Campus Emergency Response Team (CERT) Overview

Introduction

West Texas A&M University is committed to providing an educational climate that is conducive to the personal and professional development of each individual. With a university community of over 7,700 students and 800 employees, WTAMU realizes that crises, or campus emergencies, will occur and that these crises can have a significant effect on the university and surrounding community(s). Such campus emergencies require an effective and timely response.

This plan addresses each of the four phases of emergency planning and management. These are:

1) Mitigation - A long-term activity aimed at eliminating or reducing the probability of occurrence of a critical incident (i.e. identifying hazardous materials).
2) Preparedness - A readiness to respond to unmitigated events. It ensures effective response and minimizes damage (i.e. warning systems, planning and exercises).
3) Response - The first phase after onset of the critical incident (i.e. evacuation, rescue, and communication).
4) Recovery - Both short and long-term restoration of vital systems to normal operations (i.e. cleanup, resumption of functional operations).

Purpose

1) To help WTAMU personnel prepare for campus emergencies through education, awareness, and sound mitigation practices;
2) To help WTAMU personnel be prepared for a campus emergency should it occur;
3) To help WTAMU personnel minimize the effects of a crisis by knowledgeable and thorough response; and
4) To ensure the continuity of services the university provides, both during and after a campus emergency.
Assumptions

This Campus Emergency Response Manual is predicated on a realistic approach to problems likely to be encountered during a major emergency or disaster. Hence, the following are general guidelines:

1) A campus emergency may occur at any time of the day or night, weekend, or holiday, with little or no warning.

2) The succession of events in an emergency is not predictable; therefore, this manual should serve only as a guide and may require field modifications in order to meet the requirements of the situation.

3) A campus emergency may be declared if information indicates that such a condition is developing or is probable.

4) Disasters may affect the entire geographical area. City, county, state and federal services may not be available to assist for some period of time. The greater the severity of the campus emergency, the greater the chance that WTAMU will be forced to rely on its own resources.

5) This manual shall not be construed in a manner that limits the use of prudent judgment and common sense in matters not covered by the elements of this manual.

Scope

These procedures apply to all personnel employed by and all property of West Texas A&M University.

Authority

This plan is promulgated under the authority of The Texas A&M University System Chancellor and the West Texas A&M University President.

Priorities

1) The primary focus of this plan is to protect and preserve human life. All other issues are secondary to this overriding and central focus.

2) Protection and preservation of WTAMU assets.

3) Providing support for those who are affected by a campus emergency.

4) The resumption of business operations.
Goals

1) To coordinate the university's response to campus emergencies involving students, employees and visitors while paying special attention to the continuing safety and security needs of members of the university community;

2) To protect and preserve university assets while not exposing students, employees or other individuals to unacceptable levels of risk;

3) To ensure positive and thorough communication throughout the university and surrounding community in order to minimize failures in crisis intervention;

4) To offer emergency services, counseling, guidance and appropriate support to members of the university community, their families and university care givers;

5) To facilitate the resumption of essential university services in a timely and efficient manner and to communicate closure of the incident to all University faculty and staff, as well as the community at large;

6) To facilitate the resumption of normal university operations as soon as possible; and

7) To use critical incidents, when appropriate, as "teachable moments" which may enhance the quality of life for all those affected.

Definition of a Campus Emergency

A campus emergency is a critical situation that requires immediate attention, decision making, and action. These situations are identified by the President, the CERT coordinator, the UPD Chief of Police, or a designated vice president. It does not include isolated incidents routinely handled by university personnel. The term "crisis" most frequently refers to the period that over burdens normal resources and requires the university's full attention for its duration.

Examples of Campus Emergencies

1) Extensive criminal incidents
   A) Hostage situations
   B) Chemical/biological terrorist incidents/threats
   C) Homicide
   D) Kidnapping
   E) Sniper/drive-by shooting

2) Transportation accidents involving students/employees
3) Civil disturbance/riot
   A) On campus
   B) Off campus

4) Fire/explosion

5) Natural disasters
   A) Tornado
   B) Flood
   C) Fire
   D) Severe snow storm
   E) Other severe weather (large hail, damaging wind, etc.)

6) Utility outages
   A) Electricity
   B) Natural gas
   C) Water
   D) Sewer
   E) Phone
   F) Computer system

7) Hazardous material spills
   A) On campus - labs and streets
   B) Off campus - trucks and trains
   C) Pantex incidents

WTAMU recognizes that the above list may not cover all situations that warrant CERT intervention. Therefore, the determination of whether or not a situation needs CERT attention will be decided by the President, the CERT coordinator, the Chief of Police, or a designated vice president.

**Campus Emergency Response Team Membership**

The CERT coordinator (UPD Chief of Police) will direct the Campus Emergency Response Team (CERT). During times when the CERT coordinator is not available, he can designate an interim CERT coordinator. The CERT coordinator serves as the coordinator of operations during a campus emergency, and the CERT members serve in support roles. Members of the CERT will be requested to attend training throughout the year. During a training or actual campus emergency, the CERT coordinator or designee will designate the location for the command post that best suits the situation. During an actual emergency, the CERT coordinator and the President will determine which CERT members should be activated and convey that request to the University Police Department. UPD will be responsible for activating the requested CERT members. CERT membership will include the following persons or designees:

1) CERT Coordinator (Chief of Police)
The CERT coordinator will be available through the University Police Department. A designee shall be appointed to serve as an alternate CERT coordinator if needed. Names and contact numbers for the above listed members may be found on page 13.

**Campus Emergency Response Team Members**

All department heads and identified critical staff will serve as campus emergency resource members.

**Outline of Procedures**

Note: This outline is to provide general information only. In the event of an actual campus emergency, variations may occur depending on the nature of the campus emergency and the appropriate response.

1) The CERT coordinator is notified of a campus emergency involving university students, employees and/or property by UPD dispatch (#911). In the unusual event that the designated CERT coordinator is not available, the President shall be notified instead.

2) The CERT coordinator gathers necessary information on the campus emergency and determines the best location for the command post. UPD notifies the President and the necessary campus emergency response team members. Members will be activated only if needed. UPD will contact CERT members as indicated and notify them of the command post location. Recommendations for additional sites, either on campus or off, may be made by CERT members for media briefings, victims’ assistance, and additional support staff as needed and approved by the CERT coordinator and the President. If the CERT coordinator is needed on site, the emergency mobile command center could be activated by UPD and staged at a safe and appropriate location.
3) The CERT coordinator will assist in appointing a designated recordkeeper at the command post to log all CERT activities, including phone notifications and communications. The CERT coordinator, along with the CERT members, will assist in assessing resource needs during the incident and determine the available resources. The victims’ assistance coordinator (VAC) will assess the needs of the victims and report to the CERT coordinator for needed resources. The VAC will oversee victims’ assistance programs, including deceased in the morgue, injured at hospitals, injured victims elsewhere, trauma victims, relocated victims/witnesses, and phone bank assistance for outside callers who need information. A toll-free community resource number can be established to allow community members to contact the university for updates and other information. The Director of Communications Services will work with the President and the CERT coordinator to develop a short and long-term media strategy as well as to determine locations for media gatherings and briefings. The President or his/her designee will notify appropriate TAMUS representative(s). Critical incident management badges may be issued to persons involved in the actual operations and media passes may be issued to the media.

4) As the situation is resolved, the CERT coordinator is responsible for notifying affected CERT members that the incident has come to a conclusion.

5) As the campus emergency is resolved and order returned to the community, the recovery phase becomes the responsibility of the President and designated Vice Presidents. The CERT coordinator will return to normal assigned activities and will become a resource for recovery. Restoration steps will be implemented to reestablish normal business operations.

6) The CERT will meet to de-brief and plan any appropriate follow-up programs or activities necessary. The CERT also evaluates the procedures followed and makes recommendations for revisions to the procedures.

Campus Emergency Response Team Member Responsibilities

CERT Coordinator (Chief of Police)
A) Maintains campus police force in a state of constant readiness.
B) Determines the type and magnitude of the campus emergency and establishes the appropriate incident command post.
C) Initiates immediate contact with the President and begins assessment of the situation.
D) Is responsible for the initial direction of the university emergency responses.
E) Notifies and utilizes the University Police Department in order to maintain safety, security and order.
F) Notifies and conducts liaison activities with appropriate outside organizations such as fire, police, hospitals, morgues, National Organization for Victim Assistance, etc.
G) Ensures that the appropriate members of the CERT have been notified in the case of a campus emergency.
H) Provides and equips an alternative site(s) for the incident command post.
I) Establishes management program for volunteers.
J) Establishes management program for victims/witnesses.
K) Establishes triage area.
L) Establishes mode of communication.
M) Establishes morgue area.
N) Establishes victim/witness area.
O) Establishes area to reunite family/friends with victims.
P) Establishes location for media with counsel from the president and communication services.
Q) Mobilizes victim assistance, counseling, churches, Red Cross and other relief groups.
R) Establishes Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) programs.

University President
A) Makes emergency policy decisions.
B) Determines the scope and general content of information to be released to the media.
C) Addresses media representatives at appropriate time.
D) Provides oversight to CERT operations.
E) Serves as liaison to TAMUS.

Vice President for Business and Finance
A) Authorizes emergency resources and expenditures.
B) Authorizes implementation of the toll-free # phone bank.
C) Provides oversight to CERT operations.
D) Serves as liaison to staff.
E) Identifies office/work space for staff.

Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
A) Serves as liaison to faculty.
B) Provides oversight to CERT operations.
C) Identifies alternate office/class space for faculty.

Vice President for Student Services
A) Liaison to students.
B) Provides oversight to CERT operations.
C) Identifies appropriate alternate housing for students.

Director of Communications Services
A) Collaborates with university president and CERT coordinator to establish media update location.
B) Establishes liaison with the news media for dissemination of information.
C) Advises and collaborates with the President and CERT coordinator to determine general content of information to be released to the media.
D) Prepares releases for the news media concerning the campus emergency.

**Associate VP for Physical Facilities**
A) Assists in assessing damage to university facilities.
B) Serves as liaison to utility companies.
C) Furnishes emergency power and lighting systems to the extent possible.
D) Surveys habitable space and recommends to the university administration relocation space for essential services.
E) Provides information concerning each building involved in a campus emergency.
F) Provides equipment and personnel, including but not limited to, locksmiths, groundskeepers, carpenters, custodians, electricians and plumbers to perform shutdown procedures, hazardous area control, barricades, debris clearance, emergency repairs, etc.
G) Provides vehicles, equipment and operators for movement of personnel and supplies and assigns vehicles for emergency use as required by the CERT coordinator.

**Assistant VP for Student Affairs (Student Services)**
A) Collaborates with the President and CERT coordinator to recommend appropriate locations for triage areas.
B) Coordinates triage program with local EMS and Fire Department.
C) Assists the CERT coordinator in making decisions and coordinating medical and counseling needs.

**Environmental Safety Coordinator**
A) Assists with evacuations.
B) Identifies hazardous conditions and reports to CERT coordinator.
CERT Response Procedures Diagram

Emergency occurs

Call #911 to report emergencies directly to UPD

CERT Coordinator notified

President is notified

If CERT Coordinator not available, President can assign

CERT Coordinator activates emergency response

CERT Coordinator locates Incident Command Post

CERT Coordinator activates needed members

CERT members take instruction and coordinate resources
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Contact Numbers for Outside Resources (#211 to Get Resource Help):

**Clothing**
- American Red Cross      376-6309
- React Community Center      373-6653
- Eveline Rivers Children's Clothing Room 355-3572
- Faith City Mission      373-6402
- Salvation Army       373-6631

**Clothing, Baby & Maternity**
- Amarillo Area Crisis Pregnancy Center 354-2288
- Canyon Crisis Pregnancy Center 655-HOPE

**Counseling**
- Catholic Family Services      376-4571
- Hope Counseling Services      358-7145
- NWTHS - Pavilion      354-1810
- Samaritan Pastoral Counseling Center 353-1668
- Texas Panhandle Mental Health Authority 353-7235

**Law Enforcement**
- Amarillo Police Department      378-3038
- Potter County Juvenile Probation      379-2201
- Randall County Juvenile Probation      356-1150
- Dprs/Child & Adult      358-6211
- Federal Bureau Of Investigations (FBI) 376-6395
- Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) 469-227-4300
- Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) 325-672-8111
- Randall County Sheriff's Office      468-5800
- Canyon Police Department      655-5005
- Department Of Public Safety      468-1400

**Legal Services**
- Amarillo Bar Association      355-7426
- Child Support Enforcement Agency      376-4471
- Dispute Resolution Agency      372-3381
- West Texas Legal Services      373-6808

**Victims Assistance**
- University Police Department 651-2300
- National Organization for Victim Assistance 800-879-6682
Financial Assistance
  Circle Of Friends  359-Hope
  NWTHS/Pickens Center  354-1012
  Samaritan Outreach Ministries, Inc  353-1668

Food Pantries, Emergency Food
  React  373-6653
  Bethesda Ministry Center  381-0361
  Buchanan Street Community Center  374-1252
  Canyon Cares  655-1032
  Cornerstone Outreach Center  381-2131
  Panhandle Community Services-Emergency Nutrition  372-2531
  Samaritan Outreach Ministries  374-4132
  San Jacinto Baptist Benevolence  358-7681
  Southwest Church Of Christ  352-5647
  West Amarillo Church Of Christ  383-3625

Homeless Services
  Another Chance House  372-3344
  CFS-Homeless Case Management  376-4571
  Downtown Women’s Center  372-3625
  Faith City Mission & Family Shelter, Inc.  373-6402
  Martha’s Home  372-4035
  Morning Star/Mark Schupp Center  371-0373
  Salvation Army  373-6631
  South Plains Health Providers Organization  374-7341
  Texas Panhandle Mental Health Authority  353-7235
  Tyler Street Resource Center  373-2662

Hospital
  Baptist St. Anthony’s  212-2000
  BSA Canyon Clinic/Urgent Care  655-2104
  Northwest Texas  351-5437
  VA Hospitals (For Biochemical Response)  355-9703

Housing, Temporary Shelter, Families
  Downtown Women’s Center  372-3625
  Faith City Mission & Family Shelter, Inc.  373-6402
  Martha’s Home  372-4035
  Salvation Army  373-6631
  Canyon Independent School District  677-2600

Housing, Temporary Shelter, Medical
  Morning Star/Mark Schupp Center  371-0373
Ronald McDonald House Of Amarillo     358-8177

**Housing, Temporary Shelter, Men**
- Another Chance House     372-3344
- Faith City Mission & Family Shelter, Inc.     373-6402
- Salvation Army     373-6631

**Housing, Temporary Shelter, Women**
- Downtown Women's Center     372-3625
- Faith City Mission & Family Shelter, Inc.     373-6402
- Martha’s Home     372-4035
- Salvation Army     373-6631

**Housing, Temporary Shelter, Under 18yrs**
- O'Brien House     376-7731
- Panhandle Assessment Center     335-9138

**Housing, Transitional Housing**
- Buckner Children & Family Services/Faith     373-3422
- Catholic Family Services, Inc.     376-4571
- City Of Amarillo     378-9319
- Downtown Women’s Center     372-3625

**Military**
- National Guard     374-0941
- Military Support Operations     (512) 465-5206
- Pantex Operational Center     477-5000

**Poison Control**
- Poison Center     1-800-222-1222
  354-1630

**Texas Department Of Health**
- 351-7220

**Transportation**
- Amarillo City Transit/"Spec Trans"     378-3095
- Panhandle Community Services/Rural Transportation     372-2531
- Canyon Independent School District Transportation     677-2670

**Miscellaneous**
- Family Support Services Crisis Line     1-800-749-9026
- Family Support Services Office Line     342-2500