



SECURITY AT WORK



Every County Worker plays a critical role in building security that affects the safety of employees, clients, and visitors. The purpose of this handout is to discuss potential workplace emergencies and how you can observe, report, and respond appropriately according to your own safety and level of training.

Evaluate and Plan For Emergencies



Emergency risks can be evaluated by comparing the likelihood that one will occur with the potential effects if it does. For example, a small fire from burnt microwave popcorn in the break room is a common risk. You may have participated in a fire drill/evacuation in your building for this issue. Scenarios such as suicide bombers or biological weapons are rare but have much greater potential for damage. Steps to prevent emergencies and/or control damage are:

1. **Evaluate your workplace for potential threats.**
2. **Plan a response (equipment, communication, and policies).**
3. **Train and drill to reinforce skills and build confidence.**

Some Potential Workplace Emergencies

Fire	Hazardous Spill	Power Outage	Bomb Threat
Medical Event	Plumbing Failure	Acts of Terrorism	Suspicious Package/Device
Natural Disaster	Gas Leak	Active Shooter	

General Employee Responsibilities

Complacency and disregarding security policies places you and others at risk.

Protect yourself and others by:

- Wear visible identification/security badges at all times at work.
- Follow door security procedures by swiping your key card for every entry.
- Escort visitors and make contact with unidentified people in employee only workspaces.
- Monitor your workplace and remain aware of building activities and conditions.

Recognizing Security Risks

- Watch for suspicious people, activities, packages, devices and substances:
 - ◆ **Unidentified or unfamiliar people in secured areas.**
 - ◆ **Unattended objects or packages.**
 - ◆ **Vehicles parked in unusual spots.**
- Some types and examples of terrorist weapons:
 - ◆ **Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs):** pipe bomb, car bomb, vest bomb
 - ◆ **Chemical Agents:** sarin gas, acid, and pepper spray
 - ◆ **Biological Agents:** anthrax and smallpox
 - ◆ **Radiological Agents:** radioactive materials and x-rays

Observe and Report

You are an expert at your job and know your building, worksite surroundings, and coworkers. You are uniquely qualified to identify unusual people, behaviors, activities, conditions, or circumstances at work.

- Your observations will enhance the efforts of law enforcement experts, **not** replace them.
- Trust your intuition. **NOTICE** if something doesn't feel or seem right.
- **REPORT** these issues to your supervisor, security, or the police.

NOTE: *Factors such as race, ethnicity, national origin, or religious affiliation alone are not suspicious. Report only suspicious behavior and situations.*

Training And Preparation

Get training in awareness, surveillance, response procedures and self-protection. For assistance, contact GSA Security at 654-2051. Also visit the GSA Security homepage for a list of courses available at: <http://myvcweb/index.php/special-services-security-home>.

Think about and plan the appropriate emergency response **NOW** so you stay calm and make quality decisions during an incident.

- Review and comply with Administrative Manual policies. Write workplace specific policies and procedures for potential events and read through them to become familiar.
- Review your Security and Emergency Action Plan (SEAP). A template can be found at the GSA Security homepage.
- Gather necessary supplies and equipment (first aid, communication radios, phone lists, etc.)
- Design drill scenarios and practice them to evaluate the effectiveness of the planned response.

A Suspicious Person is:



- In secure areas without proper identification, uniform, or safety gear.
- In the wrong place or appears lost.
- Overdressed for the weather conditions.
- Loitering, watching, photographing and/or videoing people, operations, facilities.
- Pacing, nervous, or jumpy.
- Acting in a disorderly manner that alarms or disturbs others.
- A repair, delivery person or "trusted employee" who is out of place.

Approaching Suspicious People

- If it seems safe, approach the person and offer to help them.
- You can request identification and a reason for their presence in the area.
- Note their physical characteristics (height, size, clothing, hair color, etc.)
- Don't become confrontational, abusive, or offensive.
- Don't try to detain or hold a person in the area.
- If it seems unsafe to approach, call 911 and follow the directions of the dispatcher. Also notify your supervisor and SCC at 654-2931.



Suspicious / Unattended Items and Devices

We have all forgotten bags and packages before. These forgotten items are rarely linked to explosive devices, but they can be a potential threat and should be examined safely and systematically. Never allow anyone to leave unattended parcels, packages or bags with you or in your work area.

Unattended Package Characteristics

- On or next to a seat in a vehicle or waiting area.
- Next to a phone booth, ATM, vending machine, or in a restroom.

Suspicious Package Characteristics

- Is left or placed in an out-of-the-way area.
- Out-of-place / abandoned container (fire extinguisher, canister, thermos).
- Matches something described in a threat or has a threat attached.

Suspicious Device Characteristics

- All shapes and sizes.
- Unusual wires and batteries.
- Some sort of visible tank, bottle or bag.
- A clock or timer attached to the object.



Taking Action in an Emergency

- Report suspicious packages or behavior to law enforcement (9-911).
- You may be the first responder to any incident. **REMAIN CALM.**
- **YOUR FIRST PRIORITY IS TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS.**
- Don't rush into an area or situation. **STOP AND THINK.**
- Don't touch, cover, or move a suspicious package, device, or substance.
- Don't light matches.
- Isolate or evacuate the area to a safe distance. Be aware of secondary attacks or devices.
- Maintain communications with visitors, other employees, **911**, and First Responders.
- Wait for first responders and further directions.

