



Emergency Management Plan

Controlling Crisis Through Preparedness

Within Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS), “emergency management” represents the agency strategy for protecting employees and agency assets during a catastrophic business interruption. Crises that might threaten the resources of the agency include natural disasters, workplace fire, criminal activity, health epidemic, violence, or other significant hazards.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUBJECT	PAGE
Purpose.....	2
Definitions.....	2
Responsibilities.....	2
Crisis Mitigation.....	2
Emergency Action Plans.....	2
BOMB THREAT.....	3
EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM.....	4
EMERGENCY EVACUATION.....	4
PANDEMIC INFLUENZA.....	5
SUSPICIOUS MAIL HAZARD.....	6
WEATHER HAZARDS.....	7
WORKPLACE FIRE RESPONSE.....	8
WORKPLACE VIOLENCE.....	8
ACTIVE SHOOTER.....	9
Emergency Communications.....	10
Post Emergency Recovery.....	11

Emergency Management Plan

PURPOSE

This Emergency Management Plan (EMP) serves as a foundation for Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) to plan for, respond to, and recover from crises causing a catastrophic interruption in agency operations. Leadership will use this plan and the other elements of the agency continuity plan to remain ready for the emergencies that may affect their mission. This EMP is a working document that may be amended as the work environment changes and hazards are identified.

DEFINITIONS

- **Local Coordinator** - the senior TFS employee in a unit/office who has the authority and responsibility to respond to and direct local activity to resolve any emergency that arises.
- **Agency Coordinator** - the designated official assigned the responsibility to direct agency activity to resolve any emergency that arises.
- **Evacuation Leader** - the designated person responsible for accountability of all personnel during an evacuation of their building.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The senior person within each TFS office shall serve as the “Local Coordinator”. They are the central hub for all information that is communicated outward from that office. Local coordinators will do the following:

- Train all personnel regarding this plan’s provisions.
- Arrange practice sessions to prepare employees to respond appropriately.
- Designate an alternate to serve in their absence.

Each TFS region or branch should establish a working group to perform a risk analysis of their exposure to potential threats not otherwise addressed in this plan. The group should develop a plan for managing each localized threat. Those plans should be communicated to all personnel in the region and to the TFS safety office for incorporation into future EMP updates.

CRISIS MITIGATION

Crisis mitigation begins with preventing those threats that can be identified in advance through inspection. For this purpose utilize the [TFS General Hazard Safety Manual](#).

EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

This section is the heart of the response plan. It addresses prevention and response measures associated with pre-identified hazards that threaten employees and facilities. This section will be posted in every office common area where all employees have access to its principles. Simulation exercises will be conducted annually to practice implementation of the plan’s procedures. The priorities for all activities related to TFS emergency management are:

- Protect human life and health
- Protect agency assets
- Implement measures to mitigate the potential for further loss
- Maintain effective internal and external communications
- Recovery from the crisis and restore service to the public

Emergency Management Plan

BOMB THREAT

Bomb threats may be delivered in a variety of ways. The majority of threats are called in to the target by telephone. When a telephone bomb threat is received, the responding employee should try to keep the caller on the line as long as possible and obtain as much information as possible. The “**Bomb Threat Checklist**” should be used as a guide to question those making the threats.

There are four steps to take for this bomb threat response plan:

- Inform the “Local Coordinator”, who will activate the response plan.
- Initiate an area search for any suspicious items as the facility is evacuated.
- Evacuate the premises to a minimum safe distance of 300 yards.
- Notify authorities and provide a detailed report of any suspicious items.

Authorities recommend that employees search their own immediate work area before evacuation in order to assist police by identifying unknown objects for investigation.

All personnel must avoid the use of electronic broadcasting equipment within the danger zone. This includes portable transceivers, mobile radios, and cell phones.

Bomb Threat Checklist

Time and Date of Call: _____

Exact Words of Caller: _____

QUESTIONS TO ASK: (Be courteous and try to keep the caller talking.)

1. When is the bomb going to explode? _____
2. How much time remains? _____
3. Where is the bomb? _____
4. What does it look like? _____
5. What kind of bomb is it? _____
6. What will cause it to explode? _____
7. Did you place the bomb? _____
8. Why? _____
9. Where are you calling from? _____
10. What is your address? _____
11. What is your name? _____

Emergency Management Plan

EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM

The key to an effective Emergency Alert System (EAS) is accurate and timely reporting. The TFS EAS uses the agency's existing e-mail system to disseminate messages. When local events may affect TFS employees, Local Coordinators are responsible for reporting them to TFS EHS. However, reports can be submitted by any employee within TFS. The objective of the EAS is to communicate information in a timely manner. The following reporting guidelines are provided:

- In the event of an emergency that may affect TFS personnel, an employee from the affected office will email TFS EHS at safety@tfs.tamu.edu and or call (979) 458-6697 and provide the following details:
 - Location of the affected area
 - Nature of the emergency
 - Actions to be taken

Events that constitute an emergency which may affect TFS operations or personnel can be broad. The events discussed in this plan should be used as a guide to trigger reporting. Other situations that should be reported may include:

- Evacuation of the office
- Active shooter in the area
- Extreme weather with potential for damage or danger

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Evacuation of most of TFS facilities should be a simple task; however, each office should use the following guidance to be better prepared for an evacuation:

- Designate an Evacuation Leader to be responsible for the evacuation of that facility.
- Instruct personnel regarding their role in an evacuation.
- Prepare a written plan for facilities with more than 2 exits. The following is the minimum information to be provided in any evacuation plan:
 - Route or direction to nearest exit
 - Location to meet for accountability
 - Procedures to evacuate persons with special needs, if necessary
- Conduct evacuation practice drills annually.

Evacuation Leaders should use the following guidance when conducting evacuations:

- Involve all occupants in evacuation drills.
- Activate the alarm, or notify occupants, and call 911.
- Instruct employees to shut down powered machinery.
- Employees should take immediate personal effects only and leave doors open.
- The Evacuation Leader clears all areas and shuts the doors before exiting.
- Account for all personnel.

Emergency Management Plan

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

A pandemic flu emergency can be described as an outbreak of influenza occurring over a wide geographic area where approximately 40% or more of a region's population is affected, reducing workplace productivity. For this EMP response levels I and II are not addressed.

Actions to take in **response level III** where the pandemic has penetrated U.S. borders:

- TFS EHS will issue sanitation guidelines and links to updated information.
- TFS sponsored events require approval from an Associate Director.
- TFS EHS will coordinate for the acquisition and distribution of prophylaxis to TFS offices.
- Affected TFS offices will implement daily sanitization procedures of all surfaces.

Actions to be taken in **response level IV.A** where mild effects of pandemic are observed in TX.

- TFS HR will issue "stay at home" leave guidance for affected employees.
- Offices will report employees who are absent due to influenza symptoms to TFS HR.
- TFS HR will establish reporting requirements with Texas A&M AgriLife HR.
- TFS sponsored events require approval from the Director.
- Department heads will review and brief their department on their business continuity plans.
- TFS HR coordinates immunizations to sustain continuity of essential services.
- The Associate Director of FIAD will submit an updated business continuity plan to TAMUS Risk Management, if needed.

Actions to be taken in **response level IV.B** where severe effects of pandemic are observed in TX.

- A TFS representative will attend daily update briefings with TX DSHS.
- The TFS Director must approve:
 - attendance at any large scale event by a TFS employee
 - sponsorship of any large scale event by a TFS department
 - all international business travel
- Implement "work from home" contingencies, where feasible.
- Close non-critical facilities when absence from illness exceeds 40%.

Emergency Management Plan

SUSPICIOUS MAIL HAZARD

Threats from packages delivered through the mail are becoming more common. Packages containing a hazardous substance or bomb have been received by a variety of state institutions nationwide. The FBI lists the following characteristics of mailed packages as “suspicious”:

- Missing a return address
- Poorly written or typed with misspelled words
- Rigid, misshapen, or protruding wires
- Strange odor
- Oily stains
- Excessive use of tape

Steps to take if a suspicious letter or package arrives unopened:

- Place the package in a plastic bag or some other type of closeable container.
- Immediately leave the room and prevent others from entering.
- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Notify the Local Coordinator and call 911.
- Initiate an emergency evacuation and notify TFS EHS.
- The Evacuation Leader will keep employees in the area in case the police want to speak to them.

If a suspicious letter or package arrives opened and something spills out:

- Do not try to clean it up; cover it immediately with anything.
- If heavily contaminated with a spilled substance:
 - remove clothing and jewelry as soon as possible
 - place clothing in a plastic bag
 - wash off with whatever water is available as soon as possible

Emergency Management Plan

WEATHER HAZARDS

The most serious weather hazards include tornadoes, hurricanes, flooding, and ice storms. Threats may also arise from windstorms, heavy rainfall, hail, and lightning. The elements of managing weather hazard effects in the workplace are:

- Analyzing storm warning forecasts
- Providing personnel with shelter
- Protecting agency facilities and property
- Making evacuation decisions early to avoid travel during a severe weather front

In the event of approaching severe weather, the Local Coordinator may need to make decisions regarding an approaching weather event, he/she should review forecast data to obtain the following:

- Nature of the threat
- Expected intensity
- Estimated time of arrival
- Expected duration
- Threat to employees

Upon reviewing the weather forecast, the Local Coordinator will plan, direct, and supervise all preparations for the impending weather event. The following considerations must be evaluated and implemented, if reasonable:

- Allow long distance travelers to leave in order to avoid the storm.
- Inform (through the EAS) all travelers in the storm's path.
- Secure all facilities and equipment with the remaining employees.
- Ensure all hazards are mitigated to prevent damage, such as:
 - Reduce the potential for damage from falling trees
 - Secure HAZMAT, barrels, cylinders, and drums
 - Move vehicles away from overhead hazards
- Coordinate with neighboring and unaffected TFS offices for support, if necessary.
- Release remaining employees in time to avoid the storm's effects.
- Establish procedures to check all facilities immediately following the storm to prevent theft or further damage.

Emergency Management Plan

WORKPLACE FIRE RESPONSE

Mitigating the effects of structural fire in the workplace begins with complying with NFPA Life Safety Code. The principles of the code are:

- Conduct periodic inspections
- Use automated smoke alarms
- Properly place fire extinguishers
- Maintain safe evacuation routes

Workplace fires may be extinguished by employees under the following circumstances:

- Employee is trained in the use of a portable fire extinguisher
- The fire department has been called
- A clear exit is available
- The extinguisher is rated for the type of fire

Refer to the TFS [Safety Manual](#) for more guidance on workplace fire prevention and response.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Violence in the workplace may culminate in the death of an employee at the hands of another employee. The first stage is simple assault. The next three stages are aggravated assault, sexual assault, and finally homicide. This plan outlines the guidance necessary for leaders to prevent and respond to allegations of assault in the workplace.

Prevention measures:

- TFS HR conducts back ground checks on all new employees.
- Hiring supervisor performs reference checks prior to hiring new employees.
- Supervisors maintain a workplace that is fair and impartial.
- Supervisors are not tolerant to threats from any employee and reports any allegation of bullying to TFS HR
- Supervisors address any of the following warning signs an employee may exhibit:
 - Increasing belligerence directed at others
 - Threats of violence
 - Hypersensitivity to criticism
 - Obsession with a supervisor or coworker grievance
 - Preoccupation with violent themes
 - Outbursts of anger
 - Continued unsolicited advances after rejection
 - Reports of stalking or other forms of sexual harassment

Violence response measures:

- All allegations of assault **will** be referred to the local authorities immediately.
- TFS HR will be consulted regarding the immediate separation of the alleged assailant from the workplace.

Emergency Management Plan

ACTIVE SHOOTER

An active shooter is defined as one or more subjects who actively engage in killing or causing life-threatening injuries to multiple people in a confined and populated area. Active shooter situations are dynamic, evolve quickly, and often end before law enforcement arrives at the scene. How you respond to an active shooter will be dictated by the specific circumstances of the encounter. If you find yourself in an active shooter situation, try to remain as calm as possible and use these suggested actions to help you plan a strategy for survival.

Run. Hide. Fight. (© 2012 City of Houston)

Should you ever find yourself in the middle of an active shooter incident, your survival may depend on whether or not you have a plan. The plan doesn't have to be complicated. There are three things you could do that make a difference: [Run. Hide. Fight.](#)

Run. When an active shooter is in your vicinity:

- If there is an escape path, attempt to evacuate.
- Evacuate whether others agree to or not.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Help others escape, if possible.
- Prevent others from entering the area.
- Call 911 when you are safe.

Hide. If an evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide and:

- Lock and/or blockade the door.
- Silence your cell phone.
- Hide behind large objects.
- Remain very quiet.
 - Your hiding place should:
 - Be out of the shooter's view.
 - Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction.
 - Not trap or restrict your options for movement.

Fight. As a last resort, and only if your life is in danger:

- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter.
- Act with physical aggression.
- Improvise weapons.
- Commit to your actions.

Arriving law enforcement's first priority is to engage and stop the shooter as soon as possible. Officers will form teams and immediately proceed to engage the shooter, moving towards the sound of gunfire. When law enforcement arrives, remain calm and follow instructions, keep your hands visible at all times, avoid pointing or yelling and know that help for the injured is on its way.

Emergency Management Plan

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

The objective of emergency communications is to ensure the timely dissemination of information regarding an emergency affecting TFS to its employees as well as the public. An effective emergency public information program can be instrumental in saving lives, protecting property, and aiding recovery.

In the event of an emergency affecting all or part of TFS, all budgeted employees will receive an emergency notification by email. The notification will include:

- The region affected
- Type of emergency
- The nature of the alert notification
- Special instructions

The Director of TFS, or a designated person through the Emergency Alert System, will notify the TAMUS Chancellor, the TAMUS Vice Chancellor and Dean of Texas A&M AgriLife, the Executive Secretary of the Board of Regents (BOR), and the TAMUS Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) of any emergency that has occurred. The Director will provide on-going status reports as information becomes available. Email addresses to include in this communication are:

Contact Person

TAMUS Chancellor
Vice Chancellor, AgriLife
Secretary, BOR
TAMUS EMC

Contact Information

chancellor@tamus.edu
mhussey@tamu.edu
vickie@tamu.edu
mhoffman@tamus.edu

The Director may designate a spokesperson to disseminate official information. The spokesperson may be the Local Coordinator, Incident Commander, designated Information Officer, or other spokesperson meeting the necessary qualifications.

Designated spokespersons should enlist the news media to provide fast, accurate and official information and instructions to the public. An effective public information program will ensure that rumors are minimized and that accurate information is disseminated.

Spokespersons should be trained on the following topics:

- Message development
- On-camera interviews
- Relations with reporters
- Answering techniques
- Avoiding difficult questions
- Avoiding interview mistakes

Spokespersons will maintain credibility and reflect empathy. The message should be presented quickly with an emphasis on what is known and also what is not known.



Emergency Management Plan

Internal communications and public relation responses will be maintained via electronic means. The TFS Homepage will establish links to online information via websites and news releases.

In the unfortunate event of serious injury or death of a TFS employee, the names of all victims **WILL** remain confidential until the notification of the victim's family has been completed.

POST EMERGENCY RECOVERY

Once the threat has passed, the recovery team will staff all incident command positions needed to coordinate efforts to return TFS to operational status and restore service to the public. The 3 step recovery plan is outlined in the business continuity plan, which includes:

- Human Resources recovery
- Financial recovery
- Information recovery