

Bomb Threat Procedures

When dealing with bomb threats, the most important thing that an individual or business can do is to PRE-PLAN. This guideline will address how to develop such a plan.

A. PURPOSE OF CALL

The only two reasons for a bomb threat to be made are:

1. The caller has knowledge of an explosive device;
2. To cause general alarm or panic.

B. PREPARATION

Lines of organization must be established. It is important that anyone, who might receive the threat, be aware of the proper procedures that are to go into effect. By being prepared for such an incident, the employee will be more mentally capable of handling the problem, without panic.

A Control Center, or Command Post, should be designated to allow all involved to know where to respond, or where to report pertinent information. A person with decision-making authority must be at this post.

C. EVACUATION

This is the most important decision to be made in the event that a threat is received. The decision must be made according to a written policy. Depending on the structure of the organization, only people with authority should be able to make this decision. *REMEMBER:* The decision to, or not to, evacuate must consider the civil liabilities of either decision.

D. TELEPHONE BOMB THREATS

A bomb threat response card (one is attached to this document) should be available by any phone that received outside calls. Keep the caller on the line as long as possible. Develop as much information as possible, using the form as a guideline.

After the caller hangs up, contact the Control Center or Command Post to get the bomb threat plan in action. *CALL THE POLICE AGENCY THAT HAS JURISDICTION IN YOUR AREA.*

E. WRITTEN THREATS

Save all material received. Once it is established that you have a threat, do NOT handle the document any more. This will allow the item to be processed for latent fingerprints, once the police take custody of the item.

F. BOMB SEARCH TECHNIQUES

The most important point to be remembered while searching is *"YOU NEVER MOVE A SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE, MOVE THE PEOPLE AWAY FROM THE PACKAGE."*

Who will search in the event of a bomb threat is a sensitive issue. The answer to this question is firm. All searches must be made by personnel familiar with the area in question. "I'm not going to look for a bomb!!!" is a normal response to this challenge. The fact of the matter, is that the person most qualified to search a given area, is one that is most familiar with the area.

To help show a person why they are the most qualified to search an area, ask this question . . .

WHAT DOES A BOMB LOOK LIKE?

In the bomb disposal business, a homemade bomb is referred to as an Improvised Explosive Device (I.E.D.). The key here is the wording "improvised", referring to the fact that it is a person's own improvisation. No two persons, without collaboration, would design the same I.E.D. By being familiar with a given area, a person can perform a cursory search, asking themselves the following questions:

*IS IT UNUSUAL?
IS IT OUT OF PLACE?
IS IT SUSPICIOUS?*

If you are in an area that you are familiar with, you can clear an area quickly, and if you spot an item that fits any of that criteria, then you can respond according to policy. Often times this can be done in a few seconds.

1. *How To Search*

- a. Search in teams of two or three.
- b. *LOOK, LISTEN and SMELL* before you enter a room.
- c. Divide the room to be searched into areas.
One person search high; one person search low.
- d. Use search patterns, such as grid, line or spiral.
- e. If lights are on, leave them on – If lights are off, leave them off.
- f. *THINK* – How long would a bomber have to place a device.

2. *Where To Search (in order of priority)*

- a. Outside areas.
- b. Common areas – open to public, i.e., restrooms, janitorial closets, waiting rooms, lobbies, and elevators.
- c. Private areas.

3. *Who Would Search*

Select teams according to who is familiar with given areas. Common areas can best be searched by security guards or maintenance personnel. Private areas should be cleared by whoever is in control of that area.

G. SUSPICIOUS OBJECT LOCATED

DO NOT TOUCH OR MOVE THE OBJECT!!!

You are only to search and report to the Control Center or Command Center, you are not a bomb technician!

1. Make a good mental note of what the device looks like.
2. Finish searching the area that you are in.

3. Search team:
 - a. One searcher must report, in person, to the person in charge, what has developed.
 - b. One searcher must secure the area. This is not to say that you must stay in the immediate area, only that you need to try to keep people out of the danger zone.
 - c. Stand by to brief the Police Bomb Squad on the particulars of the items, i.e., size, shape, container material, exact location, etc.

H. ORDERED EVACUATION

This must be practiced. It can be incorporated into fire drills without notifying employees. The procedures can be the same. NOTE: As a rule of thumb, evacuate all personnel 300 feet.

I. ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

Contact the Austin Police Department Bomb Squad at 530-2662.

TELEPHONE BOMB THREAT REPORT FORM

INSTRUCTION:

BE CALM. BE COURTEOUS. LISTEN. Do not interrupt the caller.

Exact words of the threat: _____

DATE/TIME: _____

QUESTIONS TO ASK:

1. When is the bomb going to go off? _____

2. Where is the bomb? _____

3. What kind of bomb is it? _____

4. What does it look like? _____

5. Where is the caller now? _____

6. What is the caller's name? _____

TRY TO DETERMINE:

Sex _____ Race _____ Age _____ Accent _____

MANNER: Calm _____ Angry _____ Intoxicated _____ Irrational _____, etc.

Notify Supervisor

Call 911

Name of person receiving the call _____

Telephone number where call received _____

Do you recognize the voice of the caller? Yes _____ NO _____