

# PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

## Quarterly

### Management

## Build a community that is ready for active threats

Over the past year I have become more possessive of projects I designed. I always enjoyed seeing them serve their purpose and fulfilling visions, but as news stories about tragedies became consistent, I started feeling increasingly protective of the people using the properties I designed. The real estate community has reacted appropriately to begin addressing security, safety and protection. But we have an opportunity and responsibility to take steps to address the sense of vulnerability that is gripping the public.

As commercial real estate professionals, we touch virtually everyone on a daily basis. Everyone lives, works or engages in daily life in a building or public accommodation that we have designed, built, own, service or operate. Which means we can take the lead in making a difference. What I learned is that the difference is found in awareness and preparation.

Active threats are part of our reality, with events happening almost daily. This is a difficult subject to talk about, but thinking about and planning for response to an active threat can save lives. As the saying goes, "your body cannot go where your mind has not been." Preparedness is an important part of readying your body to take action should you find yourself in an active threat situation. Preparing for disasters can be uncomfortable. However, we know talking about active threats and taking small steps toward preparedness can be empowering.

We need the public – our clients – to understand that they are not helpless. On the contrary, they are key to the community effort to suppress a threat and respond and recover if it comes to pass. This is where property managers come into the picture. It is vital that management staff is trained and prepared to react to an active threat.

It is important that a facility is known and familiar to first responders and security personnel.



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But, communicating those plans and preparing the tenants (whether they are professionals, students, residents or worshipers) is going to make the difference in the long run. In reality, in those first 5 minutes of a tragedy and then in the following days, months and years, these are the individuals directly impacted. They will put it back together, grow together and take care of each other.

The professional response to an active threat is the purview of law enforcement. However, every individual and organization has a responsibility to be adequately prepared to respond and recover should it occur near them. It is our collective responsibility to be empowered to save lives. In the case of an active threat, the police department and paramedics will respond immediately. Since most incidents are over in 5 minutes or less, lay responders play a crucial role in saving lives before law enforcement arrives.

So, what do we do? I decided to become aware. I wanted to contribute more to our community than just design or a simple business transaction – which lead me to become involved. What I am working to communicate is that resources exist to help build a resilient community within your building, campus or development. By taking the lead and bringing the necessary training opportunities to tenants and employees, you can multiply our resiliency by huge factors. You can strengthen these relatively small communities, and when they go home at night, they can strengthen the community at large.

We want managers to start

talking about preparing for active threats. The more people talk about preparedness, the more likely they are to do something to get ready to respond. Engage tenants in planning and preparation, and communicate the building's plans and resources. Managers can provide training and empowerment for identifying and reacting to threats and teach essential first-aid that will save lives before emergency personnel arrive. Managers can assemble resources for recovery. In short, managers can build trust, confidence, capabilities and community.

The Red Cross has proven itself in disaster situations over more than a century of active response. That same commitment is focused on active threats and is tailored to this threat's unique profile. The Red Cross has put together a set of materials based on widely accepted best practices supported by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Homeland Security and Federal Emergency Management Agency. The American Red Cross has an expertise and a vast network of resources, in regard to business preparedness. The broad range of Red Cross trainings include:

- Business readiness evaluation;
- Writing effective emergency plans and protocols;
- Leading hazard vulnerability assessments;
- Customized hazard and safety trainings;
- Response and treatment: stop the bleeding, hands-only CPR, first aid/CPR/AED;
- Active threats: run, hide, fight; and
- Disaster training and exercise observation/analysis.

The Red Cross is offering active threat and stop-the-bleeding training sessions free to businesses and nonprofit organizations of all sizes. This training will prepare organizations to recognize when an event is happening, teach steps to help prepare workers to respond, and

#### Facts about active threats in the workplace

The following information is from Corona Insights Workplace Violence Training Research.

- One in four employees knows at least one person who has been threatened with violence in the workplace.
- Many employees are interested in first-aid training and other actions to take during an emergency.
- Thirty percent of employees say they are concerned about workplace violence emergencies, and 40 percent of employees say they would like to learn more about how to respond in these situations.
- Eighty-seven percent of HR managers agree that formal training on workplace violence would make their organization more prepared.
- Employees are very interested in learning about actions to take during an incident of workplace violence.
- Since 2013, and with increasing frequency since then, an active-shooter incident has occurred every two to three weeks in the U.S.
- More than 1,270 people have been killed or wounded in 200 active-shooter incidents between 2000 and 2015.

includes basic training on first aid and bleeding control. More information on this program can be found on the Save a Life Denver website, [savealifedenver.org](http://savealifedenver.org).

We all say that people are our greatest assets, that we give back to our communities and that we value our relationships. We have the platform to make a huge difference, and it is time to leverage it. ▲