

BOMB THREATS

Even the best contingency plan will not prevent bomb threats from disrupting normal daily activity. It is very important that the people most likely to receive bomb threats be trained to handle such incidents as proficiently as possible.

Every threat must be taken seriously. The call recipient must remain calm and appear undaunted; panic is contagious and can cause personal injury and property damage.

The response action will depend on the level of risk threat.

The call recipient must remember to do many things, all which will aid in the search for the device (unless the threat is unfounded) and provide authorities with as much information as possible for their investigation. ***Bomb Threat Telephone Procedures*** should be kept by every phone (see Appendix A).

A bomb threat can be written, recorded or communicated orally; most bomb threats are delivered by telephone. Generally, a bomb threat call is made for one of two reasons:

1. The caller knows or believes an explosive or incendiary device has been or will be placed and wants to minimize personal injuries and/or property damage (the caller may or may not be the person who placed the device).

or

2. The caller wants to disrupt normal activity by creating anxiety and panic with no real intention of placing a bomb.

Unlike a letter or a recording, a telephone threat cannot be retained and examined (unless incoming calls are being recorded) so the recipient must get the most from the communication while it is ongoing. The recipient should keep the caller on the line as long as possible and should attempt to record everything, especially the exact wording of the threat. He or she should be an attentive listener noting

1. any background noises (radios, motors, etc.) that may help identify the source of the call;
2. information to identify the caller such as gender, age, accent/speech impediment, state of mind (calm or excited).

It is also important to extract as much information as possible about the type, size and location of the device.

If the call recipient's telephone automatically displays or retains incoming telephone numbers, this valuable information should also be noted.

If the threat is received in a tangible form such as a letter or a note, all the material including envelopes and containers must be saved. Furthermore, contact with the material must be minimized because excessive handling might destroy valuable evidence that may be on or in the material (see Appendix B).

EVACUATION

Continuous security during evacuation is a priority. Before an evacuation is carried out, a thorough search of evacuation routes and safe areas must be conducted to ensure that no suspicious objects have been placed in these locations. Safe areas are those locations to which personnel will be moved to await the 'all clear'. The locations must be a minimum of 100 m (328 ft.) from the target area where it is estimated that injury from post-blast debris would be minimal.

RESPONSE ACTION

In a bomb threat situation, physically searching the premises for a device and evacuating personnel are very closely related. The decision to either SEARCH WITHOUT EVACUATION, SEARCH AND EVACUATE or EVACUATE AND THEN SEARCH rests with the individual(s) responsible for security, generally within the administrative personnel at the Security and Crisis Management Office. Following are examples of LOW, MEDIUM and HIGH RISK responses to Bomb Threats.

LOW RISK THREAT (no evacuation)

SCENARIO: Caller states "There's a bomb at the college" then hangs up. There is NO evidence or information as to

- where the bomb might be;
- what type of bomb exists;
- why the bomb was placed;
- when the bomb might go off;

- who the caller is or represents;
- recent history directly related to Okanagan College or the specific campus.

MESSAGE TO EMPLOYEES: “A bomb threat has been received at the Kelowna Campus and has been assessed as LOW RISK. As this threat is without credibility, no evacuation will be activated. Police have been duly notified and concur with that decision.”

As a safety precaution, even when the threat has been assessed as low, check your immediate area for any unusual objects or packages. Be methodical, search the lower half of your work area in a clockwise sweep, and then search the upper half. Should a suspicious object or package be found DO NOT TOUCH IT. Anything suspicious must be reported immediately to Security or Facilities Management and to your Supervisor who may order your department evacuated. Personnel will attend and reassess the threat level. At that point they may also request police attendance and may order the evacuation of the building(s) should the risk be assessed higher.

BEFORE YOU EVACUATE FOR A BOMB THREAT ALWAYS

1. search your work station thoroughly as well as that of absent co-workers for any items obviously out of place or suspicious;
2. leave your desk drawers and filing cabinets ajar;
3. take your personal items with you (purse, brief case, lunch bag, coat, etc.);
4. open windows near your workstation and leave your office doors open.

MEDIUM RISK THREAT (employee search and partial evacuation)

SCENARIO: Caller advises there is a bomb in a specific area of the college, which is set to detonate at a specific time. Caller claims he/she represents a group responsible and may give reasons for placement.

MESSAGE TO EMPLOYEES: “A bomb threat has been received at the (specify which campus) and has been assessed as MEDIUM RISK. Conduct a search of your immediate area of work, make note of any suspicious items, DO NOT TOUCH, report the items to your supervisor or Security, describe the item and its exact location. Your building will be evacuated immediately. Police have been notified and requested to investigate.”

The difference between LOW and MEDIUM risk may be determined by the nature of the bomb threat itself. The caller may have been adamant about the device and have given a location and/or description of the device, the reasons why it was placed and/or the estimated time of detonation. At this point, however, either no device has been located or, in addition to the bomb threat, there may have been recent criminal threats against the institution or its administration in the form of phone threats, graffiti or correspondence.

HIGH RISK THREAT (complete evacuation followed by organized search with police)

SCENARIO: Caller advises of the presence of a device, gives location and a detonation time. A suspicious package has been located at the campus. The particular campus building will be evacuated immediately and possibly the entire campus depending on the nature of the threat.

MESSAGE TO EMPLOYEES: “A bomb threat has been received at the Kelowna Campus and has been assessed as HIGH RISK. Please evacuate this building immediately. You may be further directed by Emergency Wardens and Security Personnel. Please take all your personal belongings with you and leave your office and classroom doors open.”

ORGANIZED TEAM SEARCH

The Organized Search Team will be comprised of Security, Managers, Service Assistants and Facilities Workers Levels I, II and III within Facilities Management.

Facilities Service Workers Level 1 will be responsible for searching their respective building’s interior where the event occurred.

Security and Facilities Workers II & III will be responsible for searching the exterior of all affected buildings, including adjacent parking lots, trash bins and containers, ledges, planters, shrubbery and any vehicles parked close to buildings.

Maintenance Engineers and Electricians and Facilities Service Assistants will be responsible for searching general areas within buildings, for example foyers, hallways, stairwells, common rooms, bathrooms, elevators, storage areas, closets, trash receptacles, and if required, secondary searches of offices.

Again, NO person will be compelled to assist in the search for any potentially explosive device. Involvement and assistance is strictly voluntary.

SALMON ARM, VERNON AND PENTICTON CAMPUSES

The procedure is the same EXCEPT the Regional Dean or designate will notify their personnel by e-mail and/or by face-to-face communication. Employees from each campus, as directed, may conduct secondary searches. The dean's office will notify the police as a matter of course and request their attendance as deemed necessary. The Manager, Security and Crisis Management for Okanagan College should be contacted immediately for appraisal and consultation.

An assessment of the particular situation and the actual call will determine the level of credibility of the threat which, in turn, will determine the appropriate response. An evacuation response is not automatic.

POLICE RESPONSE

Initially, the role of police in responding to bomb threats is to provide assistance. Police will attend and take information for follow up investigation but will not search a building. Building searches are to be conducted by employees first as they are more familiar with their work environment and could easily identify suspicious objects. Furthermore, the number of police personnel required to conduct an adequate search would be prohibitive. Should an object be identified as suspicious following an employee search, Security will advise the police who will attend and contain the area, secure the device or suspicious object, and summon a Bomb Disposal Unit, who will remove the package or device.

APPENDIX A: Bomb Threat Telephone Procedures

BOMB THREAT TELEPHONE PROCEDURES

Date _____ Time _____

Record the number on your telephone display immediately: _____

If you can, press for more information and write down everything said:

- Where exactly is the bomb placed?

- What type of explosive is it?

- When is the bomb set to explode?

- Why has the bomb been placed?

- Is there any background noise?

- Is the voice: young old male female accent speech impediment

- What is your name? _____

How the caller responds to these questions will assist in assessing the validity of that call. In most cases, however, a caller will simply say “*there is a bomb at KLO Campus*” and then hang up.

APPENDIX B: Bomb Detection

LETTER/PARCEL BOMB DETECTION	WATCH FOR ONE OR A COMBINATION OF THE FOLLOWING:
<p>The danger posed to individuals and organizations by improvised explosive and incendiary devices traveling through our postal system is an ever-present threat. But the risk can be minimized by alert and vigilant employees even without the aid of special detection equipment. Through a simple visual and physical inspection, office personnel or mailroom sorters can identify those items in the mail that demand attention by explosives specialists.</p> <p>If you think a letter or parcel is suspicious</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• do not touch or further handle it;• isolate the area;• contact your Supervisor and Facilities Management Office at extension 6699.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unusual or unexpected point of origin.• Unusually restrictive markings (i.e. “personal”, “to be opened only by”, “fragile”, “rush”, “do not delay delivery”).• Excessive weight or thickness for envelope or package size; cut and paste lettering or improvised labels; unusual odours; the feel of springiness, metallic components or stiffeners in letters; oily or greasy stains on packaging; obviously disguised script; inaccuracies in address or titles; excessive postage; small holes, protruding wire, string or metal foil; excessive wrapping, binding or tying materials; unbalanced or lopsided letters and parcels; indecipherable or no return address.