

CITY OF CHESAPEAKE, VIRGINIA

NUMBER: 5.04

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

EFFECTIVE DATE: 02/10/14

SUBJECT: BOMB THREAT

SUPERCEDES: 07/06/04

REVIEWED: 02/10/14

I. PURPOSE

The following policy and procedures are adopted in order to guide City employees in how best to handle a bomb threat at any City building. It is designed to protect lives and property, to establish a standard procedure, and to advise City employees as to what is expected of them should an emergency of this nature arise.

II. SCOPE

This policy shall focus on a telephoned bomb threat and/or a “suspected” or unexploded bomb that is discovered or received in a City building. As per § 27-34.2:1 (Code of Virginia), this policy relies on the Chesapeake Fire Department to handle the following search techniques: removal and investigation of an unexploded bomb. Should a bomb explode, the situation will also be handled by the Chesapeake Fire Department. The Chesapeake Police Department will assist with Law Enforcement duties as requested.

III. POLICY AND PROCEDURES

A. Receiving a Call

Each department shall instruct employees responsible for receiving incoming phone calls for the department in the established procedures for a bomb threat. The individual receiving the threat should stay as calm as possible and attempt to secure as much information as possible from the caller. The information obtained should be relayed to the responding Fire Marshal. A suggested method of handling a bomb threat is as follows:

1. Listen carefully.
2. Keep the person on the line as long as possible by asking questions such as: where is the bomb located, and what does it look like, and by asking the caller to repeat the message.
3. Treat the call as a complaint, asking them questions about the problem, their name and address, or anything they might be willing to tell you.
4. Note the telephone line being used, if your phone displays this information.

5. Listen carefully for any background noise which could be helpful in locating the origin of the call.
6. Particular attention should be paid to the caller's voice for any peculiarities or distinguishing features.
7. When it is safe to do so, the employee who took the original call should make notes on the details of the call, as Fire Department representatives will want to interview them later.

B. Discovering a Letter or Package Bomb

Each department shall instruct employees in the established procedures when a suspicious letter or package bomb is found. If at any time a City employee discovers a suspected item, package, or device thought to be a bomb, they should immediately notify the Emergency Dispatch Center (EDC) via 911. The EDC will then notify the on-call Fire Marshal. In no case would an employee touch, move, jar, or attach anything to a suspicious object.

C. Notification

1. Notify the Emergency Dispatch Center via 911.
2. Notify Department Supervisor.
3. Notify City Manager's Office directly if supervisor is not available to do so.

D. Evacuation Decision

The decision to evacuate is a managerial decision that has both advantages and risks. The following can be used to assist with conducting an evaluation of the creditability of the threat:

LOW Risk:

Lacks Realism: A threat that poses a minimum risk to the victim and public safety. Probable motive is to cause disruption.

- Threat is vague and indirect
- Information contained within the threat is inconsistent, implausible, or lacks detail
- Caller is definitely known and has called numerous times
- The threat was discovered instead of delivered (e.g., a threat written on a wall)

MEDIUM Risk:

Increased Level of Realism: Threat that could be carried out, although it may not appear entirely realistic.

- Threat is direct and feasible
- Wording in the threat suggest the perpetrator has given some thought on how the act will be carried out
- May include indications of a possible place and time
- No strong indication the perpetrator has taken preparatory steps, although there may be some indirect reference pointing to that possibility
- Indication the perpetrator has details regarding the availability of components needed to construct a bomb
- Increased specificity to the threat (e.g. “I’m serious!” or “I really mean this!”)

HIGH Risk:

Specific and Realistic: Threat appears to pose an immediate and serious danger to the safety of others.

- Threat is direct, specific, and realistic; may include names of possible victims, specific time, location of device
- Perpetrator provides his/her identity
- Threat suggests concrete steps have been taken toward carrying out the threat
- Perpetrator makes statements indicating they have practiced with a weapon or have had the intended victim(s) under surveillance

The succession of responsibility for making this decision is as follows:

1. **City Hall**

- a. First, the City Manager, in his/her absence
- b. Deputy City Managers, in their absence
- c. The Fire Chief or Fire Marshal shall make the decision whether to evacuate or remain in the building.
- d. The responding Fire Marshal may at any time order the evacuation of the threatened building(s).

2. **Fire/Ems/Police Building**

- a. The Fire Chief and Police Chief shall make the decision for their respective portions of the building, in their absence.

- b. The senior Fire and Police official's on-duty shall make the decision for their respective portions of the building.
- c. The responding Fire Marshal may at any time order the evacuation of the building.

3. **All Other City Buildings**

- a. First, the Department Head, in his/her absence
- b. The senior department official on-duty shall make the decision whether to evacuate or remain in the building.
- c. The responding Fire Marshal may at any time order the evacuation of the building.

E. **Evacuation Procedures**

- 1. The following procedures are to be carried out once the decision has been made to evacuate the building:
 - a. Decide whether a partial or total evacuation of the building is necessary.
 - b. A decision needs to be made concerning whether or not the citizens will be informed through the Public Information Office.
 - c. If the decision is made to evacuate the occupants, plan an area where the occupants will be evacuated to. This area should be a secure area and should be searched for suspicious or explosive devices and any other security threat prior to the evacuation.
 - d. Forward phones to a building not under threat.
 - e. Departments having cash need to make sure that the cash has been secured.
 - f. The Director of each department, or their designee, has a responsibility to tell department personnel the location they should evacuate to as a group.
 - g. An announcement should be made that asks employees to check work areas for unusual packages and report them to the Fire Marshal.
 - h. If an evacuation is ordered, assist those that need help. Do not use elevators. Check the stairs first and determine if the area is clear before mass use. Leave all offices open to assist search team and remove all personal belongings out.

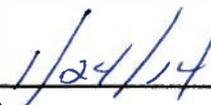
- personal belongings out.
- i. All employees shall move away from the threatened building(s) at least 300 feet and should not smoke, or use radios, cell phones, laptop computers, or any other electronic devices that transmit radio waves within (300) feet of the threatened area.
 - j. Employees/Occupants should be advised that nothing should be done to change the environment of the threatened area(s) or building(s), such as turning on/off light switches/thermostats, closing windows/doors, etc. Rooms should be left in their normal conditions.
 - k. Employees/Occupants should be advised to remove all personal items (i.e., purses, book bags, etc.) and to report any suspicious activity or items.
 - l. Supervisors should account for the safety and well-being of all employees.

F. Re-entry is Also a Management Decision

The same order of management authority is needed to authorize re-entry to the building as is used for evacuation.



James E. Baker, City Manager



Date