



**LEPC WORKSHOP
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS RECOVERY
IN A REGIONAL DISASTER
BRAINSTORMING SESSION - RECAP
April 20, 2006**

Purpose of Workshop:

To brainstorm emergency preparedness and disaster recovery issues to develop a strategy for preparing for and responding to the effects of regional disasters at facilities with hazardous materials. The outcome of this workshop will be used as the basis for subsequent workshops to assist organizations that handle hazardous materials in preparing/improving and implementing their emergency preparedness and disaster recovery plans.

Brainstorming was focused on the three key questions listed below and provided an opportunity for experienced experts to share their expertise.

Key Questions:

1. Should your evaluation of your vulnerabilities change when planning for a regional disaster as opposed to a facility-specific incident?
2. How do your emergency plans address the fact that first responders, such as the local fire department, may be unavailable or unable to respond to an emergency at your facility during a regional disaster?
3. How can communication channels be established and emergency notifications streamlined to facilitate appropriate emergency response?

Discussion of Question 1

Should your evaluation of your vulnerabilities change when planning for a regional disaster as opposed to a facility-specific incident?

Chuck Gemeundt's Presentation (General Dynamics)

Each General Dynamics site has developed its own business continuity plan. Facilities assist each other but operate independently. Each facility needs to be able to operate on its own in a disaster

situation. Each facility makes its own call on evacuation, but coordinates any evacuation with corporate. Each has its own emergency operations center location.

Chuck brought a copy of a business continuity plan template that was made available in the back of the room.

All facilities have an arrangement with Excel Administration, Inc. (1-800-432-2481) to provide support in disaster situations. This support includes: handling communication problems, contacting agencies, providing required agency notifications and assisting in identifying organizations that can handle disaster response/remediation. To date, the Florida General Dynamics facilities have not had to utilize their services.

During recent hurricanes, they found that cell phones did not work and it took days before they were operational.

Because of the type of operations conducted at their facilities, security personnel are required to remain at the facility. If there is a hazardous materials issue, security would use the Excel Administration 800 number to get assistance.

Follow-up discussion

There are problems with both cell phones and satellite phones and limitations in their use in emergency situations. A question that needs to be answered is “How soon do you need communication?” Satellite phones are still cost prohibitive for small businesses. (More on this issue, in the follow-up discussion to question #3.)

There are problems associated with the media that need to be addressed, including:

- Over/under reaction to events.
- Problems with the accuracy of the predictions / forecasts presented by the media.

Question: Do you include criteria in your plan for evacuation or other action? One trigger is when the bridges are shut down. Another is when mandatory evacuation is announced.

Important to provide employees with the 800 number they need to call to contact first responders and the questions that will be asked when they call that number.

Third party administrations, such as Excel Administration, have contracts with response contractors and activate one or more depending on availability, location and response time. It is likely to take 30 minutes from initial call until the emergency responder is activated. Organizations like Excel have pre-negotiated rates with emergency providers.

It is important to have pre-event arrangements / contracts with response providers.

What do you do about the employees who stay?

- Pre-identify the employees who need to stay
- Allow them to bring families
- Need to address payroll issues
- Need to provide laundry facilities

After the disaster event, need to do a phased-in call back and make sure they can reach your facility.

Steps to take Pre-Event

- Facility Lockdown
- Managing product/hazardous material levels
- Control of access gates

Need to do pre-planning. Good to have a pre-planning (zero to 7-day) checklist.

Several issues were identified relating to managing product/hazardous material:

- Maintaining inventory levels in tank to prevent tank failure and/or tanks floating away
- Need to stockpile assets to sustain recovery (e.g. fuel for response vehicles)
- Equalization of inventory between tanks
- Diverting incoming shipments
- Lock down tanks / piping
- Inspecting / maintaining containment
- Increasing production to decrease inventory
- Inability to ship (suppliers and vendors may stop shipping and/or delivery trucks will not or can not deliver)
- Need to manage drums and small containers (anything that can fly or float) – bring inside if possible or secure with straps and netting
- Containing bulk product with sandbags, covering with plastic/tarps

Need to identify / mitigate flood potential issues in advance of the event – inspecting impoundments, retention ponds, checking run-off, site grading

Post event issues identified:

- Access to facility (can drivers get through roadblocks to facility – may need paperwork, escorts)
- Security
- Obtaining emergency permits (e.g. to treat material as hazardous waste)
- Having right gear and supplies
- Planning for media attention

Communication is a major issue. The Internet, as well as the phone system, may shut down.

Discussion of Question #2

How do your emergency plans address the fact that first responders, such as local first department, may be unavailable or unable to respond to an emergency at your facility during a regional disaster?

Eric Brown's Presentation (SWS Environmental First Response)

If you know something is coming – pick up the phone – don't wait or responders and/or emergency supplies may not be available.

Have at least 3 responders on your call list --

- At least one local (that can respond in 1-2 hours)
- One national (that is outside of the likely disaster event)

Eric listed some of the response companies – SWS, Clean Harbors, Shaw Environmental, Gardner Environmental, Weston Solutions Environmental, Winter Environmental, LVI, Hepaco, DES, ACT, Compass Environmental.

Need to have a plan and test it with drills. Don't wait until just prior to the Hurricane season. Drills help you to identify the small details that can sink your disaster response plan (e.g. not having paddles in your boat).

Follow-up discussion

The new changes to the SPCC regulations (effective in 2007) will require companies to model their “worst case” spill and develop a response for it.

Needed supplies will run out fast so start calling early.

It is very important to provide basic supplies for your responders. This includes food, water, place to sleep, personal protective equipment and laundry services (you don't want people to bring contaminated clothes back to living areas).

You will need power. Power needed to cool things down or heat things up. Lack of power can cause explosions or fires with some materials.

You may also need to clear transportation routes so that supplies can be delivered.

May need to pre-position fuel to use for generators and/or response equipment after the disaster event. You can only pre-position so much so will need arrangements to get more. You will also need security to keep other from taking your fuel for their needs.

Your response team and supplies need to be staged outside of the likely affected area.

In pre-planning, you need to think about dealing with laboratory chemicals and radioactive sources.

Need to address to following first responder issues:

- Site security (don't want "bad guys" to be able to access your facility by posing as responders)
- Access to the facility
- Safety issues (may need a structural engineer to evaluate the safety of the building)
- Protection of confidential information
- In some cases, you may have to deal with individuals who are not familiar with the area or with language issues

Responders will need credentials – proper IDs, letters, truck signage. Should also do background checks (a pre-planning issue).

Need to have on-going (not one time) coordination with local emergency responders (police, as well as fire). Make contacts and build relationships with your likely first responders early. It is not the time to exchange business cards when your facility is burning.

Order of First Responders

- Police
- Fire Department
- Coast Guard / National Guard

In a disaster situation, public responders will be prioritized based on need (on a centralized basis) so they may not be available for your response.

Should consider using teaming and/or mutual response (assist) agreements, like those used by ACC members as part of Responsible Care, as a model for creating local communities of businesses helping each other.

Need to have a damage assessment checklist for post-event activities as well – it needs to address safety issues (e.g. building integrity) as well as damage assessment. It is critical to identify in your checklist the likely post-event safety / facility issues.

Keep a copy of key phone numbers, with contact names, at a location away from the facility. This includes numbers for things such as utilities, rental equipment, portable toilets, and trailers. You will need to know who you need to contact about your permits if you may be operating outside of the specified conditions. You may want to have copies of yellow pages from different metropolitan areas.

Supplies will run out quickly of some items (e.g. tarps). May want to have a supply on hand rather than hoping to rely on an outside vendor supplying.

Be sure you also negotiate transportation charges in advance or it may be cost-prohibitive to get supplies in.

If you need access to your facility to get critical supplies through – call the EOC and ask for the business and industry liaison or the law enforcement desk.

One idea for emergency record preservation – seal into clean 55 gallon drums.

Discussion of Question #3

How can communication channels be established and emergency notifications streamlined to facilitate appropriate emergency response?

Holley Wade's Presentation (Hillsborough County Emergency Operations)

Organizations often assume that everything else will be normal except for their emergency. This is not a valid assumption in a regional disaster.

No plan can cover everything but a lot of plans are single-minded and focused on only one type of disaster.

Your business continuity plan needs the following elements:

- Strategic Plan
- Emergency Operations / Response Plan
- Mitigation Plan
- Continuity Plan

Your crisis communication plan needs to address both emergency communication (with emergency responders) and crisis communication (both internal and external). Internal crisis communication is with your employees. External crisis communication is with your suppliers, vendors and the media. Your crisis communication plan needs to address who is in charge, how the communication will be done and when.

It is very important to have a PIO – public information officer – who is in charge of all external crisis communication. This individual needs to be trained, ready to go and available after hours. This person also needs to be LOCAL. This person needs to know who can be used as designated subject matter experts for particular subjects.

Media will show up so you need to be prepared:

- Establish a media area
- Have someone who is assigned to meet media who is trained in media communication
- Keep others away from the media area
- Train all employees in the communication plan

You need to manage the message and prepare your sound bites. You have only 5-9 seconds to give your message.

Cell phones are not likely to work for immediate emergency communication. Consider walkie-talkies or the off-the-network option if you have Nextel phones. Also consider getting the GPS option. This can be used to direct crews if street signs are gone.

Have several ways to power your communication devices – AC, Generator, DC (car lighter adaptor), and extra batteries.

Don't put all your eggs in one basket – have multiple communication options. This includes different cell phone providers, Nextel, walkie-talkies, Blackberries (with pin to pin communication), computers with wireless cards to allow for intranet, e-mail and voice over IP communication.

Need to know alternative contact information for employees. For example, will the employee be at Aunt Mabel's in Tucson? Employees are not likely to be at home so having contact information for out-of-state relatives can be important.

It is important to do pre-planning. You also need to test your communication system.

Follow-up Discussion

If you have a call-in number, include an update schedule in your message so employees know when to call back.

Have a single call-in number. This allows you to have a consistent message. Employees know where to call. You can route the call to a place outside the likely affected area.

Give employees wallet cards. Their wallet is the one thing they are likely to take with them when they evacuate.

If you don't have anything else, have a good crisis communications plan. If they can talk, creative people can figure out what to do.

It is also important to deal with mental health issues. In Katrina, one-page handouts were used with questions to keep people identify if they had a problem and resources to call or visit.

Debriefing after the event and after drills is very important. It was suggested that the LEPC sponsor another workshop like this one next April to share experiences.

To get a copy of the Florida Business Disaster Survival Kit and related templates, go to www.fldisasterkit.com

Chet Klinger's Presentation

Need to make addressing hazardous substances part of the overall business continuity for the organization.

Another resource for business continuity planning is NFPA 1600:2004, Standard on Disaster, Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs. This document is available at <http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files/pdf/nfpa1600.pdf>