BOMB THREATS – WHAT CAN WE DO?

By Michael Sellet, Regional Safety Coordinator

Bomb threats can be communicated in a number of ways, but the impact is often similar. A written message includes handwritten, typed or “cut and paste” notes. Telephonic threats may be land line, cell phone, recorded message, or computer programs. Currently, there has been a notable increase in bomb threats using computers and applications designed to hide or wipe clean traceable electronic evidence. As a result, they are increasingly difficult to investigate. The most recent trend uses a type of “robo” computer-generated calling that has been targeting schools along the U.S. east coast.

What Can You Do?

- Review/Revise your Bomb Threat Response Plans.
- Meet and review your plans and procedures with law enforcement and other first responders.
- Provide Bomb Threat training.
- Provide Threat Assessment team training.
- Preserving the evidence is critical- save messages, save paper threats and photograph threats written on walls.

All employees should receive awareness training to reduce the panic and anxiety that receiving a bomb threat can cause.

Our department has developed a powerful Bomb Threat Training that is appropriate for all staff who answer telephones. The program includes a lecture on the trends and current thinking about bomb threats. It may also include role play to allow participants to practice the techniques presented in the lecture. The role play is included for classes of 15 or less. Larger group sessions may be scheduled but only for the lecture portion of the program.

Contact Cynthia Braden at 914-248-2456 to get more information or to schedule.
The Regional Safety Committee is made up of members of each of our component districts. This committee meets six times per year. The most recent meeting was January 26, 2016. Our agenda normally consists of updates on health, safety and security issues, followed by guest speakers and a round table discussion.

At our January meeting, Mike Sellet, PNW BOCES Regional Safety Coordinator, shared information on recent trends in bomb threats. There are “robo” calls, which are leaving bomb threat messages on phones. One district in Bergen County, NJ, was inundated with 11 threats in one day.

Following the discussion on bomb threats, we held our round table discussion. A large portion of the time was spent discussing the new CO detector requirements. Most of the members are working with their school district’s architects to design appropriate systems. These systems can be tied to your fire alarm or burglar alarm systems. They must have signals that separate them from a fire or intruder. It is suggested that they sound or send a signal to a location away from the affected area.

The final agenda item was a tour of the upgrades to our School Services Building and our new Therapy Pools. These pools are truly changing lives. Our committee was able to tour behind the scenes, to get a real feel for the way these pools work.

Watch this video to see more.  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sU3t3jK5TFA

MOSQUITO CONTROL

In light of recent reports of mosquito borne disease, it is never too late to begin to plan for the management of mosquitoes and other summer insects. There are more than 70 different species of mosquitoes in New York State, but not all of them carry disease.

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in moist areas, such as standing water. The eggs become larvae that remain in the water until they mature into
adults and fly off. Weeds, tall grass and shrubbery provide an outdoor home for adult mosquitoes. Many mosquitoes will breed in any container that holds water, such as flowerpots, wading pools or discarded tires.

The challenge in widespread mosquito control is that they are a source of food to bats, birds, and other small animals.

The best way to manage mosquito populations around our homes and schools is a good IPM plan. The CDC lists these steps:

Although your chances of being infected with a disease through a mosquito bite are small, there are simple steps you can take to reduce your risk of being bitten. Reduce the mosquito population around your home and property, reduce or eliminate all standing water:

- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or similar water-holding containers.
- Dispose of used tires, which are a significant mosquito-breeding site.
- Drill holes in the bottoms of outdoor recycling bins so they can drain freely.
- Clean clogged roof gutters and make sure they drain properly.
- Remove leaf debris from yards and gardens.
- Drain temporary pools of water or fill with dirt.
- Turn over wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Change the water in birdbaths twice weekly.
- Clean vegetation and debris from edges of ponds.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor saunas, hot tubs and other water features, such as fountains and garden ponds.
- Drain water from pool covers.
- Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property.

The CDC continues to update the public with information on symptoms, prevention, and the latest cases of infections in the United States. Learn more by visiting USA.gov.

**IN OUR DISTRICTS**

Kudos to the **Croton-Harmon School District** for supplying CPR training to about 270 students during their physical education classes. Each 40-minute class period included a 10 minute video, 30 minutes of hands only CPR practice, choking relief practice and a demo of AED use. The students were very engaged and enjoyed the program.

To schedule this CPR training for your district, please contact Cynthia Braden at cbraden@pnwboces.org.