Terrorism

Preparation is always a key component to prevent, mitigate, control and recover from an emergency. Terrorist attacks are not an exception. No one wants to think about a terrorist attack but it is important to be prepared in case such an event happens. Terrorist attacks may include the use of explosives, flammable agents, biological and chemical agents causing detrimental impacts in multiple areas including infrastructure, economy, nature and human health. Adverse health effects resulting of this type of emergencies depend on the hazard and the type of attack, but hazards may include physical, biological, chemical, and nuclear hazards among others. Responding to these events requires a vast amount of resources. Emergency response and recovery workers should be trained to respond to these types of events and have access to recommendations for the selection and use of personal protective equipment against the different hazards they might face, such as biological and chemical agents.

We have all had the experience of what bioterrorism could look like from our experience with the coronavirus pandemic. Many will also recall the Anthrax scare of the early 2000s. Terrorism can be a dramatic as a bomb or as innocuous as a chemical or pathogen released into the ventilation system.

Most organizations will have evacuation policies and plans, but these are often focused on hazards like fire or power failure. These might not be enough to protect your employees from a threat like terrorism.

Depending on the type of incident, the appropriate plans need to be put into place. The reaction window to prevent the threat from escalating and harming any employees is small. Remaining calm yet authoritative gives employees the confidence to react appropriately. Alerting the authorities should be a critical step in the evacuation plan.

Among the plans to develop for your business to address terrorism includes a post event plan. It is important to create an open flow of communication between employees and the security team after an incident. Employees want to be reassured that their workplace is safe and the plans put in place will protect them in the future.