Always Changing:
Emergency Response Planning
and the Evolving All-Hazards Approach

Vivian Marinelli, Psy.D
Sr. Director of Crisis Management Services
FEI Behavioral Health

September 2018

fei workforce resilience

Always Changing: Emergency Response Planning and the Evolving All-Hazards Approach

FIRES

MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

CYBERATTACKS

ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATIONS

CIVIL UNREST

BOMB THREATS

Crisis management and emergency response planning has long followed an "all-hazards approach." Tabletop exercises, drills and other kinds of training capitalize on likely threats to prepare organizations and their people before, during and after a crisis event. Based on the probable physical risks to a business's location, infrastructure or workforce, these threats represent a general understanding of what a crisis is and can be.

The world is rapidly changing. While preparing for an active shooter or severe storm remains paramount to continuing business operations and keeping employees safe, organizations have had to shift emergency response planning to address a series of evolving threats such as cyberattacks, civil unrest and mental health challenges that, only a few years ago, would have been considered hypothetical.

From mass protests to ransomware, organizations across industries can adapt to the new threat landscape by viewing emergency response as a living process that requires regular drilling and training.

Organizations must view emergency response as a living process.

Emergency Response Planning: An Overview

To address the nuances of emergency response, an organization must have a firm grasp on standard operating procedures for crisis events. Best practice has demonstrated that the minimum criteria for an effective disaster program includes:

- A thorough **assessment** of all potential risks and hazards to an organization and each of its locations by emergency response team members such as the incident commander, emergency response coordinator and other relevant stakeholders.

- Using the information from the risk assessment to develop a robust **emergency response plan** that addresses how to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from identified risks and hazards.

- A **crisis communications plan** for managing perception and addressing internal and external stakeholder concerns, public response and media coverage, with a special focus on social media engagement.

- An employee-wide **training program** on the emergency response plan, ideally involving drills and exercises that will test and evaluate the plan on a regular basis.

fei workforce resilience

www.feinet.com ● 800.987.4368