Introduction

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans has been reduced to a devastated shell of its former self. In spite of significant warnings ahead of time, the city, the State of Louisiana and the Federal Government were overwhelmed by the impact of the category 4 hurricane, and thus were unable to effectively allocate resources and respond in a timely manner. For several days the city was left to manage the consequences of Hurricane Katrina alone; putting the people of New Orleans in a fight for their very survival. Many fingers are pointing in many directions, but we need to look past this and ask ourselves: “Can we learn some significant and valuable lessons from this event and apply them to what might be the possible aftermath if a “dirty bomb” was detonated in a city?” As we analyze the aftermath of Katrina, you will be able to draw many parallels to a manmade “dirty bomb” aftermath, but more importantly, at the potentially larger pitfalls that await us if a manmade “dirty bomb” were detonated.

As you read this, you may be asking: “Why are you worried about a manmade “dirty bomb”? Well, many individuals may not be aware of this, but a manmade “dirty bomb” scenario is actually one of the foremost concerns in terrorism activity at this time in the US. During the 2004 campaign, Vice President Dick Cheney stated:

``The biggest threat we face now as a nation is the possibility of terrorists ending up in the middle of one of our cities with deadlier weapons than have ever before been used against us - biological agents or a nuclear weapon or a chemical weapon of some kind to be able to threaten the lives of hundreds of thousands of Americans''


Earlier this year, New York Times journalist Eric Lipton reported on the National Planning Scenarios – a basic “doomsday” analysis of what threats face our nation. He stated in this article:

“The Department of Homeland Security, trying to focus antiterrorism spending better nationwide, has identified a dozen possible strikes it views as most plausible or devastating, including detonation of a nuclear device in a major city, release of sarin nerve agent in office buildings and a truck bombing of a sports arena.”


Whether we like it or not, the threat is here and it is real. Planning and preparing for it is our only option, because as September 11th and Hurricane Katrina have shown us, preventing it may not be possible, and relying on government to provide for us is no longer practical.
Preparedness Responsibility

In today’s fast paced environment waiting can be deadly. It was revealed that the Director of FEMA waited almost four hours before contacting Homeland Security regarding the situation in New Orleans. This “wait and see” approach was disastrous. Would a similar delay occur if a manmade “dirty bomb” were detonated in a similar sized city?

Most individuals outside the Department of Homeland Security are not aware of the fact that many hours of Congressional testimony has been given on this very subject. Which governmental entities are responsible for preparedness planning and ensuring that a local entity is truly trained and prepared for a disaster event? Well, according to representatives of the federal government, that responsibility always has AND STILL DOES lie with local government.

Six months following the tragedy of September 11, 2001, then FEMA Director Joe Allbaugh testified before the Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development and Independent Agencies Subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee regarding his 2002 goals and objectives, and stated:

“Disaster mitigation and prevention activities are inherently grassroots.”
(http://www.fema.gov/library/jma051601.shtm)

Throughout the entire testimony, Mr. Allbaugh’s overriding theme was that of accountability and responsibility on the part of the state and local governments to be prepared. In fact, Mr. Allbaugh went so far as to state:

“It is not the role of the Federal Government to tell a community what it needs to do to protect its citizens and infrastructure.”

If anyone doubts that this is the prevailing viewpoint, please note this was reiterated by Randall Yim, Managing Director, National Preparedness in his testimony before the Subcommittee on Governmental Efficiency, Financial Management, and Intergovernmental Relations on March 25, 2002 when he stated:

“...the initial responsibility (for preparedness) falls upon local governments and their organizations.”

“...state and local resources alone will likely be insufficient to meet the terrorist threat.”

“State and local response organizations believe the federal programs designed to improve preparedness are not well synchronized or organized.”
What does this mean for Strategically Critical/Major Cities?

Let’s analyze just a few examples from the Katrina aftermath. Without question, New Orleans, the fourth largest port in the world, is vital and strategically important and in fact is the gateway to the Mississippi River. The port ships 50% of the grain exported by the U.S. The port accounts for 25% of the coffee imported and 25% of the seafood that comes into the U.S.

The Louisiana Offshore Oil Port (LOOP) is located near the city. The LOOP carries about 10% of the U.S.’s oil imports. The LOOP is the nation’s only deepwater tanker terminal, typically receiving almost a million barrels of foreign crude oil daily.

The port facility is located in 110 feet of water about 20 miles south of Grand Isle, La., an area severely hit by Hurricane Katrina.

Sabine Pipe Line LLC owns and operates the Henry Hub, which is the centralized point for natural gas futures trading in the U.S. The Henry Hub offers shippers access to pipelines that have markets in the Midwest, Northeast, Southeast and Gulf Coast regions of the United States. The Henry Hub interconnects with nine interstate and four intrastate pipelines including the following: Acadian, Columbia Gulf, Gulf South Pipeline, Bridgeline, NGPL, Sea Robin, Southern, Texas Gas, Transco, Trunkline, Jefferson Island, and Sabine’s mainline. Sabine’s two compressor stations at the Hub provide the operational flexibility to compress 520,000 Dth/d and make any necessary deliveries to high-pressure pipelines. Sabine currently possesses the ability to transport 1.8 Bcf/d across the Henry Hub.

Henry Hub is the pricing point for natural gas futures contracts traded in the New York Mercantile Exchange, or NYMEX. It is a point on the natural gas pipeline system in southern Louisiana. It is owned by Sabine Pipe Line LLC.

It interconnects with nine interstate and four intrastate pipelines: Acadian, Columbia Gulf, Gulf South Pipeline, Bridgeline, NGPL, Sea Robin, Southern, Texas Gas, Transco, Trunkline, Jefferson Island, and Sabine. The two compressor stations can compress 520,000 decatherm/d (6.3 GW). The transportation capacity is 1.8 billion ft³/d (590 m³/s).

A potential crisis in the natural-gas markets was apparently averted Monday 29 August 2005 after Sabine, the company operating the Henry Hub gas gathering facility said it avoided major damage from Hurricane Katrina and reopened the site for delivery and receipt. "As individual flows are reinstated, Sabine will return to full service, ending the force majeure condition previously noticed," said Sabine Pipeline LLC, operator of Henry Hub.
No Warning

Hurricane Katrina gave us plenty of warning. NOAA was able to track the path of the hurricane without much difficulty. On Thursday, August 25th, Florida Emergency Response Team Chief, Mike DeLorenzo warned the Gulf states when he saw the fierceness of the category 2 Katrina:

“Make sure your individual family preparedness plan is up-to-date.” This was a whole 72+ hours before the storm.

New Orleans had plenty of time to evacuate its citizens. Days after Katrina came ashore, there were pictures released in the mainstream news feeds showing multiple school buses underwater. Why weren’t these buses utilized to move citizens away from the city?

With a manmade “dirty bomb” there will be no warning. Let’s repeat this vital fact – with a manmade “dirty bomb” – either nuclear, chemical or biological – there will be no warning.

In the aftermath of Katrina, chaos, confusion and blame seem to be the order of the day. Yet, we knew it was coming. We had ample time to do something about the event. With no warning, albeit less destructive force, what would the potential reaction to a manmade “dirty bomb” be? Are we prepared?

A quick assessment of the situation as of September 9, 2005 – two weeks after the first warnings, shows the following:

- 90,000 square miles of affected areas
- 71,000 federal personnel have been deployed
- 43,000 National Guard are on the ground in three states
- 48,500 people have been rescued (23,000 by the Coast Guard alone)
- 18 million ready to eat meals have been distributed
- 40 million liters of water
- 1.7 million lbs. of ice
- 32 tons of basic first aid supplies
- 100,000 pieces of clothing seized from customs was delivered to the Astrodome

WASHINGTON – Four years after the Sept. 11 attacks shattered America's sense of invulnerability, the federal government has spent more than $175 billion to secure the homeland and reshaped itself in the biggest transformation since World War II.

Yet in recent days, Hurricane Katrina has badly rattled Americans' belief that the government is any better prepared to confront catastrophe – whether natural or terrorist – than it was on that September morning in 2001.

The images of bloated bodies in the streets and of people trapped by floodwaters and the heart-breaking tales of suffering so foreign to the American experience have cast a harsh glare on the nation's disaster relief system.

Though federal, state and local politicians are bickering over culpability, the botched early response to the Gulf Coast devastation has led to the inescapable conclusion that the system failed – and absent repair, it will fail again.

"Hurricane Katrina was in one sense the most significant test of the new national emergency preparedness and response system that was created after 9-11, and it obviously did not pass that test," said Sen. Joe Lieberman, D-Conn.

Will the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) be able to respond effectively (The DHS budget for 2003 allocated less than 10% for first responder training)? Will State and Local response agencies, police, fire and emergency medical services be adequate to maintain order in the aftermath? If Katrina is an example, there may be some parallels that can be drawn and lessons learned that should be applied.

Observations: Hurricane Katrina Response – Are you on your own?

Reflecting on the current state of response to the hurricane and projecting forward to the possible response to a manmade "dirty bomb" what conclusions might we draw? Does it seem reasonable to assume the following?

Reliance on federal, state or local governmental entities for communications, safety, protection or even food may not be realistic in this disaster scenario.
Back in 1997, President Clinton created the President’s Commission on Critical Infrastructure Protection (PCCIP). The Commission was chartered to conduct a comprehensive review and recommend a national policy for protecting critical infrastructures and assuring their continued operation. Under Executive Order 13010, certain national infrastructures have been identified and designated as so vital, that their incapacity or destruction would have a debilitating impact on the defense or economic security of the United States.

On October 15, 1997 the Commission presented its report on critical infrastructure vulnerabilities to President Clinton. The report of the PCCIP states in its introduction:

"The United States is in the midst of a tremendous cultural change - a change that affects every aspect of our lives. The cyber dimension promotes accelerating reliance on our infrastructures and offers access to them from all over the world, blurring traditional boundaries and jurisdictions. National defense is not just about government anymore, and economic security is not just about business. The critical infrastructures are central to our national defense and our economic power, and we must lay the foundations for their future security on a new form of cooperation between the private sector and the federal government."

The Critical Infrastructures studied consist of:

- Electric Power Supplies
- Gas and Oil
- Telecommunications
- Banking and Finance
- Transportation
- Water Supply Systems
- Emergency Services
- Continuity of Government

The Commission divided its work into five "sectors" based on the common characteristics of the included industries. The sectors are:

- Information and Communications
- Banking and Finance
- Energy (Including Electrical Power, Oil and Gas)
- Physical Distribution
- Vital Human Services
The Commission characterized the sectors, studied their vulnerabilities and looked for solutions. They prepared comprehensive working papers for each of the five sectors providing specific recommendations. Other sections of the report contain information on issues that were not sector specific. Among them is a paper on *Research and Development Recommendations*, which outlines a comprehensive set of topics regarding the long-term needs of infrastructure protection.

Hurricane Katrina devastated the infrastructure of the Gulf Coast states. Electric Power Supplies, Gas and Oil, Telecommunications, Banking and Finance, Transportation, Water Supply Systems, Emergency Services, Continuity of Government have all been disrupted. New Orleans specifically had ample warning for over 20 years that they were a disaster waiting to happen since the city lies 8 feet below sea level. Numerous studies, reports and even media documentaries detailed their danger. In spite of all this warning, yet it appears that we have done little to address the issue.

So, the question that you may wish to posit is “*Are we on our own?*” Perhaps a better question would be to posit, “*Whatever happened to personal preparedness and taking responsibility for one’s own safety and well being?*”

Michelle Mittelstadt’s article entitled, “*Four years after 9-11, Katrina reveals flaws in emergency planning*” continues:

> While Congress readies hearings on the disaster relief effort, state executives and emergency management experts say they’re afraid of what would happen if tragedy lands at their doorstep.

> "One of the unfortunate lessons from Katrina is that states cannot always count on the federal government for prompt disaster response and assistance," California state Sen. Nell Soto wrote Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, urging better disaster preparation for the earthquake-prone state.

> Asked if the U.S. is better positioned now than before 9-11 to mobilize for a major disaster, George Haddow, a FEMA deputy director in the Clinton administration, offered a crisp answer: "We are worse off."

Katrina has caused massive environmental damage to the Gulf Coast states. The toxic soup created by the combination of flood waters and industrial chemicals from the many chemical plants, refineries and other industrial facilities located in these states will take many years to clean-up. The effects of a manmade “dirty bomb” could produce the same clean-up quandary, albeit on a smaller and more concentrated scale as far as the area of impact.
Table 1, entitled, “Regulations with Environmental, Health and Safety Implications”, provides a list of regulations that should be taken into account if clean-up efforts are to be in accordance with the legal constructs that we have applied for environmental, health and safety since the 1970’s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regulations with Environmental, Health and Safety Implications</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) (Public Law 96-510)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resource Conservation and Recovery Act 1976</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEMA Guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clean Air Act</td>
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<td>Clean Water Act</td>
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<td>Oil Pollution Act of 1990</td>
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<td>Endangered Species Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pollution Prevention Act (PPA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)</td>
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Table 2, entitled, “Regulatory Implications*”, provides a list of laws and regulations that should be taken into account as they relate to homeland security, clean-up efforts and compliance constructs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Laws &amp; Regulations</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sarbanes Oxley Act</td>
<td>Compliance with all applicable regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gramm Leach Bliley Act</td>
<td>Risk Management &amp; Control, Monitoring and Adjustment, Outsourcing Arrangements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFPA 1600</td>
<td>Hazard ID &amp; Risk Assessment, Hazard Management, Crisis Communications, Public Education &amp; Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)</td>
<td>Various sections of CFR 1910 address emergency preparedness, these include: 1910.36, 1910.38, 1910.156, 1910.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Conservation and Recovery Act 1976</td>
<td>The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), an amendment to the Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1965, was</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
enacted in 1976 to address a problem of enormous magnitude – how to safely manage and dispose of the huge volumes of municipal and industrial waste generated nationwide. The goals set by RCRA were:

- To protect human health and the environment from the hazards posed by waste disposal;
- To conserve energy and natural resources through waste recycling and recovery;
- To reduce or eliminate, as expeditiously as possible, the amount of waste generated, including hazardous waste; and
- To ensure that wastes are managed in a manner that is protective of human health and the environment.

**Emergency Planning & Community Right to Know Act**

42 U.S.C. 11001 et seq. (1986)

The Emergency Planning & Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA) was passed by Congress as part of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA). As a result, EPCRA is also referred to as SARA Title III. The act created a program with two basic goals:

1. to increase public knowledge of and access to information on the presence of toxic chemicals in communities, releases of toxic chemicals into the environment, and waste management activities involving toxic chemicals; and
2. to encourage and support planning for responding to environmental emergencies.

To fulfill these goals, EPCRA created the Toxics Release Inventory or TRI and the hazardous chemical inventory. This information enables state and local governments and the community to identify what needs to be done at the local level to better deal with pollution and chemical emergencies.

**US Federal Emergency Agency (FEMA) Disaster Planning for Business and Industry**

Various FEMA planning guidelines address preparedness.

**Presidential Executive Orders related to FEMA**

These Executive Orders have been on record for nearly 30 years and could be enacted by the stroke of a Presidential pen:

- Executive Order 10990 allows the government to take over all modes of transportation and control of highways and seaports.
- Executive Order 10995 allows the government to seize and control the communication media.
- Executive Order 10997 allows the government to take over all electrical power, gas, petroleum, fuels and minerals.
- Executive Order 10998 allows the government to take over all food resources and farms.
- Executive Order 10999: All modes of transportation will go into government control. Any vehicle can be seized.
- Executive Order 11000 allows the government to mobilize civilians into work brigades under government supervision.
- Executive Order 11001 allows the government to take over all health, education and welfare functions.
- Executive Order 11002 designates the Postmaster General to operate a national registration of all persons.
- Executive Order 11003 allows the government to take over all airports and aircraft, including commercial aircraft.
Executive Order 11004 allows the Housing and Finance Authority to relocate communities, build new housing with public funds, designate areas to be abandoned, and establish new locations for populations.

Executive Order 11005 allows the government to take over railroads, inland waterways and public storage facilities.

Executive Order 11051 specifies the responsibility of the Office of Emergency Planning and gives authorization to put all Executive Orders into effect in times of increased international tensions and economic or financial crisis.

Executive Order 11310 grants authority to the Department of Justice to enforce the plans set out in Executive Orders, to institute industrial support, to establish judicial and legislative liaison, to control all aliens, to operate penal and correctional institutions, and to advise and assist the President.

Executive Order 11049 assigns emergency preparedness function to federal departments and agencies, consolidating 21 operative Executive Orders issued over a fifteen year period.

Executive Order 11921 allows the Federal Emergency Preparedness Agency to develop plans to establish control over the mechanisms of production and distribution, of energy sources, wages, salaries, credit and the flow of money in U.S. financial institution in any undefined national emergency. It also provides that when a state of emergency is declared by the President, Congress cannot review the action for six months. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has broad powers in every aspect of the nation.

Executive Order 12919: Directs various Cabinet officials to be constantly ready to take over virtually all aspects of the US economy during a State of National Emergency at the direction of the president.

Executive Order 13010: Directs FEMA to take control over all government agencies in time of emergency. FEMA is under control of executive branch of the government.

Executive Order 12656: "ASSIGNMENT OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS RESPONSIBILITIES", "A national emergency is any occurrence, including natural disaster, military attack, technological emergency, or other emergency that seriously degrades or seriously threatens the national security of the United States. Policy for national security emergency preparedness shall be established by the President."

Executive Order 11490: Establishes presidential control over all US citizens, businesses, and churches in time of "emergency."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act/Matter</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)</td>
<td>Technical, Physical Safeguards and Administrative Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean Air Act</td>
<td>Air quality standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean Water Act</td>
<td>Water quality standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil Pollution Act of 1990</td>
<td>Releases of oil to the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endangered Species Act</td>
<td>Protection of endangered species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act</td>
<td>Chemical use standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)</td>
<td>Access to information</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 3, entitled, “Regulatory Applicability**” further breaks down the laws and regulations by compliance applicability (recommended or mandatory).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Laws &amp; Regulations</th>
<th>Recommended/Mandatory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sarbanes Oxley Act</td>
<td>Mandatory for publicly held entities. Strongly recommended for privately held enterprises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gramm Leach Bliley Act</td>
<td>Mandatory. Recommended that other enterprises evaluate their relationship with financial institutions and investment bankers to assure compliance with other laws, such as, Sarbanes-Oxley, NYSE Rule 446, Foreign Corrupt Trade Practices, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maritime Transportation Security Act</td>
<td>Mandatory. Recommended for transportation, shipping and receiving operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFPA 1600</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Conservation and Recovery Act 1976</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Planning &amp; Community Right to Know Act</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 U.S.C. 11001 et seq. (1986)</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Federal Emergency Agency (FEMA) Disaster Planning for Business and Industry</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Executive Orders related to FEMA</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean Air Act</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* The list cited in Table 3 is not inclusive; I have only listed the top ones here.
Can I afford not to be Personally Prepared?

Politicians, Business leaders and people at all levels should ask, “Can we count on contingency to work in our favor?” Katrina is demonstrating the potential long term effects and consequences of one of Mother Nature’s “dirty bombs”. “What if…” is not a question that we should be asking; “When…” is the question that we need to ask. “Can I afford not to be prepared personally?”

In order to answer my earlier question “Are we on our own?” let’s take another look at Michelle Mittelstadt’s article entitled, “Four years after 9-11, Katrina reveals flaws in emergency planning” that continues:

Federal officials spent more than two years writing a blueprint to handle catastrophes in a seamless capacity that weaves together local, federal and state assets.

When then-Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge released the 426-page National Response Plan in January he described it as the playbook for the quarterback.

The discordant response during the first use of the National Response Plan forces the question: Was the playbook flawed or did the team botch the plays?

Are we a step behind? Recent articles allude to the need for personal preparedness as companies and government are faced with a myriad of issues to contend with:

**US Firms In Midst of Cybercrime Wave, Report Suggests**
A new e-crime survey finds that US companies and organizations just can't keep up with the accelerating pace of hacks, worms and intrusions attacking their networks

**CDC Makes Bioterror A New Priority**
The venerable Center for Disease Control (CDC) will soon be helping shore up US defenses against terror attacks using biological weapons.

**Message To First Responders: Cooperate, Communicate and Coordinate**
With the prospect of more terror attacks in the summer, editorialists are urging US cities to pay attention to the testimony being heard by the 9/11 Commission and improve coordination and communication between police, fire and rescue departments.

**Oil: Our Achilles Heel**
With increased demand for oil, experts fear that a well placed terror attack or a natural disaster could cause disproportionate disruptions in oil supplies.
Concluding Thoughts

Should you depend on government (at any level) for your personal well being in the event of a manmade “dirty bomb” incident? The aftermath of Katrina indicates that there is much to be done regarding the ability of government to respond effectively.

Should you depend on your employer for your personal well being in the event of a manmade “dirty bomb” incident? Market research indicates that only a small portion (5%) of businesses today have a viable plan, but virtually 100% now realize they are at risk.

As posited earlier, “Whatever happened to personal preparedness and taking responsibility for one’s own safety and well being?” Perhaps by applying the following eight essential elements of analysis to your personal preparedness you can take steps in the direction of assuring your personal safety. Many of you will readily recognize the eight essential elements as embodying the incident management system. Eight key areas that must be taken into consideration for personal safety are:

Management – Personal decision-making regarding how you will handle the event. No “crisis” ever goes completely according to plan. In a “crisis” people react in unexpected ways. We are no longer able to merely think about the plannable or plan for the unthinkable, but we must learn to think about the unplannable. Whether a natural or human induced disaster, surprise is the key element in the failure to anticipate effectively.

Planning – Short term and long term considerations for you and your family. Plan for long-term sheltering – avoid being herded into a “Superdome” situation. Assess the worst case scenario and work backwards to a preparation level you are comfortable with.

Operations – Identifying how you will function if your home or workplace is affected by an event.

Logistics – Identifying and acquiring essential and supporting logistics for survival. Assess your food and water situation in your home and your workplace – do not count on being able to leave your home or workplace. First aid beyond the norm – antibiotics, face masks, gloves, etc. Get shortwave or NOAA/FEMA radio and/or a ham radio that can communicate with local authorities.

Infrastructure – Identifying internal and external infrastructures that will support you and your family and developing a back-up for external infrastructures that may not be available (get that generator).
Administration – Keeping a current set of critical documents available in a secure location, to include a copy on electronic medium. Keep a log of the entire event for future potential litigation.

Finance – Keep some cash on hand and plan for short term dislocation and long term dislocation.

External Liaison – Communicate with others in your community and local government regarding current plans and considerations. If New Orleans is an example, human civility will deteriorate quickly; panic will be beyond what we saw with Katrina – in a manmade “dirty bomb” scenario, you will potentially have injured people, people getting sick over a period of days, people wanting to leave but cannot because of quarantined conditions.

A Chinese proverb states that "Opportunity is always present in the midst of crisis." Every crisis carries two elements, danger and opportunity. No matter the difficulty of the circumstances, no matter how dangerous the situation… at the heart of each crisis lies a tremendous opportunity. Great blessings lie ahead for the one who knows the secret of finding the opportunity within each crisis.

About the Author

Geary W. Sikich is the author of "It Can't Happen Here: All Hazards Crisis Management Planning," "Emergency Management Planning Handbook" available in English and Spanish-language versions and, "Integrated Business Continuity: Maintaining Resilience in Uncertain Times," www.Amazon.com and over 150 published articles. Mr. Sikich is the founder and a principal with Logical Management Systems, Corp. (www.logicalmanagement.com). He has extensive experience in management consulting in a variety of fields and consults on a regular basis with companies worldwide on continuity and crisis management issues. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in criminology from Indiana State University and Master of Education in counseling and guidance from the University of Texas, El Paso.
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