Increasing courthouse resilience to disasters

Justin Mammen, MSW, CEM, MEP
Increasing courthouse resilience through training – Court Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Increasing courthouse resilience through infrastructure development – Mitigating Active Shooter Events through the Homeland Security Grant Program
Emergency Response and Security Services (ERSS)
- Safety
- Security
- Emergency Management

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Why do we need courthouse resilience?

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What do employees want?

2012 Courtwide Needs Assessment

Key findings from the assessment:
• How to respond to active shooter events
• How to prepare and respond to an earthquake
• Getting prepared both at work and home
• Desire to know courthouse emergency plans and their role
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- 2,700 Registered CERT programs in the nation
- National standard and certified training
- CERT TTT (E427) and Program Manager (E428) Courses offered locally and at FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute (EMI)
What does the training consist of?

- Disaster Preparedness
- Medical Operations I and II
- Light Search and Rescue
- Fire Suppression
- Disaster Psychology
- Active Shooter Response
- Terrorism Awareness
- Incident Command System
- Final Simulation

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CERT In Action!

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Partnerships

Orange County
Intelligence and Assessment Center

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Implementation

• Buy in (Supervisor to Executives)
• Hey, can we borrow your stuff?
• Whole courthouse community concept
• FEMA Registration
Benefits

• Seven total cohorts – 120 graduates
• Get to know your courthouse emergency plan
• First responders – “There’s more to the courthouse than detention!”
• Nationwide standard on critical incident response (triage, Incident Command System)
• Empowerment
• Expansion of certain modules to all staff
Looking to start a CERT???

• Connect with your local emergency manager
• Attend a local CERT program
• Start early to find speakers
• Attend CERT Program Manager and Train the Trainer (FEMA Emergency Management Institute)
• FEMA registration
• One class a year
• Perishable skills lead to a need for continual engagement

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Increasing courthouse resilience through infrastructure development – Mitigating Active Shooter Events through the Homeland Security Grant Program
Courthouse security vulnerabilities

- OCSC vulnerability = Front entrance
- Growing concern nationwide
- Highlights need for ballistics protection at main entrances

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Forsyth County Courthouse, GA (June, 2014)

Las Vegas Federal Courthouse, NV (January, 2010)

Chester County Courthouse, PA (August, 2015)
Ballistic Project – North Entrance

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Ballistic Project – South Entrance

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Ballistic protection at other OCSC courthouses

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How does the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) work?

• Purpose of HSGP
• Urban Area Security Initiative and the Urban Area Workgroup
• Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA)
• EHP (Environmental, Historical, and Preservation) Review

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OCSC Process through HSGP

1. Security Assessment
2. Develop Project Concept
3. Informal meeting with HSGP grant managers
4. Complete UASI grant application

- Present at UAWG
  - UAWG Votes and Approves
  - Federal Review by DHS
  - County Board of Supervisors Review

- Complete EHP and wait for approval
  - Find vendor (RFP)
  - Complete Project
  - Seek reimbursement from UASI

- Await FEMA Audit 😊
Challenges and Solutions

• Funding for something that’s not first responder related
• Courthouses are critical infrastructure
• Are the Court’s County or State?
• Partnership with the Sheriff’s Department
• Federal requirements and procurement standards
• Be prepared to move at the lightning fast speed of the federal government...aka...a snail’s pace!
• You may not get all you asked for
• This is not an endless supply of money

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Looking Beyond Active Shooter Mitigation

• Preparedness
  • Training – Run, Hide, Fight - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VcSwejU2D0
  • Merced County – http://mercedtraining.org/

• Response and Recovery
  • Emergency Operations Plan
    • Command and Control
    • Communication/Accountability
    • Public Relations/Social Media
    • Psychological effects
    • Triage cases and Judicial Emergency Orders

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Resources

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https://www.ready.gov/community-emergency-response-team
https://training.fema.gov/emi.aspx
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