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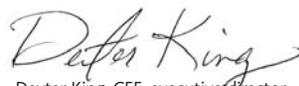


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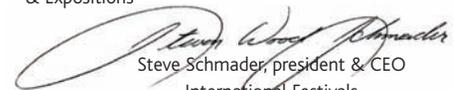
Prepare Today for Tomorrow's Disasters

The only good disaster is the one that never happens. ▶ Long before Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast or the unthinkable terrorist acts of Sept. 11, 2001, the concern for safety and security was considered a standard component of event planning and venue management. Even before the fire in Bradford, England, that killed 56 and left 200 injured, or the crushing deaths of attendees at The Who concert in Cincinnati in 1979, we were acutely aware of the importance of providing a safe and secure environment for those we serve and work with. Even Maslow's Theory states that beyond food and shelter, mankind's primal instincts are concerned with safety and security. ▶ Granted, the sheer magnitude of the above incidents has elevated awareness of this base issue to the forefront of today's societal concerns; the issue requires that we all remain vigilant of our surroundings wherever we are. Being safe and secure is no longer a passive reaction to an incident, but a mindset and practice of pro-activity and preparation. But even these tragic episodes, with their unforgettable magnitude and destruction alone, over time have faded into apathetic oblivion with an attitude of "it will never happen to us." ▶ In the past, being prepared meant having an emergency number to call, and assuming that the respective governments and/or officials would do everything possible to assure the public of protection. Yet in the above cases, that assumption was not enough and business as usual was compromised. In the end, we have learned that the primary responsibility of business response and recovery lies with the private sector, and we must each do our part to prevent catastrophic events or assaults on our industry before they happen. ▶ In that regard, we're pleased to introduce *Venue Safety & Security* magazine, a collaboration of four associations whose vested interests include providing safe and secure environments for their attendees to enjoy themselves. These allied associations are the International Association of Assembly Managers (IAAM), International Festivals and Events Association (IFEA), International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE), and the Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA). ▶ Each of these organizations understands the importance of business viability and business stability for their respective segments of the industry. That is, if our venues of congregation aren't operated with the safety and security of our guests and workers first in mind, our businesses simply won't remain viable. ▶ Regardless of whether you work with an organization or event that relies on a venue such as an arena; amusement park; convention center; exposition; stadium; fair grounds; public park, space or facility; performing arts theater, carnival; or any other type of venue, or are involved from a safety- and security-related position at a local, state or national level — this quarterly magazine is designed to assist you in maintaining a safe and secure environment. ▶ We're glad to have you as part of our audience of readers. If there's anything we can do to make this magazine even more insightful and meaningful for you, please don't hesitate to share your comments with us. It is our common goal to make our businesses and organizations safer and more secure for everyone who works with, performs at, volunteers for and visits our varied venues and events. ▶ We wish you a safe and successful future.


Dexter King, CFE, executive director,
International Association of
Assembly Managers


Bob Johnson, president
Outdoor Amusement
Business Association


Jim Tucker, president & CEO
International Association of Fairs
& Expositions


Steve Schmader, president & CEO
International Festivals
& Events Association



**2603 Eastover Terrace
Boise, Idaho 83706
Phone: (208) 433-0950
Fax: (208) 433-9812
Web: www.ifea.com**

Founded in 1956, the International Festivals & Events Association (IFEA) today is The Premiere Association Supporting and Enabling Festival & Event Professionals Worldwide. In partnership with global affiliates under the umbrellas of IFEA Africa, IFEA Asia, IFEA Australia, IFEA Europe, IFEA Latin America, IFEA Middle East, and IFEA North America the organization's common vision is for "A

Globally United Industry that Touches Lives in a Positive Way through Celebration."

With a target audience that includes all those who produce and support quality celebrations for the benefit of their respective "communities," the IFEA's primary focus is identifying and providing access to the professional resources and networks that will, as stated in our mission, inspire and enable those in our industry to realize their dreams, build community and sustain success through celebration.

The IFEA exists to serve the needs of our entire industry, all those who share our core values of excellence & quality; the sharing of experience, knowledge, creativity and best practices; and the importance of "community" building both locally and globally. Our success lies in the success of those we serve through

professional education, programming, products and resources, networking and representation.

President & CEO
Steven Wood Schmader, CFEE
schmader@ifea.com

Senior Vice President
Kaye Campbell, CFEE
kaye@ifea.com

Director of Communications & Marketing
Nia Forster
nia@ifea.com

CFO, Assistant to the President
Bette Monteith
bette@ifea.com

Director of Advertising & Expo
Shauna Spencer
shauna@ifea.com

Creative & Publications Director
Craig Sarton
craig@ifea.com

Director of Convention Production & Communication Technologies
Tom Frazee
tom@ifea.com

Director of Administrative Operations
Julie Parke
Julie@ifea.com

Director of Membership Services
Beth Petersen
beth@ifea.com



**PO Box 985
Springfield, MO 65801
3043 E Cairo
Springfield, MO 65802
Phone: (417) 862-5771
or (800) 516-0313
Fax: (417) 862-0156
Web: www.fairsandexpos.com**

The International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) is a voluntary, non-profit corporation, organizing state, provincial, regional, and county agricultur-

al fairs, shows, exhibitions and expositions. Its associate members include state and provincial associations of fairs, non-agricultural expositions and festivals, associations, corporations, and individuals engaged in providing products and services to its members, all of whom are interested in the improvement of fairs, shows, expositions and allied fields.

The IAFE began in 1885 with a half dozen fairs. Today, the IAFE represents more than 1,300 fairs around the world, and more than 1,300 members from allied fields. Throughout the years, the IAFE has remained true to its purpose of promoting and encouraging the development and improvement of fairs, shows and expositions.

Its mission is "To represent and facilitate the interest of agricultural fairs, exhibitions and show associations."

President and CEO
Jim Tucker
jimt@fairsandexpos.com

CFO, Director of Meetings and Publications
Max Willis
maxw@fairsandexpos.com

Director of Membership, Sponsorship, and Trade Shows
Steve Siever
steves@fairsandexpos.com

Director of Grants and Special Education
Marla Calico
marlac@fairsandexpos.com

Meeting Planner/Registrar
Kate Turner
katet@fairsandexpos.com

Director of Education and Information Technology
Rachel Stutesmun
rachelst@fairsandexpos.com

Fairs & Expos Managing Editor
Rebekah Lee



**Phone: (407) 681-9444
E-mail: oaba@aol.com
Web: www.oaba.org**

The Outdoor Amusement Business Association, organized as a non-profit trade group in 1965, is the largest association representing the mobile amusement industry. Our members include carnivals, circuses, independent ride owners, food/game concessionaires, rental amusements and others associated with family entertainment. Our members contract with fairs, festivals, community and philanthropic organizations throughout

the U.S. and Canada. Its mission is "To encourage the growth and preservation of the outdoor amusement industry through leadership, legislation, education and membership services."

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**635 Fritz Drive, Suite 100
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Web: www.iaam.org**

The International Association of Assembly Managers is an association whose purpose is to provide leadership,

to educate, to inform and to cultivate friendships among individuals involved in the management, operation and support of public assembly facilities.

IAAM is the world's largest professional association dedicated to issues relevant to the management of public assembly facilities. Members of the association manage public assembly facilities such as amphitheaters, arenas, auditoriums, convention centers/exhibit halls, performing arts venues, stadiums and university complexes; or provide products, services

or attractions to support the industry. IAAM has more than 3,200 members worldwide.

Executive Director
Dexter King, CFE
dexter.king@iaam.org

Director Life Safety & Security
Harold Hansen, CFE
harold-hansen@sbcglobal.net

Life Safety Council Chair
Frank Poe
frank.poe@dallascityhall.com

Editor, Facility Manager
R.V. Baugus
rv.baugus@iaam.org

Legal Counsel
Turner D. Madden, Esquire
tdmadden@verizon.net



President
Ray Larson

COO
Virginia Larson

CFO
Jim Heffel

Editorial Director
Mario Medina

Production Manager
Shannon Thornton

Graphic Design
Barbara Sutton

Production Artist
Andrea Paul

Advertising Sales Manager
Lori Harvey
lharvey@prismdb.com

Advertising Account Manager
Olivia Kim
okim@prismdb.com

Advertising Account Manager
Jonathan E. Maples
jmaples@prismdb.com



Mourners gather at Virginia Tech's War Memorial Chapel for a candlelight vigil on April 17, 2007, a day after the deadliest shooting in modern U.S. history. Photo by Michael Kiernan, courtesy of Virginia Tech University Relations.

10 Ways to Assess Risk

BY THE NUMBERS Following are the 10 most desirable characteristics of a risk assessment methodology.

- 1 Clearly identify the infrastructure sector being assessed.
- 2 Specify the type of security discipline addressed, e.g. physical, information, operations.
- 3 Collect specific data pertaining to each asset.
- 4 Identify critical/key assets to be protected.
- 5 Determine the mission impact of the loss or damage of that asset.
- 6 Conduct a threat analysis and perform assessment for specific assets.
- 7 Perform a vulnerability analysis and assessment to specific threats.
- 8 Conduct analytical risk assessment and determine priorities for each asset.
- 9 Be relatively low cost to train and conduct.
- 10 Make specific, concrete recommendations concerning countermeasures.

Source: Department of Homeland Security.

More Information Sharing Needed, Report Says

IN THE NEWS Information silos among educational institutions, educational staff, mental health providers and public safety officials impede communication and may prevent legitimate information sharing, according to a report prepared in the wake of the shootings at Virginia Tech. At the state and local level, organizations should “utilize technology to improve notification, communication and security systems.”

On a more uplifting note, the report also says, “Promising practices and examples of comprehensive emergency management planning efforts currently exist and are being used across the country,” although it acknowledges that more could be done to disseminate best practices. Other findings:

- The report noted “the importance of, and challenges to, practicing the plan and making sure that everyone in the relevant community (students, faculty, staff and parents, as well as local law enforcement) is aware of appropriate steps to take in an emergency.”
- State and local organizations should “integrate comprehensive all-hazards emergency management planning for schools into overall local and state emergency planning.”

The Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Justice, and Department of Education prepared the report — which includes recommendations at the federal, state and local levels for addressing school violence and mental illness. It is available at the Web site of the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT), a nonprofit think tank whose mission is to inform the public about terrorism prevention and responder preparedness. For more information, visit www.mipt.org.

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Can You Smell that Smell?

PRODUCTS In the months following Sept. 11, the U.S. government spent billions of dollars on the purchase, deployment and training of explosive trace detection (ETD) and explosive detection systems (EDS) for airports and transportation facilities across the country.

Now comes a new type of threat that conventional explosive trace detectors can't detect: liquid explosives, such as the type used in the 1995 failed plot hatched in the Philippines to bomb 12 U.S. commercial jets flying out of Southeast Asia. This incident — as well as the Aug. 10, 2006, U.K. bombing

threat — centered on the used of triacetone triperoxide (TATP).

In response to these threats, the governments of several nations are actively searching for trace detection technology that will identify not only commercial explosives such as TNT and C4 but also improvised explosive materials such as TATP, HMTD, Urea Nitrate and Ammonium Nitrate. Companies such as Scent Detection Technologies (SDT) have developed a formable solution to counter these new threats. SDT's High-Frequency Quartz Crystal Microbalance (HF-QCM) technology

can sniff out trace levels of explosive chemicals at a lower cost in comparison to existing explosive trace detection technologies.

The technology doesn't employ radioactive sources, as is the case with IMS-based techniques, X-ray and other CT scanners. It's a combination of several scientific disciplines, which digitally recreate the mammalian olfactory processes. The trace detection technology can be used to screen clothing, baggage, ID cards, tickets, cargos and containers for any trace level of explosive chemicals. For more information, visit www.scent-tech.com.

The Center for Police Organizational Studies is offering a seminar, Special Events Management, in October in San Diego, Calif., and Key West, Fla. For more information, including curriculum, instructor bios, additional dates and more, visit www.cps.org.

AVSS to Offer Intensive Training

EDUCATION You must do everything possible to protect lives and property in your facility — and that's exactly what IAAM's Academy for Venue Safety & Security (AVSS) is designed to help you do.

AVSS offers five full days of intensive training in security planning and life safety management for the public assembly venue industry. Slated for August 19-24 in Fort Worth, Texas, AVSS takes partic-



ipants through an in-depth approach to many of the types of emergencies that can and will occur at public assembly facilities. "There's nothing more important than pre-planning, because of the seriousness of what we are trying to do. AVSS is a major component of that preparation," says Larry B. Perkins, CFE, assistant general manager of the RBC Center/Carolina Hurricanes and past president of IAAM.

Get with the Program

EDUCATION Trinity Technology Group, a provider of professional technical services, is offering a way for public assembly managers to bolster their safety and security programs. The Fairfax, Va.-based company's program, "All Hazard Contingency Readiness and

Infrastructure Security Information System," is designed to help facilities, first responders and private corporations efficiently respond to emergencies and comply with all FEMA and DHS requirements. For information, visit www.trinitytechnologygroup.com.



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Slipping Standards

PERSPECTIVE “In several defense cases I’ve handled involving crowd misbehavior at stadiums and concert venues, opposing experts have claimed that the facilities had violated the standards of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

“The NFPA does significant good, and some of their standards for fire suppression systems are widely adopted by various public agencies and officials. However, not all of their standards are universally accepted.

“The NFPA requires large

facilities to undergo a Life Safety Audit if they use general admission seating. I thoroughly support having a detailed safety audit conducted for every facility. However, the Life Safety Audit, if mandated by a local government official, involves a daunting and comprehensive document that could take weeks to prepare.

“Through all my research into these audits, many facility managers have never heard of them, and I haven’t been able to find a completed example — even after asking for one from the NFPA. Thus, can it be an industry standard when there are few if any praction-

ers in the industry who could even comply with the alleged standard?

“The NFPA regulations, in my perspective, lost a significant amount of their teeth when they were significantly changed after The Station fire in Rhode Island in 2004. Prior to the fire, some of the key safety standards applied to public assembly facilities with an occupancy load of more than 1,000 people.

“However, after the fire the same standards were changed to facilities with occupancy loads of 250. Does that mean that the initial ‘standards’ were wrong and needed to be downgraded? If the ‘standard’ was reduced 75

percent after one incident, does that cast doubt on to all the associated standards?

“While I’m not attacking the NFPA, I am trying to highlight a key point: Industry standards are developed by the industry, not an external organization. My rule of thumb is that if seven out of 10 facilities in a region behave in a given manner, then it’s probably an industry standard — regardless of what external organizations might say.”

Gil Fried is chairperson of the management department and coordinator of the internships/graduate program in sport/facility management at the University of New Haven’s School of Business.



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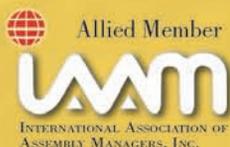
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Emergency generators are often the last line of defense — but they're among the most important safety measures.



Generating Safety

By Mark Henricks

If American Airlines Center ever loses power, John Hancock knows exactly what will happen. “We have a Caterpillar 2500 kilowatt, 12-cylinder diesel powered backup generator,” says the vice president of safety and security for the Dallas arena. “What it’s designed to do and will do is operate all the egress lighting and the entire smoke evaluation system for up to four hours.”

The situation is typical for permanent assembly venues like American Airlines Center, which usually own on-premises generator sets, or gensets, that will provide short-term power to emergency systems. For longer power outages, they may lease mobile generators on standby to be delivered if necessary.

Mobile venues, meanwhile, are more likely to have larger, truck-mounted mobile generators that can power their entire operation. Mobile venue generators are also more likely to be prime generators that can provide their rated output 24 hours a day, while permanent venues may have standby gensets that operate only for a few hours continuously before needing to be shut down.

Mobile venues tend to own their own gensets, according to Tom Barry, rental manager of power systems for Holt Caterpillar, the nation’s largest Cat dealer, located in Irving, Texas. Permanent venues bring in mobile gensets, typically rented from people like Barry, to provide backup power for large shows or in emergencies.

Local building and fire codes drive basic decisions about emergency power. Depending on the area of the country, a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ▲ Local building and fire codes drive basic decisions about emergency power.
- ▲ Large generators need to be refueled a couple of times a day, and the greater the load they are under, the bigger the volume of fuel they consume.
- ▲ Other sources of potential power include gasoline, natural gas and solar energy.

venue may be required to have supply enough emergency power to do as little as keep the lights on or as much as supply the building's entire energy needs, Barry says. For anything more, events must bring in their own power if they want the show to go on during a power outage.

"It's driven by the code," he says of permanent venue emergency power systems. "They do the bare minimum, and that's why we bring in gensets for shows."

Bare minimum varies according to local laws and venue decisions. Egress lighting is typically a floor. Beyond that, venues may power elevators and escalators to allow people to exit the building in the case of a fire. Smoke evacuation is another common priority. "The smoke evacuation is probably the most important aspect," Hancock says. "That's our biggest concern, fire or smoke."

Public address systems, security cameras and access control systems may all also be

considered essential systems for emergency backup. Some venues may do as fire and police departments do and have small generators to power chargers for batteries to keep emergency radios, cellular phones and flashlights charged up.

Beyond that, venues may elect to power air conditioning, cash registers so business can continue unabated and even refrigerators to keep perishable food from spoiling and sound systems to keep music going. Otherwise, says Barry, "When they lose power, the ice is going to melt and you're going to hear them strumming dead guitars."

Keep it Going

Fuel isn't necessarily a top-of-mind issue when venues begin planning for power in an emergency but it quickly becomes more important — especially when plans begin to stretch beyond a few hours. "How are you

going to fuel it, and where are you going to get the fuel?" sums up Barry.

Large generators need to be refueled a couple of times a day, and the greater the load they are under, the bigger the volume of fuel they consume. "A generator set will put out whatever power you draw out of it," Barry says. "If you only turn on half the lights, you'll take half the power."

In the case of diesel-fueled generators, this means refueling trucks need to have ready access to wherever the generator is located. In the event of a weather-related emergency such as a flood, this can present sizable issues for venues to address.

Other sources of potential power include gasoline — which is usually restricted to small gensets, such as those used to power battery chargers — natural gas and solar. Natural gas-fueled generators can simplify the fueling issue if they are located where they can be connected to reliable gas sup-

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A Closer Look at Gensets

Whether portable or mobile, large gensets are exceptionally complex pieces of equipment. They may include sophisticated transforming and computer-controlled switching equipment, natural gas pressurization compressors, extensive sound insulation and muffler baffles and a wide array of other seemingly ancillary equipment. The large diesel engines that power many gensets — both mobile and permanent — typically feature oil- and water-heating and circulation systems so that they are ready for instant startup at any time.

Testing and maintenance of gensets is a significant consideration. Gensets may be tested anywhere from weekly to monthly, for anywhere from a few seconds to a few hours. Maintenance and testing are typically done by equipment vendors, although mobile venues may rely on their own staff to do the work. Some venues schedule longer tests to take place during periods of peak power demand, so they'll save money on electricity purchases from their local utility.

plies. Solar is suitable for remote locations, but Barry says he isn't aware of any rental solar backup power.

Batteries can form an important part of emergency power backup as well, in the form of uninterruptible power supplies that switch on instantly in the event of a power

failure. This keeps essential systems going for a few seconds or minutes, until motorized generators can start up and begin contributing power. Ideally, a UPS system can make a power outage almost unnoticeable to patrons of the venue.

Emergencies are hard to predict, and the

duration of an emergency power outage is likewise going to vary widely. In the wake of major hurricanes, power may come back to some areas almost immediately, and be out in others for many months, Barry says. "You think it's going to be out forever but power from the grid can come back in certain areas very quickly. It just depends on the damage to the infrastructure," he says.

Temporary power in an emergency is a many-faceted issue. While venues naturally hope they will rarely need the backup power they provide, Murphy's Law usually sees to it that things are otherwise. "More often than not," says Barry, "if the lights are going to go out, they'll go out during a show." **VSS**

Mark Henricks is a freelance writer whose byline has appeared in more than 100 publications, including *American Way*, *Entrepreneur* and *The Wall Street Journal*.

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What you must know about the liability time bomb called underage drinking.



To Serve and Protect

By Steven A. Adelman

Every venue that offers alcohol struggles to serve their patrons while not over serving to the point of intoxication. Lawyers routinely hear event managers complain that short of someone throwing up or falling down, they cannot identify a drunk during the brief exchange necessary to buy the next round of beers. Nonetheless, under “dram shop” law, most states hold alcohol servers liable for getting a patron drunk if they injure someone because of their impairment.

Where patrons under the drinking age are involved, venues must be even more vigilant. In fact, the trend is closer to a zero-tolerance rule than ever.

For venue liability arising from alcohol sales, there is good news and bad news. The good news is that a huge dram shop verdict was recently overturned on appeal. In *Verni v. Harry M. Stevens Inc.*, a New Jersey jury awarded \$110 million against Aramark for repeatedly serving a man who then caused an accident that left a little girl paralyzed.¹

The case will be retried because the jury should not have heard about a “culture of intoxication” at Giants Stadium that was not directly related to the accident. The next jury can hear that Daniel Lanzaro drank so much at a Giants game that he still had a whopping .266 blood alcohol concentration several hours later, but they will not learn about Aramark’s “standard practice” of serving even visibly drunk people until they were “excessively intoxicated.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ▲ Most states hold alcohol servers liable for getting a patron drunk if they injure someone because of their impairment.
- ▲ Virtually no amount of fault by an underage drinker will protect the server from liability.
- ▲ Protect your venue and patrons by enrolling in alcohol service training programs.

“Because nearly every party involved in live entertainment is a well-insured ‘deep pocket,’ everyone gets sued.”

If the good news is that one company survived one verdict involving an intoxicated adult, the bad news is that the law regarding underage drinkers is less forgiving than ever. This is a concern for more than just beer vendors. Because nearly every party involved in live entertainment is a well-insured “deep pocket,” everyone gets sued. In Verni, for example, the defendants included not only Aramark, but also Giants Stadium and the National Football League.

Who Is at Fault?

The most recent underage drinking case comes from Massachusetts. In Nunez v. Carrabba's Italian Grill Inc., the court held that instead of having to prove that a server negligently served a visibly intoxicated

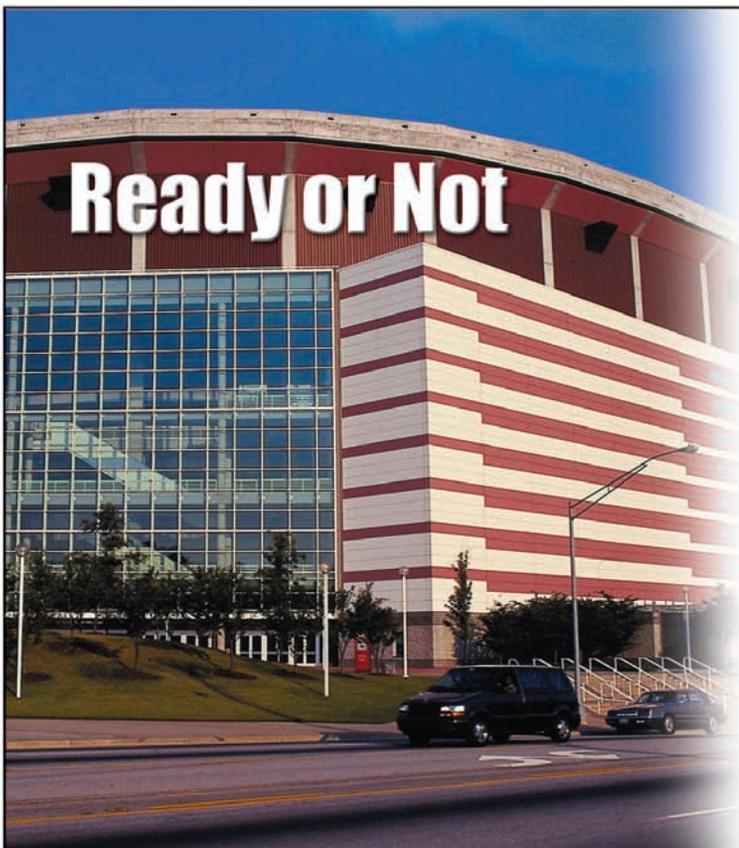
person, the victim only has to prove that the server should have known the patron was under 21 years old.² Unlike a venue's duty not to serve obviously intoxicated adults, it does not matter whether an underage drinker looks drunk or not.

Eighteen-year-old Robert Nunez had worked at Carrabba's as a waiter. From 7 to 9:30 p.m., the staff gave him dinner and half a dozen drinks. He went home, then at 11:30 p.m. he drove to a nightclub. He used to work there too, so the bartender served him a couple more free drinks. Sometime between midnight and 1 a.m., Robert Nunez headed home. He was not wearing a seatbelt; he was speeding through an intersection; he was hit by a car that ran a red light; his blood alcohol content at the time of the accident was

0.13. The restaurant filed a motion to get out of the case. It was denied.

Nunez does not reconcile the conflicting views regarding underage adult drinking. On one hand, the law treats people under 21 as peculiarly susceptible to the effects of alcohol and less able than adults to decide how much they can safely consume. On the other hand, underage adults are trusted to vote, sign contracts, get married without parental consent, serve on a jury, and buy a gun. On these subjects, their judgment is evidently more trustworthy.

Massachusetts' hard line against serving underage drinkers is typical. Since 2000, seven other states have upheld liability against venues whose servers knew or should have known they were serving underage drinkers.³ But there are excep-



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tions. In Iowa, a plaintiff must prove the server knew he was serving someone less than 21, and in Louisiana, a venue may have no liability for serving underage drinkers at all.⁴

A casual attitude towards underage drinking is a liability time bomb. The Surgeon General estimates that there are 11 million underage drinkers in this country. The likelihood that underage people are drinking while enjoying live entertain-

ment at your facility is so high that rather than asking whether you are serving underage drinkers, ask how many. As a result, the liability question is not whether you will be served with a lawsuit involving someone under twenty-one, but when.

Protecting Yourself

One alternative to risking lives (and facing catastrophic jury verdicts) is to enroll in an alcohol service training program. TEAM Coalition (www.teamcoalition.org) works with sports and entertainment venues to refine their alcohol policies and help train event-day staff. One particularly important aspect of TEAM's training is coordinating alcohol vendors with ushers and event staff to prevent legal drinkers from buying drinks, then passing them to underage friends outside the concession area. TIPS, an alcohol awareness program targeted to concessionaires, also teaches techniques

to prevent underage drinking (www.gettips.com).

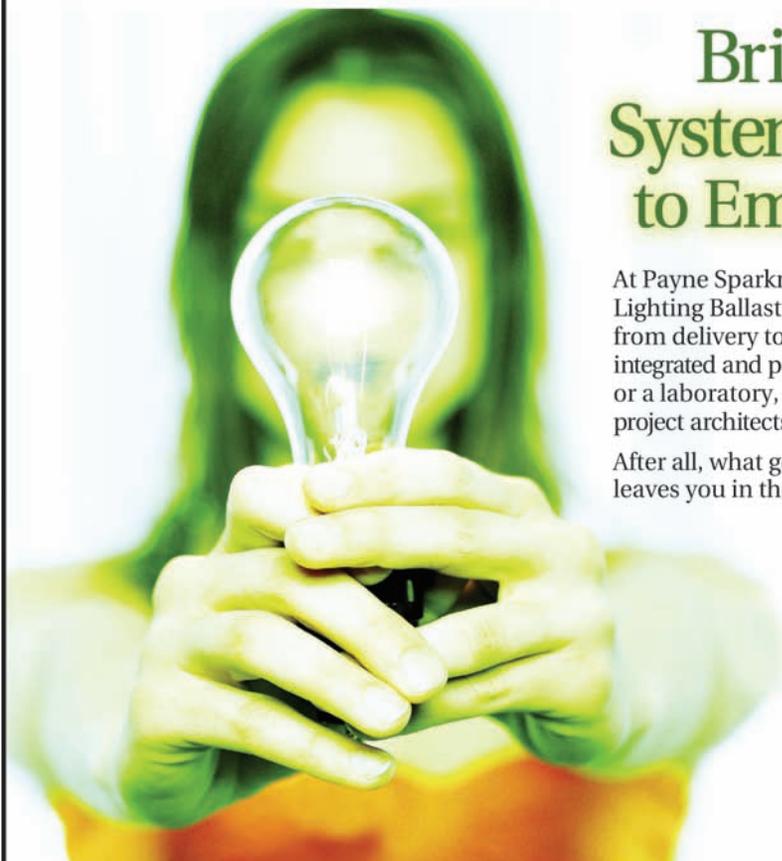
In addition to training your servers, technology can help. For states whose driver's licenses have bar codes, scanners can detect fake ID's. Even a simple colored light can show where a laminate has been cut or a hologram has been altered.

Even the best lawyer cannot keep a public assembly facility from getting sued. Accidents and litigation are facts of life when you invite thousands of people to your event and encourage them to lower their inhibitions and have a good time. But in the current legal environment, alcohol and young people simply do not mix. **VSS**

Steven A. Adelman is an attorney practicing in the areas of venue safety and entertainment law in Phoenix, and a frequent writer and speaker on risk management in public assembly facilities. He can be reached at sadelman@rcdmlaw.com.

FOOTNOTES

1. Verni ex rel. Burstein v. Harry M. Stevens, Inc., 387 N. J. Super. 160, 903 A.2d 475 (2006), cert. denied, 189 N. J. 429, 915 A.2d 1052 (2007). The total judgment against four Aramark defendants was \$109,667,750.
2. Nunez v. Carrabba's Italian Grill, Inc., 448 Mass. 170, 859 N.E.2d 801 (2007).
3. South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Connecticut, Florida, Kentucky, and Mississippi.
4. Garafalo v. Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity, 616 N.W.2d 647 (Iowa 2000); Berg v. Zummo, 763 So.2d 57 (La. 2000).



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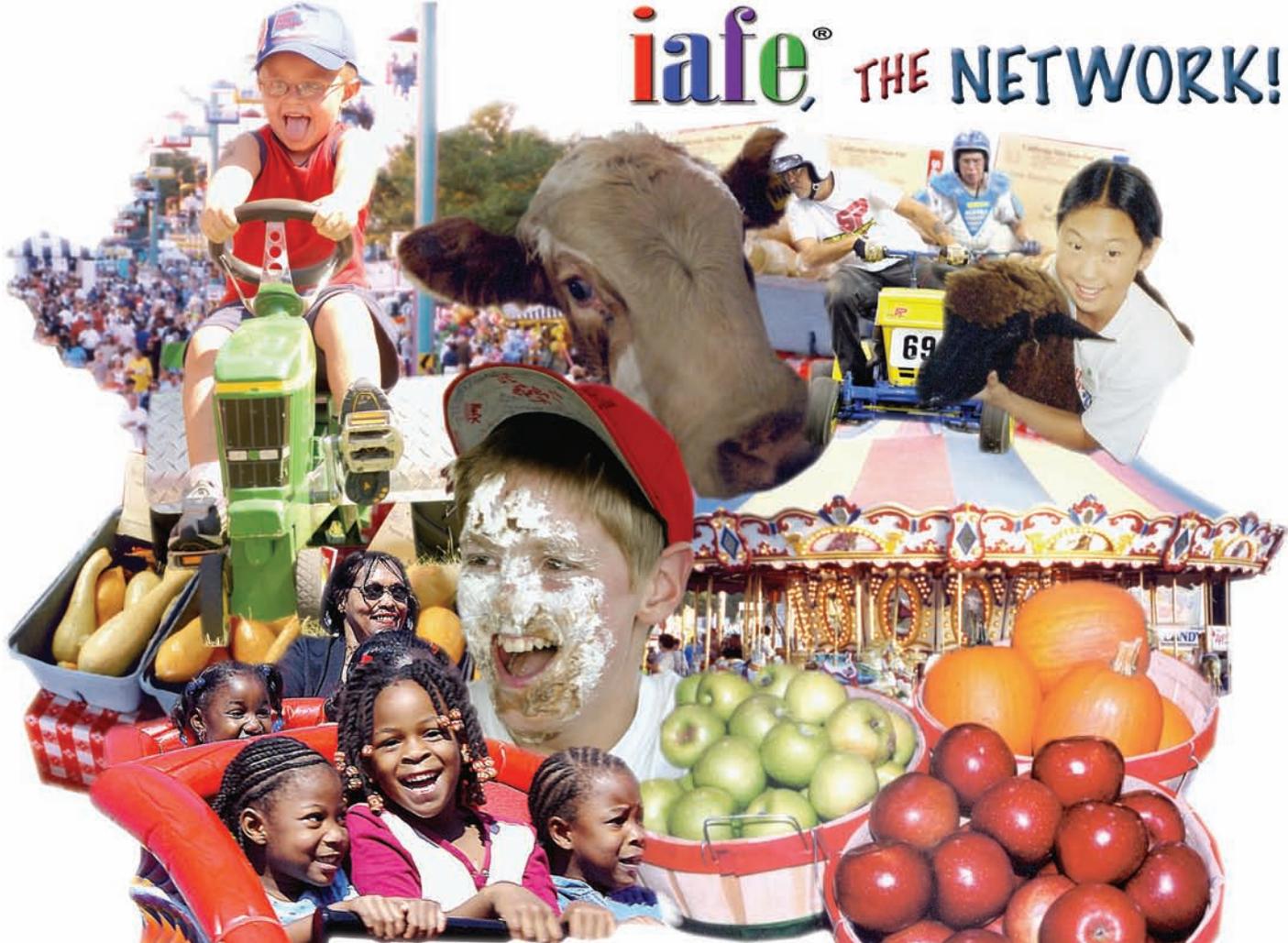
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ensuring that
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A Recipe for Food Safety

By Karen Lancaster

Hot dogs. Nachos. Fried Twinkies. Venue managers know that for many attendees, it's all about the grub. "Universally, food is an important part of the entertainment experience, no matter what the venue," says Marla Calico, former manager of the Ozark Empire Fair in Springfield, Mo., and now on staff at the International Association of Fairs and Expositions. "And as venue managers, one of our most important responsibilities is ensuring the ultimate safety of our guests, including the food they consume on our premises."

The National Restaurant Association points to a 2006 study from the Michigan State University's Food Safety Policy Center that surveyed Americans' ideas concerning food safety. Ninety-six percent of respondents said they trusted themselves to ensure the food they prepare at home is safe. However, when asked if they trust others to handle their food, their confidence rate dropped to 62 percent.

So how do venue managers go about reassuring consumers that food obtained at their events is OK to eat? And more importantly, how do you ensure that food sold at our venues is safe for consumption?

"Communication is key to the process," says Pat Moroney, director of concessions for the Miami-Dade County Fair and Exposition. In her current position, Moroney works with 162 food vendors who serve nearly 700,000 attendees of an 18-day event each spring. "We have high expectations for our vendors, but they know they can count on us to maintain high standards, as well. So it's a two-way street. They know our door is always open for them with any problems or suggestions they may have."

Over the years, the longtime industry veteran has developed a multifaceted approach in producing management communications with the group's food concessionaires. A participant's manual is sent out to the vendors in advance of the event, covering details on topics including:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

▲ Communication among concessionaires, health inspectors and employees is key to ensuring that food is safe for consumption.

▲ The National Independent Concessionaires Association's committees and programs help foster that communication.

SHARPENING SKILLS FOR FOOD PROS

Food safety certification is a growing requirement in many jurisdictions. In fact, two-thirds of states now require that concessionaires be staffed with at least one manager who has earned the credentials. One of the best-known providers of certifications and other related training is the National Restaurant Association, who created the ServSafe program. "We work to reduce the risks of this industry through education," says LeAnn Chuboff, director of science and regulatory relations for the association's Chicago-based Educational Foundation.

Nationally recognized, the association's ServSafe Food Protection Manager Certification has been awarded to more than 2.6 million professionals. The program is accredited by the American National Standards Institute — Conference for Food Protection. Designed to meet the needs of a diverse workforce, written examination booklets are offered in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, French Canadian and large print.

In addition to formal certification, the group offers broad-based training and curriculum, developed through cooperative efforts with regulatory agencies to understand their regionalized requirements. Materials are available in book format, online, through videos and instructor supplements. The group even offers free activities updating the latest health issues for food purveyors.

"Food safety impacts your customers, your employees, and your business," says Chuboff. "With so much on the line, the right preparation means everything. But most importantly, we're all into it for the common good — that's our priority.

For more information on the ServSafe program for your area, contact your state's restaurant association.

General information. Contracts and forms, check-in/checkout procedures, hours of operation, maps and location codes, fair info for guests' questions, delivery/package info, and utilities/service.

Regulations. Contingency plans for bad weather, securing location in case of emergency, other facility security guidelines and tent permits.

Food regulations. Local health inspector policies, stand maintenance, drain lines, ice and refrigeration, rules regarding animals, handling refuse and protecting public from unsightly areas.

Additionally, Moroney and her staff conduct a meeting with concessionaires after they arrive and prior to an event's opening to review operating procedures, ensure that everyone is comfortable with the guidelines and answer questions.

During the meeting, health inspectors are ready with their paperwork to be completed by each vendor and answer questions

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regarding licensing procedures. “We give the inspectors an office in which to head-quarter, offer them maps and directories of vendor locations, and even provide staff liaison coordinators to assist them.”

Employees are also on hand to explain the organization’s own separate follow-up inspections — which are conducted throughout the duration of the event — in addition to those of the health inspectors.

It’s also for the benefit of all parties involved that the National Independent Concessionaires Association was formed 15 years ago. The group has essentially created a new communications network between vendors and venue managers, says executive director Dave Schlabach.

“Among other programs that serve our members, we’ve put together a communications committee that meets twice a year to talk about the issues we all deal with,” he says. “It’s a way to come together and

Resource Center

▲ **The National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (www.dineout.org) has information on the ServSafe certification and other training curriculum.**

▲ **National Independent Concessionaires Association (www.nicainc.org) has information on food industry safety programs**

▲ **For information about publications and programs from federal agencies, visit www.foodsafety.gov.**

▲ **Suggested reading: *Bizmanualz ISO 22000 Food Safety Policies, Procedures & Forms*, published by Bizmanualz.com; and *International Food Safety Handbook: Science, International Regulation, and Control*, by Vanderheijden, published by CRC.**

pass on information, hear from managers’ concerns, and create solutions to any challenges that may be occurring in the

workplace. We think we do a good job of working together to continually make things better.”

Training for everyone is crucial for success, and it’s far easier to know how to deal with problems ahead of time instead of in a crisis management situation, Schlabach says. “The best venue managers know that vendors interacting with their customers often serve as the face of the event, so it’s in everyone’s best interest to operate with the best practices available,” he says. “The most effective use of materials and services is a win/win situation for venue managers, concessionaires and the customers they serve. It’s in everyone’s best interest to provide a safe experience for the client, providing them a good experience so they’ll want to come back again. **VSS**

Karen Lancaster is a Dallas-based writer specializing in lifestyle, consumer and marketing issues.

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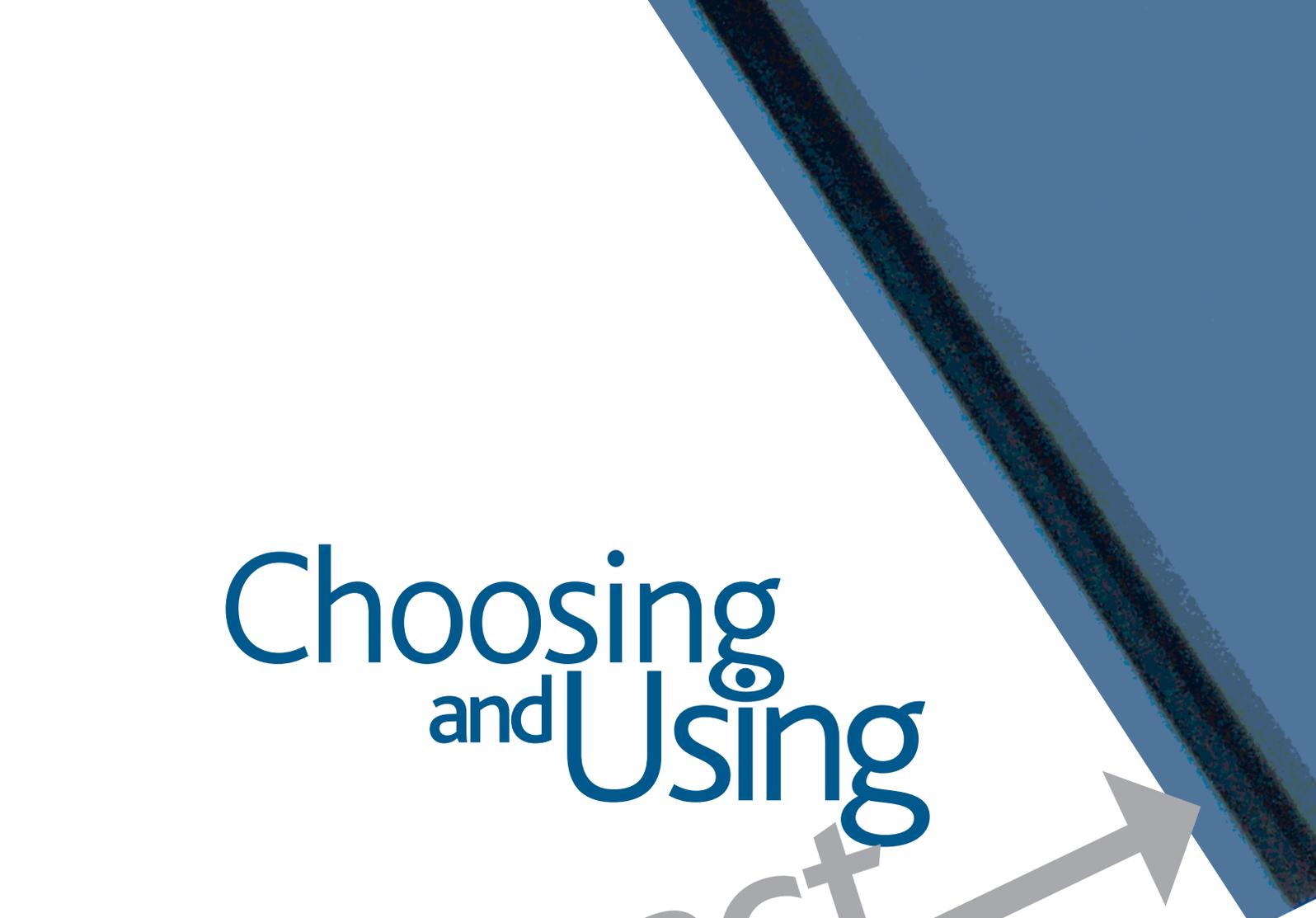


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Choosing
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Learn how to make the most
of your venue's investment in
"ambassadors for hire."



By Carly L. Price

Hiring a private contract company for security, guest services, crowd management or other security-related functions means putting your guests' experience and safety in someone else's hands — and that's a choice a growing number of venues are making.

"There is a trend where more and more venues are realizing they can save money and have their programs managed more efficiently by contracting out their services and still maintain a high level of control," explains Jimmie Deloretto, president and CEO of Starplex Corp. and Crowd Management Services.

Some venues use a combination of in-house and contract security. Larger facilities may find that they need a low level of in-house security staff year-round, which they supplement with contractors during busier seasons or specific events. Some hire their own internal, management-level security personnel to supervise contractors. Regardless of the mix, though, an inclusive, team-oriented approach is critical to maximizing your investment in contract security.

Why Contract Security Makes Sense

As events and venues have grown in size and security needs are increasingly sophisticated, many are staffed with at least some portion of contract security staff due to the following reasons

Cost. The administrative costs of training and maintaining a part-time security staff may be prohibitive, especially for smaller or seasonal venues that only need most positions to be filled during a few months, or sometimes days, throughout the year.

Turnover. The turnover rate among security staff tends to be high (40 percent is considered a good rate, and 70 to 80 percent is typical for lower-level security positions). Venues with dramatic seasonal fluctuations in the amount of work available have partic-

ular difficulty keeping people. Contract companies tend to have lower turnover because they can provide full-time, year-round work and benefits.

Different Approaches

Certain venues will find that hiring and training in-house security is more cost effective. For instance, facilities such as theme parks or casinos — which have major, full-time security needs and a constant stream of events and customers — are more likely to keep all security staffing and training internal.

It's also important to make a distinction between individuals who perform straight security functions, like guarding an entrance, versus other types of "security" staff who have as much, if not more, influence over the safety and comfort of venue guests.

During the last decade, an increased emphasis on customer service has led to a "softer" approach to security in order to create a friendly atmosphere and reduce crowd anxiety. Strategies for minimizing security risks have also shifted more emphasis toward predicting and preventing incidents, so security personnel are often less conspicuous these days.

"All of our people on events security are licensed guards," says Kevin Mattingly, deputy director for operations at the Phoenix Convention Center and Venues, which works with a contract security firm under the direction of full-time, in-house, management-level security personnel. The team covers three buildings and six parking structures. "If someone is carrying your ticket, he's not an usher; he's a licensed guard. We made that change a few years ago because we wanted to increase the level of (responsibility and care our staff could deliver)."

ular difficulty keeping people. Contract companies tend to have lower turnover because they can provide full-time, year-round work and benefits.

Flexibility. It's easy to change the amount or makeup of the security staff based on the size and needs of a specific event when using contractors. If you aren't happy with a particular worker, simply ask the firm not to send him or her again. Many contract firms provide staffing for every security-related area, providing added convenience and flexibility. Some even provide management staff to work on-site and oversee these areas on a full-time, year-round basis.

Expertise. Expect qualified companies to comply with state requirements for security personnel, to provide background checks and drug screening, to provide ongoing training and to have established relationships with local law enforcement (if they don't have all of the above, they may not be reputable).

Liability. Although venues are still responsible for mistakes or negligence of their own, hiring a contract security force can lessen

Choosing a Firm

Once the choice to go contract is made, search for a security firm that will act as a partner, not just a provider. It helps if the firm specializes in the type of events you offer, although many of them are capable of offering quality services for all types of events. Make sure they offer the range of staff that will suit your needs and enhance the experience for your guests — and, of course, ask for references.

Once you've targeted a few companies, make sure they're compliant with state licensure; don't just take their word for it. Also consider the level of insurance and liability the security firm takes on, and understand the limitations of those protections.

One of the best ways to evaluate a company is to attend an event staffed by them and see for yourself if security and customer service is up to par. Talk with the staff or even try to smuggle in a disallowed item (something harmless, of course, like food or a drink), ask for directions to your seat, or attempt to walk through a prohibited area during the event.

Investigate how the company interviews, hires, and places each individual. What type of background checks and screening are done? Does it meet or exceed state requirements for drug screening? Get as specific as you can with questions about the way the company treats its staff. Ask about their turnover rate and what type and level of benefits they offer. Does it include such perks as tuition reimbursement or free uni-

forms? What type of shifts are offered to the employees and can they rotate?

"If you find a company that has been able to master that turnover rate, that's a good sign the company is doing something right and the people are going to be a bit more reliable," says Kevin Mattingly, deputy director for operations at the Phoenix Convention Center and Venues.

Also ask how they determine which specific position an individual is suited for (e.g. security officer versus usher). How extensive and frequent is the training and continuing education provided to their individual staff members, and what specialized training do members of their staff have? For instance, do they have individuals who specialize in dealing with alcohol-related incidents or suspicious packages?

Perhaps most importantly, evaluate the management staff carefully. "The most important thing for me is the qualifications of their management team," says Kevin Tyo, president of ESCO Security

Using Guest Services As Watchdogs

Rather than having a whole fleet of obvious, roving, intimidating, uniformed officers to deter security problems, many venues are utilizing guest services staff as their top layer of security. These people have a unique opportunity to prevent incidents or respond more quickly because they're intermingled with the crowd and have more face-to-face and verbal interaction with individuals who might cause trouble.

"There's a strong difference between security officers, crowd management and guest services," says Jimmie Deloretto, president and CEO of Starplex Corp. and Crowd Management Services. "All of them can perform security-related functions. Most venues will utilize uniformed security staff and they also may share some of those duties with local law enforcement. Perhaps they have uniformed security for 24-hour watch or overnight protection, move-in and move-out services.

"Then you go to the next step and realize that uniformed security and police don't belong in crowds. So you have a crowd management operation, and then of course you have to see how that is going to integrate with guest service staff — ushers, ticket takers — because these people will all be involved in security issues."



Ultimately, you want this to be a partner with whom you can build a long-term relationship, so the management should have a teamwork-oriented view of the arrangement.

Promoting Teamwork

The more involved your internal staff is in creating a strong relationship with the contract staff at your venue, the better the results. "If you treat security at arm's length then you will get arm's-length security," Mattingly says. "If you design it right, (the contract security firm) is going to act not just when the fire alarm goes off, but when everything is great. They'll be the ones who notice the floor is scuffed or a window needs cleaning."

Connecting with contractors as part of your team is important for building trust and accountability. "The most basic security person who is paying attention knows more about how your security can be breached

Consulting. "It's all dependent on if that manager has attention to detail and shows that he cares about the staff"



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than your average staff member who comes to work in that building every day," Mattingly says. "That fact alone should get managers to sit up and notice these folks."

This type of approach can also help a facility establish a small cadre of repeat contract workers who can be brought into the fray of company policies, procedures and culture. "We find the greatest success and retention occur when our clients make us partners," says Mike Eicher, vice president of business development of Staff Pro. "There is a pride in work and ownership that comes from a guy who feels that he's a part of the same team as a general manager or guest services manager, when we're incorporated as part of their training group. We like to put the same usher or staff member in the same position on a consistent basis to provide a consistent service."

Do everything within your power to build an atmosphere that bridges the gap between in-house and contract employees who need to interact during events. However small your staff is, consider setting up a "command center" or something like it where all parties involved can exchange information.



“The most basic security person who is paying attention knows more about how your security can be breached than your average staff member who comes to work in that building every day.”

"We've developed an operations center staffed by security, and we use it as a centralized event coordination and incident reporting room," Mattingly explains. "If someone spills his soda, you call the operations center and they make sure somebody cleans it up. Security has become an integral part of how we operate."

It's also critical to support and participate in the contract company's training efforts. Offer to conduct their training sessions on-site, and even consider putting together your own training sessions. "We've gotten to know our local person from FBI, ATF, the Secret Service. Through those relationships you can get an amazing amount of free training," Mattingly says.

Ultimately it's about investing in the relationship and facilitating communication among individuals at every level to ensure that contract workers feel part of the team, know what is expected of them, and have a vested interest in keeping your guests safe. **VSS**

Carly L. Price is a Dallas-based journalist who has written for national trade and consumer publications, including *Cooking Light* and *Southern Living*.

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Venue managers discuss their strategies for ensuring attendees' safety

WHEN EXTREME WEATHER STRIKES

By Amy E. Lemen



A little bit of rain never hurt anyone, so the saying goes — but what if the weather turns dangerous at an event where hundreds, perhaps thousands, are in attendance?

That's one responsibility that venue and event managers take extremely seriously. Just ask Rob Webb, certified meeting professional and director of the Conference Center at Bentley College in Waltham, Mass., one of the nation's top business schools.



During graduation exercises in May 2002, the weather was unseasonably cold and, by the time the traditional outdoor ceremony under a tent took place, it was hailing.

“That year, we felt there was no danger to our guests, just an uncomfortable setting,” says Webb, who is also president-elect of the Association of Collegiate Conference and Event Directors International. “If a dangerous situation occurs, we have the option to graduate our students ‘en masse,’ meaning the president can declare students official graduates and end the ceremony so people can get to safety in very nearby buildings.”

In the end, it was the students who chose to keep going, but Webb and his staff provided portable heaters and blankets to students, faculty, staff and guests to ensure they were comfortable.

“The safety of our employees, our customers and guests is our first priority,” he says. “Our facilities department works with Bentley Police to determine conditions and decide whether we need to delay, release early or cancel school.”

Staying in Touch

It’s exactly that type of communication, event managers say, that plays a critical role in dealing with and preparing for dangerous weather. For example, in February 2007, a series of three tornadoes touched down in central Florida, including an F3 tornado that hit Volusia County, home of the Volusia County Fair. The Fair isn’t held until November, but David Viers, the Fair’s executive director, still had a plan in place and was ready when he got a 4 a.m. phone call.

“When I got there and saw that a tornado had gone through the property, I called 911 and reported it and said we had possible injuries in the RV area,” he says. “I helped get the emergency vehicles on the property, since there were trees and power lines blocking the main entrance, and helped the ambulance get to the person who was most injured.”

By that time, with the emergency plan in place, Viers called staff to keep them informed, as well as building superintendents for the grounds who came to help salvage what they could from the damage. He also called a security agency to help, ensuring that only those who were supposed to be on the property were there. Staff and board members put together a plan of action for cleanup and rebuilding in time for this year’s event. In the end,

“Be ready at any time to make sure that patrons are aware of incoming weather, and that they know the best places to be during this time.”

Viers says, the advance planning paid off.

“Make sure you have an emergency manual, and that all employees know what’s in it,” he says. “Be ready at any time to make sure that patrons are aware of incoming weather, and that they know the best places to be during this time.”

Help for Those in Need

Many venues, especially large ones, are called upon to provide shelter during a weather disaster. Greg Davis, director of the Cajundome in Lafayette, La., says they’ve been called upon to be a shelter many times in the 22 years he’s been there — most recently for victims of Hurricane Rita and Katrina, both at the same time.

“When Katrina and then Rita happened, it was totally out of the ordinary,” he says. “There was no manual to guide us on how to respond to this overwhelming need.”

The Cajundome was home to 18,000 Katrina victims for 60 days; when Rita hit, Katrina residents had to be evacuated to nearby Shreveport. In the meantime, since the Cajundome had damage from Rita, Davis says they had to recover quickly so they could continue to provide help to those who needed it.

“It took us two days to recover from the damages, then we were able to bring back Katrina evacuees and also house those affected by Rita,” he says.

Davis says the expertise required to manage arenas, stadiums and convention centers is easily transferable when it comes to the operation of a mega-shelter. “We had professional staff already on board and had the services and resources we needed to accommodate refugees,” he says. “Our greatest challenge was lack of resources. We’d normally order food from New Orleans and Houston, and we couldn’t do that.”

They also needed things that a convention center doesn’t normally keep on hand, like clothing and personal hygiene products, and needed to set up makeshift clinics and isolation rooms for those with infectious diseases. In those circumstances, Davis relied on the Red Cross for medical treatment and supplies.

“It was overwhelming because we had thousands and thousands coming, but we were able to respond quickly,” he says. “We work in an industry where we deal with crowd safety and awareness, and that really helped us.”



Time to Prepare

While the Cajundome, 130 miles from New Orleans, was well out of the strike zone for Katrina, Rita was another story. Davis says they had warnings with Rita, tracking the storm as it continued to move further and further east. “We were meeting days in advance, doing what-ifs so that by the time it hit, we had a plan to transfer Katrina evacuees, especially making sure that families weren’t separated,” he says. “In New Orleans, a lot of people ended up in different places, and we didn’t want that.”

The experience resulted in Davis’ input, as chairman of a task force for the International Association of Assembly Managers, in writing a manual that has since been distributed to all venue managers on the Gulf and Atlantic Coast on how to run a mega-shelter.

“We didn’t have that information or the opportunity to coordinate with Katrina,” he says. “I think everyone will be much more coordinated now.”

Resources to Ensure Safety

Event managers use any number of sources to stay ahead of the curve when it comes to weather-related issues, including local weather alerts, National Weather Service regional offices, computer notification, weather radios and local television.

“We rely on the local weather channels,” Viers says. “We’ll also look at the weather on the computers and use the National Weather service warnings on our radios.”

Webb uses local and National Weather Service bulletins, as well as local police reports for the most up-to-date information. Once he has it, it’s immediately available on the college hotline and Web site. His contingency plan includes a staffer who calls any customers that have a scheduled event, letting them know the status.

If an event is canceled, the college offers customers the option to book “weather backup dates” for no extra charge during unpredictable winter months, Webb explains. “This allows our customers to prepare for such an event, and inform their attendees of the make-up date well in advance if there’s a weather emergency,” he says.

The Power of Technology

Thankfully, the technology used to predict dangerous weather situations has grown by leaps and bounds in the past 20 years, making it much easier for weather experts to predict threatening weather — and event managers to warn guests.

“The Tiros 1 satellite, launched in 1960, gave us the first look

from space at the weather below, seeing early-stage hurricanes, whereas before we were using ship reports,” says Dennis Feltgen, a meteorologist at National Weather Service in Silver Spring, Maryland. “Now the satellites have evolved so much that we can tell wind speed, direction and literally look at the weather from the sky to the ground.”

There’s also a little footwork involved, with National Weather Service-trained volunteer storm spotters across the country. Their

TIPS FOR DEALING WITH ANY EMERGENCY

Rick Brenner, author of *101 Tips for Communication in Emergencies*, principal of Chaco Canyon Consulting in Cambridge, Mass., and a consultant for companies like Microsoft, the IRS and Intuit Corp., offers tips that he says should be obvious but often aren’t.

- Plan ahead. Know in advance how to respond to emergencies you can anticipate, and have your plan reviewed by an outside expert.
- Designate some staff as members as the emergency management team. “Avoid the common mistake of assuming that functional managers of the event organization are *ex officio* the emergency management team, because the skills required for event management and emergency management are very different,” Brenner says. “Train team members in their responsibilities, and let them get used to working together.”
- Drill, drill, drill. “Drills are essential parts of emergency management training,” says Brenner. “Involve local first responders, let them get to know your emergency management team, and work out any technological glitches.”

fascination with weather events and willingness to help others has gone a long way in giving accurate reports of what’s happening, when and where — as it’s happening, since spotters relay reports to the NWS instantaneously.

Feltgen says that event managers’ best tool is the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administrations’ (NOAA) Weather Radio All Hazards. It’s handheld, portable, offers 24/7 access, and, with 122 radio stations and more than 900 transmitters, its signals cover 95 percent of the U.S. The price is right, too: about \$40 to \$50.

“The biggest value is the alarm system that automatically turns the radio on when there’s a threat in your area, giving you a warning and the precious time needed to know what’s coming and to take action,” says Feltgen. “You can also program it to receive only the warnings you want by county, and it covers civil emergencies, like hazardous spills and terrorist attacks.”

In the end, it’s better safe than sorry and, with tools, technologies and a good plan in place, venue managers can easily stay ahead of scary weather. **VSS**

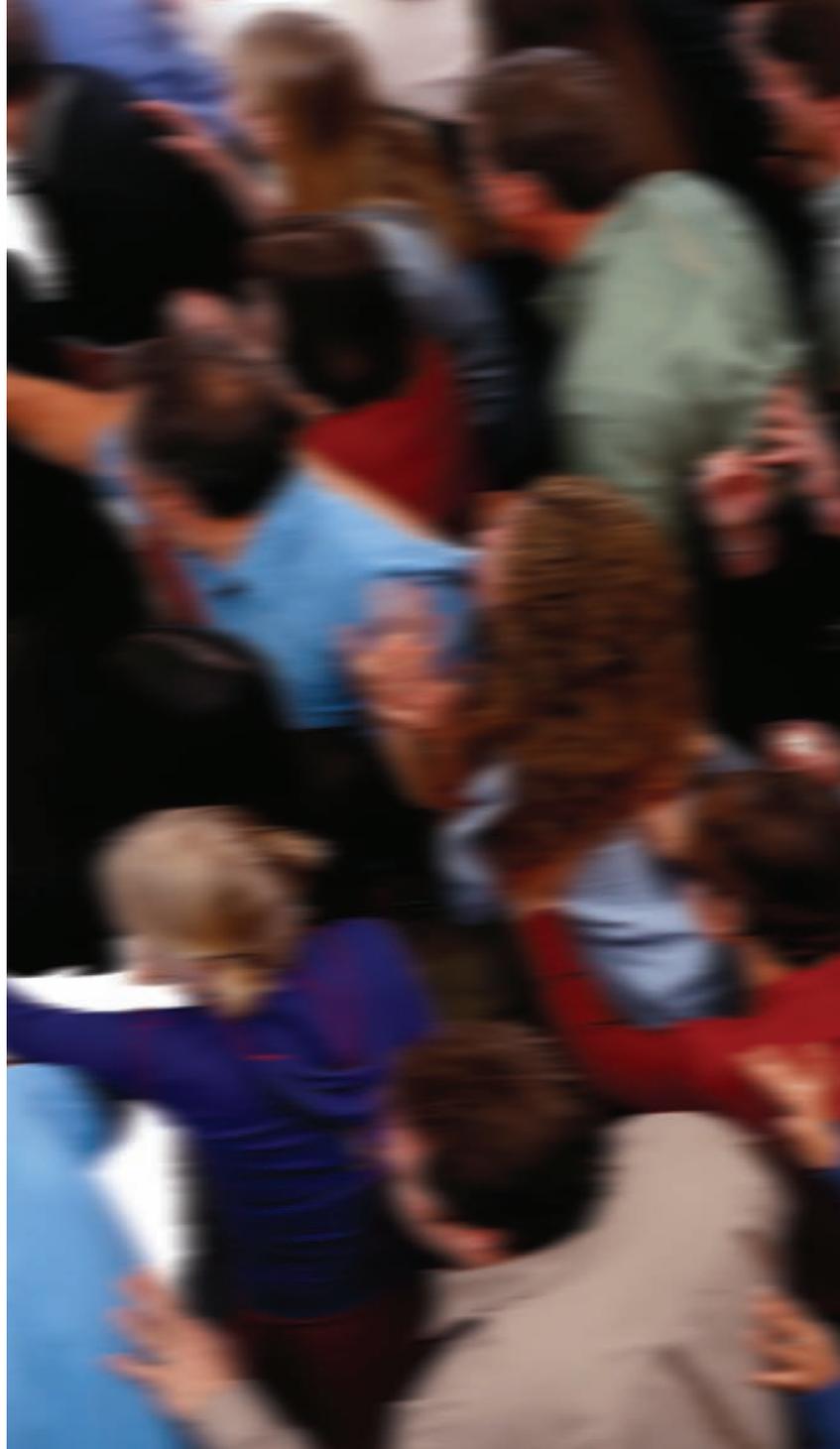
Amy E. Lemen is a freelance writer for corporate, association and editorial clients. Industries she has written for include real estate, technology, health care, advertising and general business.



can **y**ou
get
THEM ALL
OUT?

An evacuation plan can help protect your venue and attendees — assuming you're regularly evaluating it and keeping it current.

(By Pat Pape)



When the first stadium emergency drill was conducted more than 20 years ago, officials could not have anticipated the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks or a world in which chemical weapons and suicide bombers make headlines. Along with severe weather and manmade crises, those are potential threats that every place of public assembly must consider when planning for emergencies. An important part of that planning includes a rock-solid evacuation plan — one that's evaluated regularly and rigorously.



According to C. Ray Graves, principal with GRACorp, a security and emergency management firm based in Glen Allen, Va., evacuation plans should be reviewed every year and every time there is a change in the facility.

“One reason an evacuation plan doesn’t work is because construction workers have added or removed a door or built a new room, and the plan doesn’t take that into account,” says Graves, who served on the Olympic Games Security Management Team for the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games in Atlanta. “Even drills and evacuation exercises can’t be executed if the plan on paper doesn’t reflect these changes.”

A change in facility management also requires an evacuation plan review. It’s also a good idea to keep up with changes in local fire, police and emergency medical personnel. “When new fire department or police officials are put in place, invite them to take a tour of your facility,” Graves said. “In the event of a crisis, you don’t want them standing in your parking lot reading a map.”

Evacuation Essentials

Work with local emergency experts and first-responders to create/update your facility evacuation plan. Consider the needs of people with disabilities and those who don’t speak English when preparing the plan.

- ✓ **Maintain updated evacuation manuals, including floor plans with designated exits.**
- ✓ **Test all safety systems, such as back-up lighting and communications, on a regular basis.**
- ✓ **Establish a system for notifying emergency personnel when a crisis occurs.**
- ✓ **Know where fire and evacuation alarms are located and how to use them.**
- ✓ **Post evacuation route diagrams in public areas and update them as needed.**
- ✓ **Ensure that facility personnel are properly trained in evacuation procedures.**
- ✓ **Designate an assembly location in order to account for personnel after the evacuation.**
- ✓ **Participate in annual evacuation plan reviews and regular drills.**
- ✓ **Amend the plan immediately in the event of personnel, facility or software changes.**

approximately \$223 million in legal settlements eventually were paid out as a result of the tragic fire. “I began thinking, ‘What if something happens’ ” says Neff, who today is vice president of operations for the Tampa Bay Devil Rays. “How do you handle the evacuation of 70,000 people and get emergency vehicles in?”

“What if something happens? How do you handle the evacuation of 70,000 people and get emergency vehicles in?”

The San Francisco Giants have learned the importance of first-responders and emergency agencies through their own evacuation planning efforts. The Giants opened the doors to the bayside AT&T Park in 2000, and the 41,000-seat facility had its first full-scale emergency drill in February — an event that was two years in the planning, according to Shana Daum, director of public affairs and community relations for the team.

“We partnered with the San Francisco Department of Emergency Management, the Office of Homeland Security and the FBI, among others, to review and test our emergency plans and procedures,” she explains.

The drill simulated a bomb attack from the San Francisco Bay side of the stadium, and a triage area was set up to handle the “wounds” of volunteer victims. Daum says ballpark officials actually found pre-planning to be most beneficial part of the exercise. “We learned that we need to communicate often with our police and fire personnel and with the Office of Homeland Security,” she says.

Doing the Drill

As a professional in the sports facility business, Rick Neff attended a seminar detailing how a Las Vegas stadium was converted to a makeshift morgue following the 1980 MGM Grand fire, which left 84 dead and almost 800 injured. In addition to the loss of life,

Then associated with Tampa Stadium, Neff began making calls. He found that others in his area were equally concerned, and he formed a group to address the issue. Neff, along with the county director of Mass Casualty Planning and about 30 area officials, worked to develop an emergency evacuation plan for Tampa Stadium. Then they put it to the test with the first-ever stadium emergency drill.

Because Tampa Stadium was located next to the Tampa Airport, the scenario for the drill was a mid-air collision that caused a small plane to crash into the stadium. Approximately 1,500 high school students got the day off to portray injured sports fans. Each student was physically transported to a local hospital where emergency room doctors were standing by to evaluate their “injuries.” “All of them were treated and tagged as if it were an actual disaster,” Neff says.

Tampa emergency personnel participated as if a real plane crash had occurred, and U.S. Air Force disaster experts were on the scene to evaluate the exercise and make recommendations for improving the stadium’s emergency plan. When the drill ended, the group took what they had learned and compiled it into a 50-page manual, complete with drawings and instructions. For several years, it served as the guideline for public assembly facilities.

“At last count, we made more than 75 presentations about the disaster response plan, and more than 500 organizations have

“When new fire department or police officials are put in place, invite them to take a tour of your facility. In the event of a crisis, you don't want them standing in your parking lot reading a map.”

requested the manual,” Neff says. “We have shared it with everything from a small theatre to the Rose Bowl.”

Ready or Not

Mickey Farrell, director of Stadium Operations at Raymond Jones Stadium in Tampa, believes that managers can't over prepare for an emergency, whether working with local authorities or stadium employees.

Prior to the season opener, Farrell ensures that staff members are familiar with the stadium's evacuation plan by running through the plan before the first game and then again at the end of an actual game. “We tell our employees to go to their (evacuation plan) positions as if they were evacuating the stadium at the end of the game,” Farrell says. “I like to do this at least twice a season.”

Farrell advises venue managers to contact executives at similar venues and take a look at the emergency plans they're using. “You can extract the parts that work for you and make them applicable to your facility,” he says.

Fortunately, Farrell has never needed to evacuate an entire stadium full of spirited sports fans. “We had to evacuate the press box once when we had a power outage prior to a game,” he recalls. “And in the early '90s, we evacuated the stadium after a concert that lasted for only three songs. The guests were unhappy about being asked to leave, but fortunately, it was a pretty mellow concert.”

Own Your Plan

Most public assembly managers can find plenty of assistance in finalizing or updating a site-specific emergency evacuation plan.

Techno Savvy

There are a variety of things that could prevent employees, guests and performers or athletes from safely evacuating a building or stadium, and one of them is technology. “Facility managers must keep up with everything that's going on in their building, including upgrades to software,” says C. Ray Graves, principal with GRACorp, a security and emergency management firm based in Glen Allen, Va. “For example, if you have an electronic barrier that only permits one-way traffic, you should have an automatic release (on that barrier).”

Computer software often drives facility-wide door locks, screening units and emergency lighting, so it's necessary for managers to be aware of software changes or updates. “Some applications have end lives,” Graves says. “Don't let your software get outdated.”

Leading professional organizations, such as IAAM or the Stadium Managers Association, can provide materials and training on emergency evacuation and risk management, suggests Neff.

Another important information source is the facility's local director of mass casualty planning or the office for disaster planning. Of course, industry professionals are available to suggest best practices when a colleague needs advice. “We share information like that on a regular basis,” Neff says.

Carefully planning ahead for an emergency evacuation will help a facility protect people and property and mitigate damages that might occur in a crisis, which hopefully never happens. In addition, it will go a long way toward ensuring the reputation and integrity of an industry that is dedicated to the public and to maintaining the public's confidence. **VSS**

Pat Pape is a Dallas-based freelance writer.

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By Matt Bolch

What every venue manager
must know about this
dangerous bacteria.



As part of its precautions regarding E.coli 0157:H7, the Puyallup Fair's hand washing stations are checked once or twice daily and noted on a "Corrective Action Log," which is kept for a year.

The Puyallup Fair in suburban Seattle received a scare during its September 1998 event when several children were hospitalized after contracting E.coli 0157:H7. Although the affected children attended the fair, extensive DNA testing didn't find any link between the fair and the outbreak.

But instead of breathing a sigh of relief and going back to business as usual, fair executives took a serious look at their operations and made wholesale changes in the way they presented animal events and educated the public about the importance of personal hygiene. "We want to be on the cutting edge, a role model for other fairs," says Karen LaFlamme, spokesperson for the fair, which attracts more than 1.1 million attendees during its 17-day run.

The changes put into place by the Puyallup Fair & Events Centre serve as a powerful example of the types of precautions every venue should consider regarding E. coli, which is a leading cause of foodborne illness responsible for as many as 61 deaths each year in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Precautionary Measures

Prior to the Puyallup Fair, each barn is cleaned with a bleach solution before pens are set up, and then cleaned daily during the event. A log book for each barn details what procedures occurred and when, and those records are retained for one year. Manure on the ground is swept away, and the ground is cleaned with a bleach water solution that's then diverted to a special holding area instead of a storm drain.

Meanwhile, the Fair Farm petting zoo is a controlled environment, where attendants are on hand to change out animals frequently and remind visitors to wash their hands afterward. Each barn also has hand-washing stations at each end.

Permanent hand-washing stations and prominent signage can be supplemented by portable units when required, including a 14-foot tall station where huge mechanized hands mimic hand washing.

Each hand-washing station is checked either once or twice daily, with the attendant cleaning and filling out a corrective action log detailing what was done and any special requests. Logs are maintained for each station and each bathroom. During the 2006 fair, visitors used 770 gallons of liquid soap, 5.4 million feet of paper towels and 3,500 gallons of hand sanitizer.

"All that's required are some pretty simple, basic things to stay healthy, but people forget," LaFlamme says. "A fair is fun, exciting and different, and it can be difficult sometimes for people to remember to wash their hands after petting animals. But it's heartening to see kids pull their parents over to the hand-washing station, as the importance of hand-washing to overall health and safety gets through to them."

Publicized Outbreaks

Puyallup Fair was able to react well before publicized E.coli outbreaks among schoolchildren in Pennsylvania and Washington in 2000 resulted in 56 illnesses and 19 hospitalizations. Illness was associated with school and family visits to farms where children came into direct contact with farm animals.

The 2000 outbreaks and others led to recommendations from the CDC concerning human/animal contact in petting zoos and

animal exhibits the following year and resulted in the first *Compendium of Measures To Prevent Disease Associated with Animals in Public Settings*, published in 2005. The document was prepared by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV), with input from the CDC. The compendium

was updated in 2006, with another update due later this year.

Although contamination from E.coli 0157:H7 continued to make headlines in fall 2004 with an outbreak in North Carolina that sickened 106 and two in Florida the following spring that sickened 22, animal-to-human contact also can cause problems with campylobacter, salmonella, cryptosporidium, and fungi-like ringworm, says John Dunn, a medical epidemiologist with the Tennessee Department of Health.

Dunn helped investigate the North Carolina E.coli outbreak while employed at the CDC, and after joining the Tennessee health agency, he helped develop and implement a series of one-day workshops for fair operators. "We've had good attendance and good feedback" on the seven workshops that have been held in Tennessee cities since November, Dunn says. "We don't want these outbreaks in Tennessee, and we

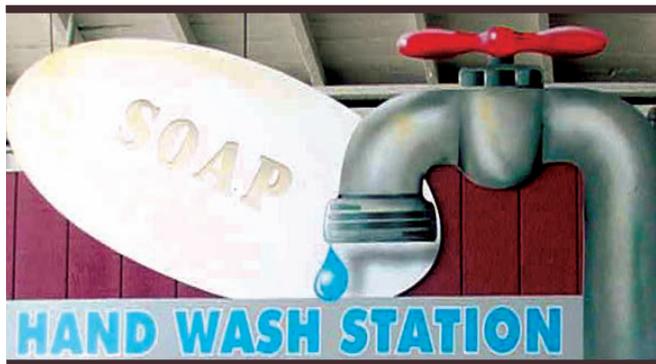
want to protect the public and the heritage of fairs."

Standard Recommendations

The Tennessee curriculum is based on NASPHV guidelines, which Dunn says the legal profession is recognizing as the standard of care regarding human/animal contact.

NASPHV recognizes the positive benefits of human-animal contact and believes that the risks of these contacts can be minimized in properly supervised and managed settings by using appropriately selected animals that receive regular health examinations and preventive care. Although eliminating all risk from animal contacts might not be achievable, the report provides standardized recommendations for minimizing disease and injury.

"We're not going to test our way out of this or vaccinate our way out of this. We can't do this for patrons but with patrons," says Stephen Neel, CEO at Technical Solutions Inc., about reducing the risk of contamination. "Our job is to share the responsibility with visitors, giving them adequate information to make good decisions



“A comprehensive plan around planned contact will go a long way toward ensuring safe facilities. Those steps include keeping up to date on changes to the NASPHV compendium, providing hand-washing facilities and educating staff and managers.”

— not just what to do but why — and the opportunity to do so.”

Neel’s company has been working with the International Association of Fairs and Expositions to present one-day workshops designed to help operators reduce the risk of contamination from enteric pathogens and enhance consumer protection at fairs, expositions and petting zoos. Much of the workshop is hands-on, with operators reviewing their own facilities for potential trouble spots and determining how to minimize risk.

Leave Nothing to Chance

The first workshop was held in 2005 in Maryland with funds obtained by the state Department of Agriculture, says Becky Brashear, executive assistant at the Great Frederick Fair, which is in its 145th year. “We haven’t had any problems, but we certainly don’t want E.coli to tarnish any fair in Maryland,” she says.

After the outbreaks in North Carolina and Florida, the Great Frederick Fair modified how its “City Streets, Country Roads” agricultural awareness program was staged. The area introduces children and adults to traditional livestock and more exotic animals such as emus and llamas.

For the 2005 show, walkways through the exhibit were changed, and the fair adopted new standards for manure removal. A log is kept of each area, with high-touch locations wiped down two or three times daily and supplies at temporary and permanent hand-washing stations checked frequently.

The Maryland State Fair and Great Frederick Fair bought 12 portable hand-washing units between them for use at their events and others in the state. “Our goal is to leave no fair behind,” Brashear says. “Our No. 1 priority is protecting our customers.”

Mitigating Risk

While the possibility of exposure from animal-to-human contact cannot be eliminated, venues can take several steps to help ensure the safety of guests and protect against possible liability, says Neel. The first is to document what is being done to mitigate any risk. The second is to configure planned contact in petting zoos and pony ride areas. A gatekeeper can ensure that strollers stay outside, monitor both humans and animals and remind people to wash their hands upon exit.

Of course, convenient and well-stocked hand-washing facilities are a must. An operator also should take into account incidental contacts in areas such as barns, show rings, animal wash areas and pathways where humans and animals intersect.

Neel says he has heard stories about fair managers wanting to drop petting zoos and other planned contact events because of the possibility of liability, but he hopes that workshops such as the IAFE Consumer Protection Program “give confidence to operators and managers to operate in full confidence while doing what they can to minimize risk.”

A comprehensive plan around planned contact will go a long way toward ensuring safe facilities, says Heather Bair-Brake, a veterinarian and health communicator at the CDC.

Those steps include keeping up to date on changes to the NASPHV compendium, providing hand-washing facilities and educating staff and managers on not only the nuts-and-bolts of

the plan but why each step is important. In June, the CDC planned to distribute educational fliers that vendors can use in their facilities, adds Casey Barton-Behravesh, veterinarian epidemiologist with the CDC. **VSS**

“We’re not going to test our way out of this or vaccinate our way out of this. We can’t do this for patrons but with patrons.”

E.COLI EXPLAINED

“E. coli O157:H7 is one of hundreds of strains of the bacterium *Escherichia coli*. Although most strains are harmless, this strain produces a powerful toxin that can cause severe illness. E. coli O157:H7 has been found in the intestines of healthy cattle, deer, goats, and sheep. The combination of letters and numbers in the name of the bacterium refers to the specific markers found on its surface and distinguishes it from other types of E. coli.” — *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*



Are You Ready?

Using tools such as ViSAT, venue managers must be prepared to handle security issues.

By Harold Hansen

Everyone knows that the Boy Scouts motto is “Be prepared.” For the Scouts, this famous motto means to be in a state of readiness to do the right thing at the right moment. While “Be prepared” isn’t IAAM’s official motto, it’s something that all IAAM members — in fact, all managers of public assembly facilities and activities — should aspire to in their daily business operation.

Now more than ever, it’s important that facility managers be ready to anticipate and manage any safety or security issue that could arise so that they can protect the lives and well-being of employees, participants and guests. It’s also important to protect the reputation of — and the consumer’s confidence in — a public assembly.

An unexpected threat to one facility can negatively impact consumer confidence in all public venues and activities; if that happens, our entire industry is at risk. In fact, a major attack on a public assembly facility, casino, racetrack, performing arts center, amphitheater, fairgrounds, amusement park, convention center, hotel or other major public venue could have a negative, long-term impact on the nation’s economy.

Sadly, we can point to several recent examples of unsuspected attacks being carried out in public places. One is the tragic shooting on the Virginia Tech campus by an otherwise forgettable student, an event that left 33 innocent people dead. Another is the random killing of two shoppers and the shooting of seven others by a disgruntled former Target employee at a Kansas City shopping mall.

Afterwards, news reports would reveal that both offenders battled mental illness and had been identified as threats to themselves. Terrorism comes in many forms, and these two examples demonstrate that threats to public safety don’t always originate outside our country’s borders.

Of course, terrorist groups and deranged loners aren’t the only safety threat to the public or to the facility industry. Other potential crises are caused by dangerous weather, including tornadoes, hurricanes and snow storms; and infrastructure issues, such as power outages, structural failure, communications disruptions or fire. We must also consider the much-discussed concern over future pandemics, such as avian influenza or “bird flu,” and the ongoing problems associated with crowd control.

Managing Risk

Part of the risk management process is assessing a venue’s vulner-

ability to threats before they happen. This assessment is at the heart of the Vulnerability Identification Self-Assessment Tool (ViSAT), the software program that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) developed in conjunction with IAAM.

ViSAT was created to help managers of all venue types evaluate the strengths and weakness of their individual security operations. The ViSAT online assessment includes more than 200 questions and is located on a secure DHS Web site.

After using the no-cost assessment, the ViSAT software creates a summarized report of the facility manager’s responses that can guide them in setting priorities for security enhancements. While only one person from a facility is granted access to the ViSAT Web site, completing the assessment should be a team process.

Managers are encouraged to involve all staff members in ViSAT — particularly those working in operations, maintenance, securi-

“The horrors of Hurricane Katrina demonstrated a worst-case emergency scenario on a massive scale. What must we be prepared for next?”

ty and communications — plus their first responders. The risk associated with any vulnerability can then be addressed by the entire team through careful planning, best practices application and staff training.

The ViSAT online assessment covers these seven important areas:

- Security plan, policies and procedures
- Security force and security awareness training
- Cargo, personnel and vehicle access control
- Physical security issues
- Security technology
- Communications security
- Information security

DHS reviews each submitted ViSAT data for consistency but doesn’t judge any facility. A summary report and guidelines for interpreting the report are provided to the facility manager, who is responsible for determining that particular venue’s strengths or vulnerability.

Thanks to a grant from DHS to the IAAM Foundation, training on the use of the ViSAT software is available to all managers of public assembly facilities. Recently, the ViSAT training program was enhanced, and now an updated, six-and-a-half-hour program addresses the entire vulnerability assessment process. This new

program focuses on five areas: risk management, the assessment process, use of ViSAT software, use of the summary report and the protected status of information.

Empower Yourself

The tragedy of Sept. 11 forever changed the way we look at national and personal security forever. The horrors of Hurricane Katrina demonstrated a worst-case emergency scenario on a massive scale. What must we be prepared for next?

It's essential to realize that every public facility is a potential target for terrorism or other security and safety threats, no matter what the size or where it's located. Risk cannot be eliminated. It's something we will live with always.

However, smart and proactive managers have the opportunity to follow the Boy Scouts motto and prepare for problems before they occur. By doing so, they empower themselves and their staffs to be prepared for anything and everything that could come their way. **VSS**



Harold Hansen is director of Life Safety and Security for IAAM. He serves as coordinator and as an instructor for the ViSAT course. He has more than 32 years of venue management experience with facilities in Ames, Iowa; Sioux City, Iowa; Peoria, Ill.; Skokie, Ill.; Topeka, Kan., and Chicago.

Available ViSAT Training

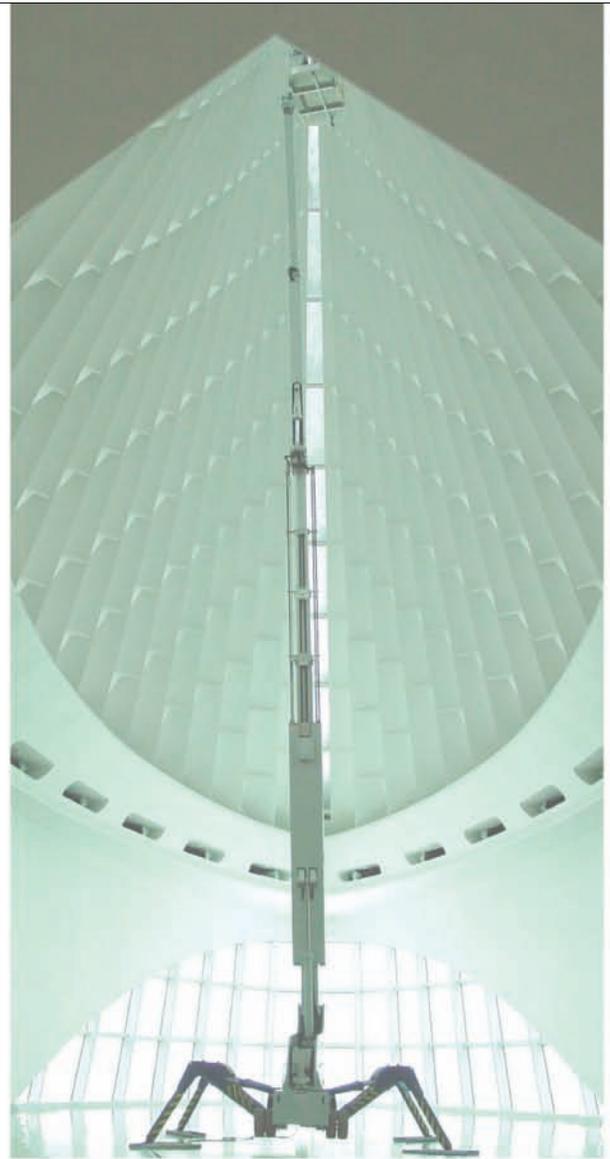
IAAM wants to heighten all facility managers' proficiency at preparedness, prevention, response and recovery. To that end, ViSAT training sessions are scheduled for the IAAM annual conference in July, the Academy of Venue Safety and Security (AVSS) in August, and in various regional locations in the future.

The next AVSS is set for Aug. 19-24 in Dallas. This intensive program, now in its fourth year, offers two courses of study. The first focuses on the fundamentals of safety and security, while the second builds

upon previous training by putting theory into action.

It also includes sessions on working with first responders, security operations and refining facility emergency preparedness plans.

If you would like to host a ViSAT training session for facility professionals in your city, or to learn more about scheduled ViSAT training or the upcoming Academy of Venue Safety, phone me at (773) 973-2049 or e-mail me at harold.hansen@iaam.org.
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In Times of Crisis

Every venue must have a plan for communication during a crisis — and strong management to lead the way.

By Courtney Simmons

As an entertainment venue that caters to a large number of patrons, it's not a matter of if you're going to have a crisis — it's a matter of when. What can you do to minimize the possibility of a highly undesirable outcome? This is a question that management of theme parks, carnivals, fairs and other types of venues have been asking themselves since the first ticket was sold and the first turnstile cranked.

Big or small, companies need to set out a crisis communication plan. Preparing for a crisis requires a comprehensive, well-organized plan, teamwork and leadership. The objective of a crisis communications plan is to create a unified voice, assign responsibilities, set priorities and ensure that issues are dealt with according to an agreed-upon company policy and procedure.

No single plan can foresee everything that can happen in the event of a crisis. However, by having a plan, there's a greater chance of controlling the crisis, therefore minimizing the negative impact on your business.

The Power of a Plan

A crisis is any situation that threatens the integrity or reputation of your company. These situations can be any kind of accident, power outage, legal dispute, theft, fire, flood or manmade disaster that could be attributed to your organization. It can also be a situation where, in the eyes of the media or general public, your company didn't react to one of these situations in the appropriate manner. If handled correctly, the damage to your company's reputation can be minimized.

A good plan covers three phases: pre-crisis, during-crisis and post-crisis. While the during-crisis plan covers actions taken to contain it or minimize the effect of the crisis, the post-crisis plan is aimed at rebuilding or recovering credibility, whether it be corporate, guest related or product specific. Depending on a company's operations, preparing a crisis communication plan can sometimes be more difficult than implementing it when a crisis occurs.

Regardless, one thing that should resonate throughout the entire plan — something that's crucial in a crisis — is a mantra I teach to all of my clients: Tell it all, tell it promptly and tell the truth.

Preparing to Plan

Prior to preparing a plan, a company must first look at issues relevant to its business. These issues will have audiences — people

and organizations — and specific types of communications will have to be determined for each group.

The audiences can include company employees, customers, shareholders, media, government people, the corporate sector, company rivals and everyone else affected. Each of these audiences has its own agenda and communication requirements. Thus, a full list of potential crises should be developed. Determine as many crises as possible, and list them in priority according to the possible risk of occurrence.

A crisis-handling plan will cover various communication channels. These may include key media, people in the public and private sectors, correspondence, e-mail, the Internet, briefings and press conferences, advertising, a telephone hotline, media and video news releases.

Crisis messages must have a human face; that is, they must be honest and reassuring, not a cover-up. Company backgrounders

“The objective of a crisis communications plan is to create a unified voice, assign responsibilities, set priorities and ensure that issues are dealt with according to an agreed-upon company policy and procedure.”

and briefs should be prepared in advance. They are standard reference information for the news media and others.

Plan Your People

Selecting and briefing the crisis communications team is one of the more difficult tasks. The size of the team will depend on the scale of the issues, but it could include some members of the top management, a team leader, a spokesperson, operations coordinators, lawyers, public relations staff and technical experts.

The crisis communications plan is essentially a to-do list that will set in motion the responsibilities of the team members, their roles and accessibility; resources and facilities available, including the Internet or company Web site; procedures and usage; team members' names and positions; important addresses and telephone numbers; and corporate information and other important data.

The crisis communications plan doesn't end after the issues and audiences have been fully realized, team members picked and a crisis manual prepared.

Practice the Plan

Your plan also should include:

- continuous crisis-handling simulations
- spokesperson training
- exercises on how to deal with news media calls or interviews
- Internet communications
- staging a realistic scenario
- an impromptu check, whereby an external consultant drops in and queries some team members on manual procedures
- continuous manual information updates

Information and procedure updates must be done regularly as the industry or corporate situation changes.

Conventional wisdom — and, frankly, common sense — regarding crisis management dictates that a crisis plan and monitoring industry events can provide the proactive planning needed to avoid false first steps in responding to an industry event. However, even with the best plan, preparation and practice, there's no replacing the critical need for leadership.

Crisis Leadership

It can be argued that preparation may not be enough; organizations need to focus on developing leadership skills. Top communicators should identify the most effective individuals to lead during a crisis, and enlist them in an organization's planning and ongoing crisis management efforts.

Few people would argue against preparation as a key element to crisis management, yet when it comes to crisis communications, one of the most important factors is the least studied: crisis leadership. While planning is important, leadership in a time of crisis, particularly in the immediate aftermath, may trump any preparation. Crisis management is a test of the quality and character of leadership as much as it is a test of skill.

The reality is that no organization can prepare for every single crisis event. We know as industry professionals that this would be an impossible task, and a tremendous misappropriation of financial and human resources.

As management, you must discover how to work with the leaders in our organization before a crisis, how to develop leaders to deal with crises, and the role of the public relations practitioner in this process. Then you'll have a great crisis communications plan. **VSS**

Courtney Simmons is a media consultant, public relations executive and the founder of C. Simmons Associates. She has more than 20 years experience working with industries as diverse as theme parks, entertainment venues and roller coaster manufacturers. She can be reached at (760) 505-7879 or cs@courtneysimmons.com.



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Handling a Bomb Threat

Recognized with a 2006 Prime Site Award as “The Best-Run Convention Center in America,” Dallas Convention Center is a well-oiled organization — but challenges still occur regularly. *Venue Safety & Security* asked Frank Poe, director of convention and event services, to share the details of a bomb scare that occurred last year.

“It all began along a light rail station that comes directly in to the convention center. A passenger noticed a suspicious package with some pipes and wires coming out of it, and immediately reported it to the police, who in turn notified us. All streets adjacent to the area were blocked off, and the Dallas Police Department bomb squad deployed their investigative unit, which includes a mobile robot fitted with assessment cameras.

“In the meantime, the company who was setting up for a large convention in the center — and who was the addressee on the package — was notified. We quickly relocated their staff away from the area, and gathered refreshments for them while we tried to keep them informed as to what was going on with the incident.

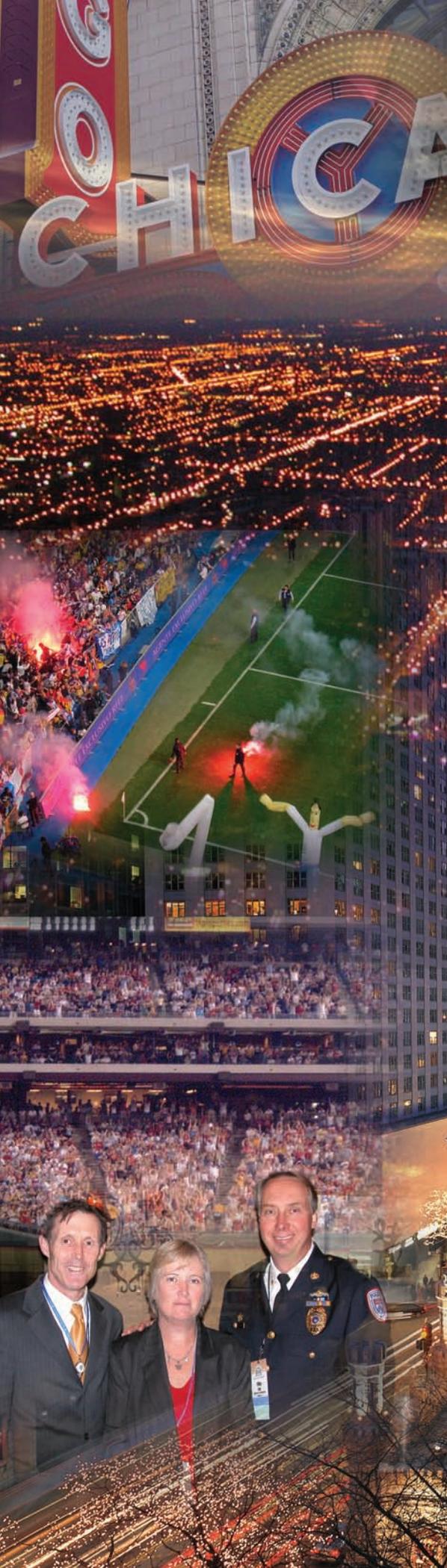
“The bomb squad eventually chose to explode the package, and fortunately it turned out to be nothing at all. Further investigation revealed that a construction worker had left behind the pipes and wires, bundling them with the box as refuse. As soon as we got the word, we were able to advise the client and they quickly returned to setting up for their meeting. Overall, the incident spanned five hours, from beginning to end.

“From a ‘lessons learned’ process, this was a very good exercise for us. We were able to test our security systems and evacuation plans, and were pleased to see that they worked quite well. We came away from the experience, though, confirming our knowledge that communication is key. In this particular situation, it was imperative that we establish effective communications between our team and those in law enforcement. Our team improvised with a procedure to station one of our security representatives in a safe location near the incident so that we could receive periodic updates from the police department. In that way, we created a means for passing timely information directly from the source on to our building staff and the client, keeping everyone apprised of the progress. Our post-incident assessments triggered many new ideas about optimal means for establishing the most effective communications in all of our contingency plans.

“Incidents like these do happen, but because security planning and procedures are an integral part of our venue management program, we are confident that our team will always be ready for any situation that may occur.” **VSS**



Photo by Marlon Taylor, c3 Premedia Solutions



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84,501

The number of people inside a football stadium on Oct. 1, 2005, when a University of Oklahoma student detonated a bomb about 500 yards away.

Risk = consequence times threat times vulnerability

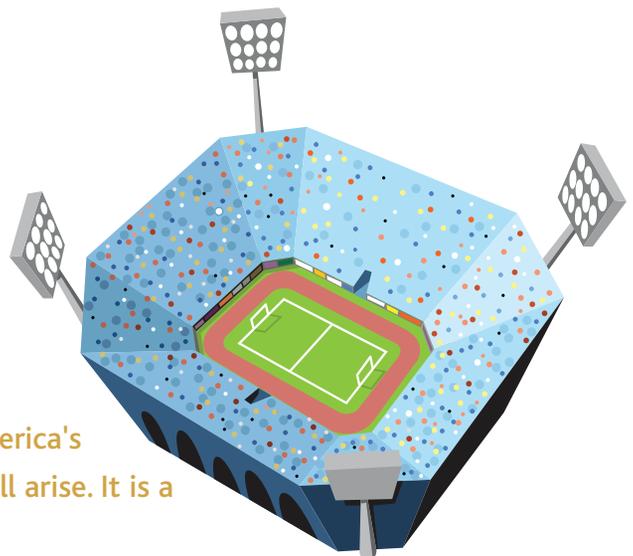


\$41.1 billion

Amount U.S. government spent on homeland security in 2006

\$38.4 billion

Amount Americans spent on their pets in 2006



“It is impossible to ensure a risk-free environment at America's sporting venues. Incidents will happen and emergencies will arise. It is a matter of how one prepares, responds and recovers.”

— from an article in *The Sport Journal*, published by United States Sports Academy and written by Stacey Hall, Lou Marciani, Walter E. Cooper and Robert Rolan.

Sources: *The Sport Journal*; The American Pet Products Manufacturers Association; the Department of Homeland Security; Wikipedia.

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"...in the event of an emergency evacuation, if the public is given a logical alternative, the probability of panic is greatly reduced."

IAAM Safety & Security Taskforce

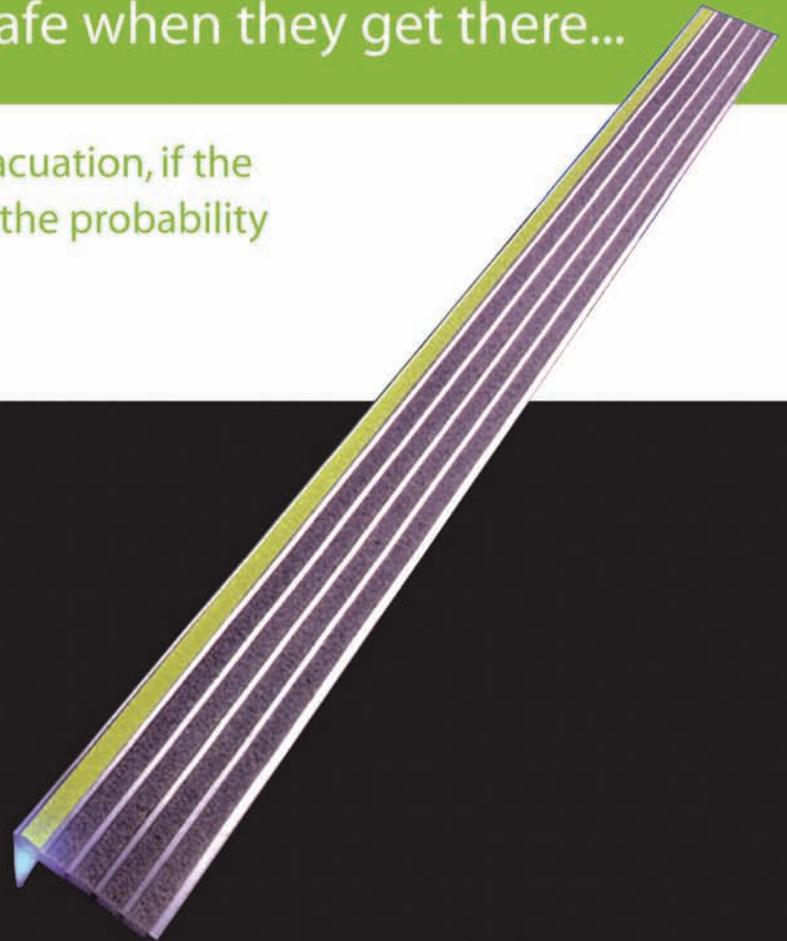
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