

# Community Emergency Preparedness for Terrorist Threats

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# Hazard analysis

- ✍ Many terrorist threats involve familiar hazard agents:
  - Flammable and explosive materials
  - Toxic chemicals, and
  - Radiological materials

# Hazard analysis

- ✍ These threats initiate *agent-generated* demands for
  - Emergency assessment,
  - Expedient hazard mitigation, and
  - Population protection.

# Emergency assessment functions

- ✍ Threat detection and emergency classification
- ✍ Hazard and environmental monitoring,
- ✍ Population monitoring and assessment, and
- ✍ Damage assessment

# Expedient hazard mitigation functions

- ✍ Hazard source control, and
- ✍ Impact mitigation

# Population protection functions

- ✍ Protective action selection,
- ✍ Population warning,
- ✍ Protective action implementation,
- ✍ Impact zone access control and security,
- ✍ Reception and care of victims,
- ✍ Search and rescue,
- ✍ Emergency medical care and morgues, and
- ✍ Hazard exposure control.

# New challenges for community emergency preparedness

- ✍ Biohazards exhibit some behaviors that are unfamiliar to local emergency responders (e.g., contagion rather than contamination).
- ✍ These will require new biohazard-specific emergency response procedures.
- ✍ However, the general processes of emergency assessment, expedient hazard mitigation, and population protection will remain the same.

# Emergency response analysis

- ✍ All terrorist threats initiate *response-generated* demands that require the same incident management functions as more familiar natural and technological hazards.

# Incident management functions

- ✍ Agency notification and mobilization
- ✍ Internal direction and control
- ✍ External coordination
- ✍ Public information
- ✍ Administrative and logistic support
- ✍ Documentation

# Objectives of comprehensive emergency preparedness

- ✍ Link preparedness for each hazard agent into existing emergency management networks.
- ✍ Anticipate potential hazard impacts on risk area population segments and assess their capabilities for self-protection.
- ✍ Develop clear lines of authority and mechanisms for inter-organizational coordination.

# Objectives of comprehensive emergency preparedness

- ✍ Allocate response functions according to agency competence and resources.
- ✍ Identify potential sources of extra-community assistance; establish horizontal and vertical mechanisms to coordinate with them.
- ✍ Promote emergency resource acquisition at household, organization, community, and supra-community levels.

# Objectives for household emergency preparedness

- ✍ Establish a basic awareness of hazard agents and feasible protective actions;
- ✍ Increase hazard intrusiveness: frequency of thought, discussion, and information receipt;
- ✍ Promote accurate beliefs about hazards: severity, duration, certainty, immediacy; and
- ✍ Promote accurate beliefs about preparedness actions: efficacy in protecting persons/property, utility for other purposes, cost, safety, time & effort, equipment & skill, cooperation with others.

# Prognosis for community emergency preparedness

- ✍ Community emergency preparedness will continue to have a low priority, especially in small, local, private sector organizations without prior disaster experience,
- ✍ Community emergency preparedness will continue to show substantial variation in the quality of local preparedness networks,

# Prognosis for community emergency response

- ✍ Community emergency response will continue to rely on improvisation rather than planning to resolve questions of authority and inter-organizational coordination, and
- ✍ Community emergency response will continue to repeat mistakes such as responding on the basis of beliefs in disaster myths.

# Important new issues

- ✍ The presence of an intelligent adversary escalates information security problems that have emerged during response to industrial accidents and environmental extremes.
- ✍ An intelligent adversary could take advantage of predictable population protective responses to inflict even greater casualties in secondary attacks during mass evacuations.

# Important new issues

- ✍ Emergency management and public health agencies at local, state and federal levels must establish methods of emergency response coordination.
- ✍ Local emergency response organizations need to be given training, drills, and exercises on biohazard-specific methods of emergency assessment, expedient hazard mitigation, and population protection.

# Important new issues

- ✍ Research is needed to determine if biohazard *contagion* could create emergency response challenges even more complex than those of hazardous materials *contamination*.