

Plan of action: A library's journey to training for emergencies and disasters

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Abstract: Although the importance of emergency training in libraries has been mentioned in articles and books, there is a lack of attention focused on how to develop and to maintain an emergency management training program for personnel. This case study of Kennesaw State University Library System shows how the library staff has been involved in developing a preparedness and training culture at its library, campus, and home community. Training methods include tabletops, drills, and simulations to practice and review emergency procedures. The goal of this article is to encourage libraries to start their own emergency training program.

Keywords: *Emergencies, disasters, training, preparedness, exercises, drills, tabletops, simulations, crisis coordinators, Kennesaw State University*



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Introduction

Shots are fired on the ground floor of the library on the morning of May 12, 2016. People are finding ways to escape or hide in a secure place. The shooter goes from floor to floor, firing his weapon and knocking on doors. The whole incident is over after 15 minutes. Is this a description of another shooting at a college reported in the news? No; In this case, the shots were blanks, and the people were participating in an active shooter simulation at their university library. This exercise is one of several examples of training exercises that library staff at Kennesaw State University (KSU) participated in over the past few years.

Institutions and libraries are responding to tragic incidents such as the 2007 shootings at Virginia Tech and the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina in 2005 by realizing the importance of having plans for various emergencies and disasters. A plan, however, is only as good as its execution. Robertson (2015) introduced his chapter about training with the statement, “[i]f your disaster plan lacks an orientation and training program for employees, you do not have a disaster plan” (p. 87). How many organizations follow up on testing their plans, training their staff, and implementing drills? One training session alone will also not do it. Institutions and people rarely take the time to schedule regular training exercises for emergencies.

One prominent example of how regular training exercises saved lives is the story of Rick Rescorla, head of security for Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, which occupied several floors of the South Tower of the World Trade Center. As described in Amanda Ripley’s book *The Unthinkable* (2009), Rescorla’s determined effort to implement frequent evacuation exercises, which included all employees and even visitors, resulted in the survival of most people working on the firm’s floors when terrorists flew planes into the towers on September 11, 2001. Through their training, they knew exactly how to get to the nearest stairway exits and get out of the building; they avoided the mistake others made of trying to get to the roof in hopes of being rescued by air, because they had learned the door to the roof would be locked. Unfortunately, Rescorla did not make it out before the towers collapsed, most likely due to making sure everyone had left before him.

In the past ten years, the KSU Library System has gone from simply revising an outdated plan to having regularly scheduled active drills and training workshops. This article will show how the KSU Library System was transformed by responding to a newfound awareness of emergency preparedness and provide readers with concrete suggestions on how they too can build emergency awareness within

their organizations.

Literature review

A number of resources exist on emergency management or preparation at libraries (Holderman, 2012; Kahn, 2012; Wong and Green, 2007). Many of them describe how to create a plan or provide case studies on how libraries responded to an incident. Although the importance of training is often mentioned, rarely do authors include details on various training methods or provide specific examples. One exception is Robertson's (2015) chapter on creating emergency orientation and training programs, which he followed by presenting examples of tabletop exercises. Most of the literature refers to training in terms of purpose or need. Kapucu and Khosa (2012) identified the development of regular training and exercises, along with an all-hazards plan and strong community partnerships, as important elements for a prepared university. In their book targeted to archives, libraries, and other record centers, Wellheiser and Scott (2002) said training should be mandatory for members of what they called the Disaster Action Team (DAT). Not only does the training test the team's ability to respond, but the authors stated it also builds teamwork skills and instills a common sense of purpose (p. 26). Wilkinson, Lewis, and Dennis (2010) said training library staff serves two goals: building confidence in their response and identifying flaws and holes (p. 30). Nourse Reed (2014) wrote about revising a plan with campus partners and then having an unannounced fire drill after reviewing the new plan with the staff.

Training in emergency procedures is not just about being ready to act, but is a way to test the feasibility of a written emergency plan. Hansen and Pounds (2009) listed five ways of testing a plan: 1) expert review, 2) drills, 3) functional exercises, 4) full-scale exercises, and 5) lessons learned after actual events (p. 137). Sharing plans with local experts such as police, fire, or other emergency officials is also a great way to get feedback and develop relationships.

In what areas should people be trained? As with recent written emergency plans, an all-hazards or comprehensive approach is recommended. Incidents from severe weather or fire alarm activations may be the most frequent type of emergencies staff may encounter, and those could be designated as top priority, but it would be wise not to ignore threats from people or workplace injuries. Focusing the training on probable hazards is more efficient than just what is possible. Earthquake training makes sense in California, but not so much for Georgia. Active shooter situations are frequently mentioned in

the news media and during trainings, but what about other types of threats such as explosives or chemical accidents? The following are a list of general topics that should apply to most libraries: locating evacuation areas or storm shelters, identifying and responding to threatening situations, locating and using fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment, identifying needed supplies, administering CPR and first aid, being aware of hazardous materials in or near the library, and knowing laws and procedures related to emergencies or disasters.

This article focuses on the activities that give people hands-on experience to practice skills and procedures needed to carry out emergency plans, ones that are designed to get staff to work as a team. The following types of exercises are discussed in this article and were planned and experienced by the KSU Library System employees:

Tabletops: Discussion-based exercises that usually involve a series of questions for participants to consider. Hansen and Pounds (2009) stated that tabletops are ways to avoid “going to the expense and logistical difficulty of activating equipment or shutting down operations for a period of time” (p. 137). Tabletops help inform participants of procedures and roles, but they do not provide hands on action that full-scale or functional exercises provide to test plans (p. 144).

Drills: Exercises that are focused on a single task or function. Drills are a good way to practice executing or testing a particular procedure, using a tool or getting used to new equipment, or to maintain and learn new skills. Examples may include timing how long it takes to evacuate the building, using fire extinguishers, or protecting books from a water leak using plastic sheeting.

Simulations (functional or full-scale exercises): Functional simulations are interactive exercises designed to focus on policies or procedures. Full-scale exercises test the capabilities of people or the agency by creating a field based simulation to be as close to reality as possible. They often involve several departments or agencies and require the most planning and preparation.

Emergency Training at the university level

KSU has two main campuses located in Kennesaw and Marietta, Georgia. Originally two universities, Kennesaw State University and Southern Polytechnic State University, they consolidated

in 2015. The university offers over 150 bachelor, master, specialist, and doctorate degrees. In 2015, there were 33,000 students enrolled, with 5,200 living at eight residence halls.

Two key initiatives started KSU Library System’s journey to emergency training: the Library Administration’s directive to update the Library’s emergency procedures and the creation of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) at KSU. In 2004, KSU Library Administration organized a committee to revise its outdated emergency plan. This committee continued to annually update the plan and review procedures with staff. In 2007, KSU created a safety department, now OEM under the Police Department, which started a crisis coordinator (CC) program of emergency management training for volunteers representing most of the buildings on campus. A few library employees were among the first group to complete the training.

The participants of the crisis coordinator program train in the following areas: emergency preparedness, emergency response, crisis mitigation, first aid, CPR, automated external defibrillators (AEDs), and security awareness. To receive the CC certificate, participants must complete six basic classes, plus two elective classes and the online FEMA course on the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The training program has developed over the years to the point that now any employee or student may take one or more classes without committing to being a crisis coordinator, because the OEM wants as many people as possible to be educated on emergency procedures.

<h2 style="text-align: center;">KSU Basic Crisis Coordinator Training (classes are typically 90 minutes)</h2>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basics of Emergency Management Emergency Response Operations CPR/AED/Basic First Aid Campus Fire Safety Civilian Response to Active Shooter 	<p>Examples of electives (need 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Weather Service StormSpotter Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) Disaster Psychology Students in Conflict Bomb Threat Management 	<p>FEMA Online Course: ICS 100.He: Introduction to the Incident Command System for Higher Education, introduces the Incident Command System (ICS).</p>

Figure 1: KSU Basic Crisis Coordinator Training Classes

In addition to the modules, the OEM sponsors and encourages participation in various exercises. Several library personnel have been involved in many of these campus exercises, which included bomb threat exercises intended to test campus and local police responses; a hazardous material spill simulation; fire drills testing the use of shield doors in the new health science building; and a vaccine dispensing exercise on campus. The OEM also provides a storm spotter class, and KSU became the first public university in Georgia to complete the National Weather Service's (NWS) StormReady Program standards by adding more weather radios, one of which is monitored by a librarian (Boorstein, 2014).

An additional opportunity to compliment and expand on the OEM training is the campus Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. Three librarians completed CERT training in their county, and one of them helped start the campus CERT program and serves as a trainer. The skills learned through CERT and the Crisis Coordinator program are not limited to helping the library. Staff can be ready to assist in disasters on campus, in their community, and even at their homes. Encouraging employees to be trained in emergency preparedness is a great benefit to society, because even if someone leaves for another place of employment soon after completing the program, the investment in training is worth it by increasing the number of people who can contribute to the preparedness of another institution or community.

Emergency Training at the Library

Just as Kapucu and Khosa (2012) stressed the development of a campus culture of preparedness needing a multi-departmental and multi-divisional team to be formed with the campus leadership's support, a library should also have its own team made up of members from various service areas and positions with their top administrator's backing. A team comprised of only one area of the library, such as the Access Services' staff, may miss out on the expertise of others and feel the pressure of the full responsibility of emergency preparedness solely on their shoulders. Having representatives from all areas of the library will help spread the knowledge gained through creating plans and training. If library administration is not the initiator of emergency management efforts, then getting buy-in from the top leaders of the library is vital to support the time and resources needed to start and maintain a program. The dean of the KSU Library System is a great supporter of efforts at improving the library system's emergency readiness and encourages staff to be involved in the Crisis

Coordinator program.

For the first several years of its existence, the library's Disaster Response and Recovery Committee (DRRC) met annually to revise its emergency procedures, but the desire grew to meet more regularly and increase training. The opportunity for some of the committee members to go through the campus's Crisis Coordinator program helped, but library staff overall felt there was a need to do more to be ready to respond to possible emergencies or disasters. The library building's lead crisis coordinator, who was also the disaster committee's chair for several years, started planning tabletop exercises and drills influenced by his experiences with the crisis coordinator program.

Topics of the training are derived from comments and feedback from the staff, brainstorming sessions with the DRRC, and the opinion of the lead CC. In the beginning, the lead CC took on the planning of training on his own, but as many more library staff complete the CC program modules, they add ideas on what topics should be addressed and how. Due to the variety of emergencies that libraries may face, it is advisable to create a list of training goals to strategically plan a schedule. For example, at KSU the library crisis coordinators are focused on immediate emergency response procedures, while the library's emergency preparedness committee is expected to concentrate on salvage procedures and business continuity issues.

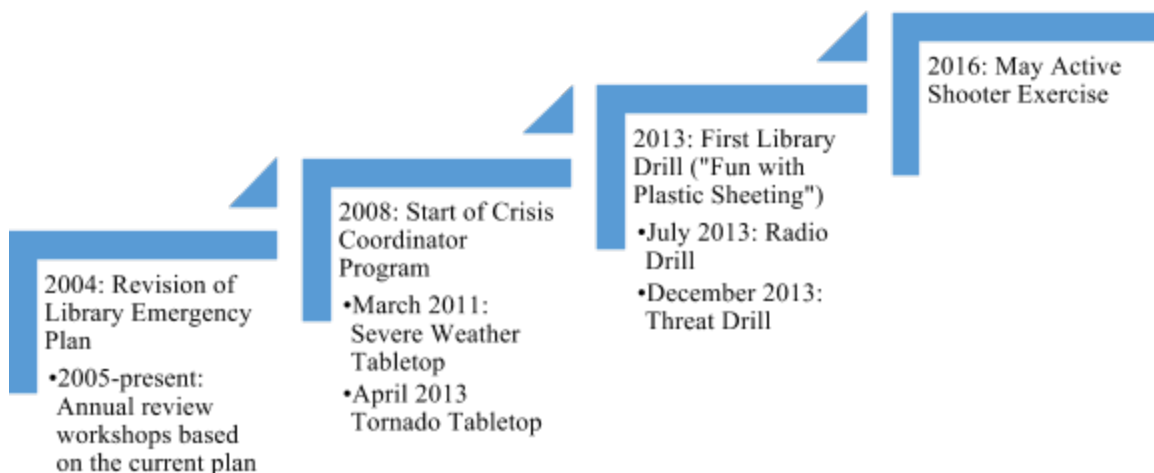


Figure 2: Timeline of Library Training

Tabletop Exercises

A great introduction to training exercises is having a tabletop. These are fairly simple to organize and plan. One of the first exercises conducted at the KSU Library System was a tabletop that involved staff viewing laminated floor maps and marking how they would check their areas before exiting the building during a fire alarm. This tabletop was a way to make reviewing the evacuation procedures more interactive, versus the previous practice of reviewing the steps through PowerPoint slides or pages in the emergency plan. This tabletop got participants familiar with the floor plans and locations of fire extinguishers and exits.

Another way to run a tabletop exercise is by preparing a scenario and a series of questions for the participants to consider and discuss. This can be done by having one person present the scenario and questions to the whole audience using PowerPoint or by having the attendees divide up into groups and receive the scenario and list of questions to answer within their groups. The latter option may be best for a large number of participants. The scenario should start from the beginning of an incident, such as a campus alert announcement about a threat, and conclude with asking key lessons learned through the exercise and identifying what may help improve response in the future. The KSU OEM conducted an active shooter tabletop. Example questions included: What should you do if you get an alert that someone has been spotted with a gun on campus? What procedures should you follow when an active shooter is in your building? If the press contacts you, then what should you say? What should you do when the police arrive in your area during the incident?

Drills

After completing a few tabletops, staff may be ready to be more active and try out some skills they have learned in classes or the procedures from emergency plans. Drills require more time to plan than tabletops because of the need to consider safety precautions, equipment, and proper notifications and permission. It is best to find a time and space to avoid disrupting patrons or services. The following is an example of a drill KSU Library staff conducted at the library and at an ACRL conference session:

“Fun with Plastic Sheeting” drill –Many libraries purchase rolls of plastic sheeting when investing in some emergency supplies, but do staff know to actually use these rolls to help mitigate water damage? Participants are verbally told that a severe weather scenario is causing damage to the building’s roof and causing concern about possible leaks in a section of the book shelves. Staff must

figure out how much plastic sheeting to use, how to cover up the shelves, and the best ways to secure the sheeting (scissors and duct tape are located near the plastic sheeting storage area). When the drill was run at KSU, the team completed the task, but had some difficulty getting around the top rails that secured the rows of shelves together. They mentioned that having additional ladders or step-stools would have been helpful. The team also experimented with different ways of protecting the shelves, such as covering one row at a time or using several long sheets going over the top of multiple rows of shelving. Drills can be fun and educational activities to test equipment or procedures and discover what else the library may need to add to its emergency supplies.

Emergency Radio drill – This drill allows staff to test their skills using a tool, in this case the emergency radio. Most of the crisis coordinators are assigned an emergency radio, but many of the library staff do not have a chance to practice using them. This drill was designed to get staff comfortable with using the radios and practice working in teams.

First, notify the campus emergency department when the drill will take place to avoid any confusion. Rather than just have people go to different areas of the building and practice talking to each other, create a situation where they need to use the radios to accomplish a task. For example, tell them it is “Take your pet to work day” at the library and one coworker cannot find his missing pets. Animal toys (KSU used rubber snakes) can be purchased at a dollar store and then hidden in a few places in the library building. If the drill can take place on a day or during hours when the library is closed to the public, then that would be best. If that is not possible, then to avoid any potential problems, it may be best to hide the toy animals in areas only staff could access. Participants should work in teams of two and search the building, using the radios to ask questions, declare a room has been searched, or announce they have found the missing pets. Each person should use the radio at least once. After all the toy pets have been found, conduct a brief feedback meeting to share what worked and what were some of the challenges. Again, planning and running these drills can be fun, but it is important to stress that all precautions should be taken to avoid scaring anyone, causing injuries, or calls to police. The purpose of these drills and other types of exercises is to allow people to practice skills and test procedures in a safe environment.



Figure 3: Radio and Toy Snake for Exercise

Simulations

News stories of workplace violence and KSU's own experience with lockdowns prompted the DRRC to plan an exercise on responding to an immediate threat in the building. The challenge was to design an experience that would give participants the chance to react to a situation that would not put anyone in the position of getting hurt. The point of this low-impact simulation is to get staff to think about what they would do if a threat has been identified. The exercise conducted was one part discussion and one part simulation and took place during the winter break period in December 2013 when few students would be in the library.

Divide participants into two groups and place them in two different meeting rooms. Give each group the same scenario (verbally or on paper). The one used at KSU was that a former cataloger has been making threats through email and voice messages to library personnel concerning the demise of

the physical card catalog she had worked so hard maintaining. Ask the groups how they would respond after receiving these threats. After five minutes, give the groups an update that the former cataloger has been spotted in the building and people can hear yelling and the sounds of possible gunfire. The groups should respond. Example of actions may include locking the door or barricading the door from the inside with desks and turning out the lights. One person should act as the threat (dressing in a crazy outfit is optional) and go to both rooms multiple times trying the door handles and peeking inside, yelling threats, etc. The person should not enter the room for safety reasons to avoid any “fight” response by the participants. The exercise ends with the announcement that the threat had been neutralized. All participants should come together and discuss what they did and how they could improve their response. Questions to prompt the group can include asking, what if the person making the threat was a current employee, or how would people respond if they were in their own office or at one of the service desks. Although safety concerns prevent staff from truly acting out this situation, the members do have the chance to consider their options if there really is an active shooter or similar threat and review the procedures of the current emergency plan.

Simulations that involve more hands-on training for violent threats should involve campus safety personnel and require more time to plan and coordinate the exercise. In 2016, KSU’s Chief Information Officer (CIO) encouraged the KSU Library System and the OEM to conduct a simulated active shooter exercise to take place in the Sturgis Library during the May break period. The director of OEM made announcements about the drill through the campus email system and visited personnel in the other departments located in the library building to ensure they knew what would be happening and to invite their staff to join the exercise. Details of the simulation were released to building occupants prior to the exercise date, and a safety briefing was scheduled on the morning of that day. Other precautions included closing the building to non-participants until after the exercise, stationing OEM staff in front of the building to remind employees of the simulation, notifying county police in case anyone calls 911, and assigning a safety officer and council to be present. The simulation consisted of an OEM employee firing a gun with blanks and testing the reaction of the people in the building. In the safety briefing, the OEM director asked people to practice the run or hide procedures, but not the “fight” option in order to maintain the safety of all involved. The person with the gun fired it several times while walking around all floors of the library and also tried to enter some of the rooms. People hid and secured themselves in offices or classrooms. During the debriefing immediately following the

exercise, the OEM staff said they did not see anyone while the shooting was taking place because everyone did so well in finding a hiding spot and staying in that secured area. Someone did mention that, if an individual had delayed their response, then they would have been face-to-face with the “shooter.” The OEM director stated the simulation was a success before it even started because it prompted the building personnel to consider and discuss with their coworkers what they would do in an active shooter situation and to become more familiar with their building.

Workshops

As for training for the whole staff, the KSU Library DRRC annually conducts multiple workshops to give an overview of emergency procedures. These workshops are planned at different times of the day and week to accommodate those who work weeknights or weekends. A quiz is given a week before the workshops to prepare staff for the topics being addressed, let them test themselves on their level of preparedness, and encourage attendance. The workshops spend most of the time reviewing evacuations, shelter-in situations, and lockdowns while also providing a background on emergency preparedness at the library and on campus. The effectiveness of these workshops has not been formally assessed, but people have given positive feedback. Administering pre- and post-tests in the future may help determine the library’s level of preparedness and the usefulness of these workshops.

Additional Training Opportunities

Whether an institution provides training or not, opportunities exist for librarians to get trained or advance their preparedness skills. As mentioned earlier, CERT is a highly recommended program to complete. A commitment of about 20 hours of class time is required. FEMA has a webpage with details on the program and a search for local groups by zip code at <https://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams>. Speaking of FEMA, the agency provides several free online training courses as well as workshops. More extensive training is offered through FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute, located in Emmitsburg, Maryland. There is an application process, but the classes are free. For those unable to travel to Emmitsburg, the EMI can provide training workshops at locations by request. Three librarians and two other KSU crisis coordinators attended EMI’s three day Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Higher Education course at a nearby university. Personnel from several other area universities attended. The workshop concluded with a simulation of a disaster on a

campus where participants had to use cell phones to communicate with teams and allocate resources. A few individuals prepared a briefing and responded to questions in a mock press conference.

Emergency Training in Practice

In the years since the KSU Library System Disaster Response and Recovery Committee formed and the implementation of the Crisis Coordinator program, staff members experienced various incidents which included tornado warnings, evacuations, lockdowns, and suspicious packages. Each incident provided a chance for library personnel to use their preparedness training and reveal areas where improvements are needed.

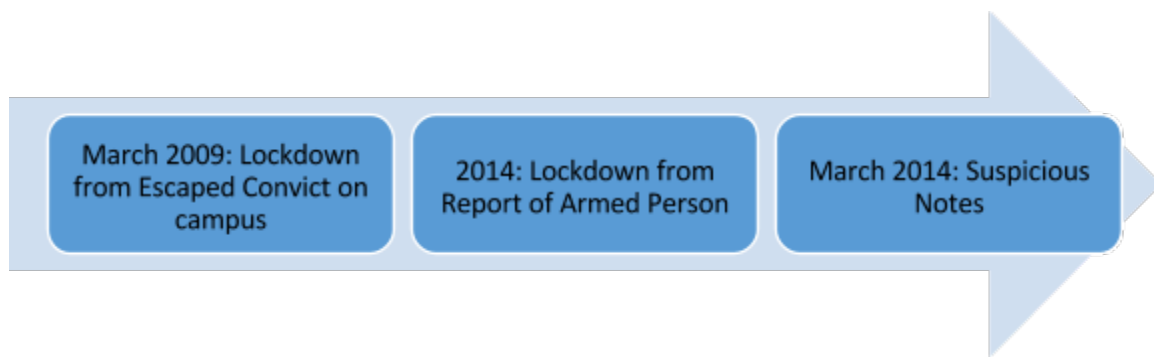


Figure 4: Timeline of KSU Incidents

Lockdowns

The Kennesaw campus experienced two occasions when it had to initiate lockdown procedures. The first was when a convict, nicknamed “Little Houdini,” escaped from a patrol car parked at the Waffle House next to campus in March 2009. Although lockdowns are mentioned during crisis coordinator training, the procedures of how to truly lock down buildings and the campus prior to this incident were never discussed. In the library, and other places on campus, staff were confused about allowing people to enter or leave the building and how to secure main entrance areas. The situation lasted for two hours. The convict was captured over a week later in Florida, but this incident revealed some weaknesses in plans and prompted the need to clarify lockdown procedures. The second lockdown occurred in 2014, starting with a report of an armed person on the main Kennesaw campus green area. This time, Crisis Coordinators (CCs) received updated training and increased in numbers, which resulted in less confusion about procedures. It was still a tense situation, with several

local police forces responding and searching the campus, but the campus was prepared for this situation. One library CC was at the recreation building when the alert came out and realized she was the only CC available. She took charge by directing students to secure the area. This was a great example to show the importance of having multiple people trained to help out wherever needed. The armed person turned out to be someone wearing a cell-phone holder resembling a gun, but it gave the CCs and the rest of the KSU community the chance to respond to a threat and put into practice training and lessons learned from the last lockdown. Although KSU has not had active shooting incidents on campus, two occurred near the Kennesaw campus: a 2010 shooting at a Penske trucking office and one in 2014 at a FedEx complex. Crisis Coordinators were on standby in case the shootings affected the campus and a lockdown was needed. These cases reminded personnel to be ready to respond to emergencies that occur not only on campus, but also in the local community.

Suspicious Notes

One library crisis coordinator followed the training advice of “if you see something, say something” when mysterious notes were discovered in the library study areas. The notes only read “Be prepared, 3.10.14,” and no one knew who had left them. The library employee reported them to the emergency department and then noticed more of the same notes in the student center. Some students asked staff what the notes meant. While trying to figure out what was going on, someone realized March 10th was Osama Bin Laden’s birthdate. More notes with the same message showed up in a few other buildings. One of the campus police personnel solved the mystery by searching social media sites and coming across the same message from students working in the university’s advising department; the notes were intended to raise awareness of advisement dates. The campus police warned the students responsible for the notes how they could be misinterpreted and to identify their office in future campaigns. The library system had a few other incidents of discovering odd bags or canisters left unattended (one bag even had wires sticking out), but they turned out to have been left behind by maintenance crews. Although these items ended up not being real threats, they show that the increase in training and discussion of preparedness has resulted in staff paying close attention to surroundings and taking precautions. The major cultural shift since the creation of the CC program and increased training is that employees are more familiar with procedures and will not just wait for someone to tell them what to do or be confused about the next steps.

Severe Weather

Georgia is a state that has above-average occurrences of tornadoes. Although library staff have led building occupants to the shelter areas multiple times before the university had the Crisis Coordinator program and the campus emergency department, differences have been noticeable in execution of shelter-in procedures in the past several years. The campus emergency notification system of texts, emails, computer pop-ups, and phone calls give faster warning time to take cover, because sometimes the tornado warning siren is difficult to hear inside the building. The orange crisis vests CCs wear get most people's attention and respect in following directions. The radios improved communication among staff while they direct people on multiple floors to the storm shelter and allow for faster updates from the OEM office. Many staff members pay more attention to weather reports when they hear of possible storms and get in the prepared mindset before the warnings are announced. The most helpful change has been the all-clear messages over the alert system and radios. In the past, staff had to check weather websites or contact campus police to see if they could return to normal business. Reviewing tornado warning procedures with all the staff and having several trained CCs has ensured that at least one person is familiar with what to do from start to finish in a situation. This is especially important for those who work evenings and weekends when less personnel are available in the library and on campus.

Future Plans

One of the major challenges is to continue the momentum of offering workshops and training exercises. Other organizational needs and priorities can cause a delay in planning efforts, and it can be difficult to get back into the exercise routine. Although it is important to continue offering practice on immediate responses to emergencies, education on salvage techniques and business continuity planning is also needed. Alternate and backup leaders among the library crisis coordinators and disaster committee members are needed to assist in planning or take charge when the top leaders experience burnout or are overwhelmed by other job responsibilities. Opportunities to collaborate with other institutions and disaster organizations should also be explored. As mentioned earlier, formal assessment of these workshops and exercises did not occur, except for the occasional verbal feedback and the observations of staff during an incident and reflections afterwards. Exploring the gaps in staff's knowledge and reviewing training priorities for both preparedness and after-disaster actions should take place.

Conclusion

When emergencies or disasters occur, having an emergency plan is a good start, but each library must develop a culture of preparedness to protect people and collections. This article has shown the importance of training and practicing plans by providing an example of how an academic library system changed its approach to preparedness. The training opportunities and resources available from local emergency management agencies such as CERT or federal agencies like FEMA help libraries be better prepared. The specific examples of drills and exercises can be used by other libraries to get their own emergency training program started. At KSU, the success of that first plastic sheeting drill increased the interest among staff for more hands-on activities.

Recommendations for starting and maintaining an emergency management program at a library include: 1) Seek approval and support from library administration; 2) Identify institutional partners such as campus police, emergency department, or environmental safety office; 3) Create or revise a library emergency plan; and 4) Plan and schedule regular review workshops and exercises.

The challenge requires a commitment of time and support. Buy-in from top administration is a must to allow staff the ability to create plans and then devise and run exercises. The safety of libraries' staff and patrons and the protection of collections should be a top priority and that requires a commitment to developing and improving responses to possible threats. It takes time to develop a preparedness culture, and realizing the number of incidents that staff may have not planned or trained for can be overwhelming. Training in emergency management is a journey that helps increase the number of people knowledgeable and experienced to better prepare institutions and communities for when an emergency occurs or disaster strikes.

Glossary

Crisis Coordinator (CC): Individual trained to be an immediate responder to a situation until first responders (police, fire department, etc.) arrive and take charge.

Drills: Exercises that are focused on a single task or function.

Simulations (functional or full-scale exercises): Functional simulations are interactive exercises designed to focus on policies or procedures. Full-scale exercises test the capabilities of people or the agency by creating a field-based simulation to be as close to reality as possible.

Tabletops: Discussion-based exercises that usually involve a series of questions for participants to consider.

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