline behavior
- Pacing, ruminating, agitated gestures, or uncontrolled and disorganized behaviors
- Staring through you
- Blocking other’s movement
- Finger pointing
- Change in mood
- Distractions from work or an inability to focus
- Inappropriate responses to environmental stressors

Signs of Imminent Danger

- Intensity in appearance with heightened senses
- Flushed, tightened jaw, clenched fists, shaking, flaring nostrils
- Rapid breathing, raised voice, nervous laughter
- Poised to strike or lunge
- Standing in a position to attack or defend
- Personal space violation
- An unauthorized person trying to enter a restricted area
- Someone impersonating an authorized person
- Someone trying to avoid security systems or personnel
- Someone abandoning an object or package and then leaving the area

Barriers to Assessment and to De-Escalation

- Lack of empathy
- Reacting with defensiveness or anger
- Lack of respect for or shaming others
- Blaming, criticizing, preaching, labeling, or lecturing
- Lack of commitment to obligations, being preoccupied, or in a hurry
- Ordering or engaging in a power struggle
- Language or cultural differences

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ASSESS YOURSELF

- Start by trusting your instincts; if the situation is beyond your abilities to engage, seek help
- De-escalate yourself first – remain calm or act calm if you aren't
- Control your breathing
- Relax your body and avoid gestures or postures that could be interpreted as aggressive or defensive
- Reassure yourself with positive self-talk – “You can do this” or “I can handle this”
- Project confidence and remain centered and self-assured



ASSESS THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE ENVIRONMENT

For situations where the individual is unknown, assess if the individual presents a potential threat — the **Power of Hello** offers a means to navigate the risk.

- Does the person appear to be legitimately patronizing the business or service?
- Is the person's clothing consistent with the weather or the situation?
- Is the person avoiding security?
- Is the person asking questions about business functions or employee information? (e.g., “Who is closing?” or “How many people work here?” etc.)
- Is the person's behavior making you feel threatened?
- How is the person reacting to you or others when approached?

Assess if the environment is conducive to de-escalation:

- Is someone present who is agitating the person?
- Is there someone or something that is aggravating the situation?
- Is it crowded or lacking personal space?
- Are there environmental barriers to de-escalation (i.e., noise, weather, other distractions)?



FORMAL THREAT ASSESSMENTS

In some circumstances, a more formal threat assessment process is necessary.

Threat assessment requires the organization to gather and analyze information about an employee or team member who may cause harm.

- A primary purpose is to inform decision-making on how to manage a person of concern, with the goal to prevent an incident.
- A thorough assessment by the organization's multi-disciplinary threat management team may include an interview with the person of concern and any witnesses - co-workers, associates, friends, family, or others - who can offer firsthand knowledge of the person's behaviors, history, or stressors.
- Is there evidence to suggest the person of concern poses a threat?
- What type of threat does the person of concern pose?
- Is the person of concern moving toward committing a malicious act?



HELPFUL LINKS

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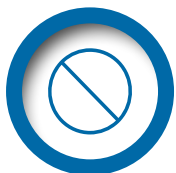
DE-ESCALATION

How You Can Help Defuse Potentially Violent Situations

De-Escalation

“The use of communication or other techniques during an encounter to stabilize, slow, or reduce the intensity of a potentially violent situation without using physical force, or with a reduction in force.”

– Department of Homeland Security
Policy Statement 044-05



De-Escalation is a method to prevent potential violence.

Individuals are encouraged to use purposeful actions, verbal communications, and body language to calm a potentially dangerous situation.



Your safety and the safety of others is the highest priority.

Maintain a safe distance and avoid being alone with an individual who is combative or potentially violent. If there is a risk of imminent violence, remove yourself from the situation and seek safety.



Know your limits.

Keep in mind that some individuals may be more adept in applying these techniques. Know your own vulnerabilities and tendencies and recognize that sometimes the best intervention is knowing when to seek additional help.



Obtain Help.

If you feel the individual or situation is escalating and violence may occur, call for help from your security staff or local law enforcement and move yourself to a safe location.

TIPS

- Be aware of your non-verbal communications. Ensure your tone, facial expressions, body language, and gestures relay calm and empathy.
- Remain respectful and courteous. Address the individual with civility and use phrases such as “please” and “thank you.”

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PURPOSEFUL ACTIONS

Remain Calm: A purposeful demonstration of calmness and composure can enable de-escalation.

Change the Setting: If possible, remove people from the area. This could involve parties to the conflict and onlookers.

Respect Personal Space: Maintain a safe distance and avoid touching the other person.

Listen: Give your full attention, nod, ask questions, and avoid changing the subject or interrupting.

Empathize: Present genuine concern and a willingness to understand without judging.



VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Tone + Volume + Rate of speech + Inflection of voice = Verbal De-Escalation

Tone: Speak calmly to demonstrate empathy.

Volume: Monitor your volume and avoid raising your voice.

Rate of Speech: Slower can be more soothing.

Inflection: Be aware of emphasizing words or syllables as that can negatively affect the situation.

Instead Of:

“Calm down.”

“I can’t help you.”

“I know how you feel.”

“Come with me.”

Say...

“I can see that you are upset...”

“I want to help, what can I do?”

“I understand that you feel...”

“May I speak with you?”



BODY LANGUAGE

Instead Of:

Standing rigidly directly in front of the person

Pointing your finger

Excessive gesturing or pacing

Faking a smile

Try...

Keeping a relaxed and alert stance off to the side of the person

Keeping your hands down, open, and visible at all times

Using slow, deliberate movements

Maintaining a neutral and attentive facial expression



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 **REPORT**

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REPORT

How To Engage Your Organization and Community

Reporting is critical to the prevention of workplace and community violence. Threats that are not known cannot be managed.



Reporting behaviors that raise concerns or an incident that is escalating plays an essential role in protecting yourself and others from a potentially violent situation by:

Alerting first responders to provide appropriate intervention in cases of an imminent or credible threat

Engaging your organization to enable assessment and management of a potential evolving threat

When making a report, the goals are to prevent violence and to get help for the individual of concern. Reporting is not intended to be punitive, to get someone in trouble, to send someone to jail, to cost someone a job, or to damage someone's reputation. Engagement following a report can discourage or stop someone from making a mistake and acting on violent ideas.

There are two types of reporting:

Calling 9-1-1

For **immediate** threats

Organizational Reporting

To enable assessment and management of an **evolving** threat

- In either case – ensure your personal safety before making a report

Calling 9-1-1

If the person of concern is directly threatening you or others, if a weapon of any kind is involved, or you feel that the threat of violence is imminent, move to a safe location and call **9-1-1**.

The 9-1-1 call taker will need specific information to provide an appropriate response:



- Your name
- The location of the incident
- The location of the person of concern
- Your exact location
- A description of the situation
- Is the incident still in progress?
- A physical description of the person of concern
- The type and number of weapons, if any
- The number of potential victims

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ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTING

Reporting can be an intimidating task.

Some individuals fear there will be negative consequences from getting involved. Others question if they may get it wrong or unintentionally cause harm to someone. To mitigate these challenges, organizations should consider creating systems which encourage reporting through a culture of shared responsibility, making sure that people know that reporting is confidential and designed to help them and the person of concern.

Key points to include in a report:

- The exact nature and context of the concerning behavior, comments, and/or perceived threat.
- Who or what is/was the intended target.
- Is the person of concern under any new or significant stress?
- The specific words or actions perceived as threatening.
 - *Did the person of concern express a planned course of action?*
 - Does the plan make sense?
 - Is it realistic and specific?
 - *Does the person of concern have the means, knowledge, and ability to carry out a plan?*
 - *Has the person of concern engaged in violent behaviors before?*
 - Developing an idea or plan
 - Approaching, visiting, and/or following a target
 - Attempting to circumvent security or protective measures
- Any available background.
 - *Are the person of concern's actions consistent with the concerning statements?*
 - *Are those who know the person of concern worried that they might act based on inappropriate ideas?*
 - *Are there any personal or professional stressors that may have contributed to the incident?*
 - *Are there factors in the person of concern's life and/or environment which might increase or decrease the likelihood of violent action?*
 - *Does the person of concern have known problems with peers, supervisors, management, or leadership?*
 - *Is there evidence of substance abuse, mental illness, or depression?*
 - *Is there evidence that the person of concern is experiencing desperation and/or despair?*

The answers to these questions can contribute to a threat assessment by a multi-disciplinary threat management team and should provide or corroborate evidence as to whether a person is progressing toward a malicious act.



HELPFUL LINKS

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DHS/CISA: Releases Violence Prevention through De-escalation Video

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency is pleased to announce the release of a new resource titled, [Violence Prevention through De-escalation Video](#), to help critical infrastructure and public gathering location stakeholders identify concerning behaviors and mitigate the risk of an incident of targeted violence. This video provides both security and non-security trained professionals with conflict prevention techniques and recommended practices that may augment more traditional security protocols. This approach can help individuals who have observed activities and behaviors that may be considered suspicious or indicative of potentially violent activity.

For more information and to access this video online, visit: cisa.gov/resources-tools/resources/violence-prevention-through-de-escalation.