

10 Things Every Christian Organization Needs to Know About Security and Emergency Planning



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1. **It can happen to you:** statistics show that every year in the US there are an estimated 1,408,337 violent crimes, 262,100 abducted children, 1,557,500 structure fires, 1,200,000 coronary attacks, and falls are the leading cause of injury and deaths for older Americans.
2. **You need a plan:** all Christian organizations need formal plans to address these security and emergency risks, however two-thirds do not have them.
3. **Threats are increasing:** according to the U.S. State Department, Faith-Based Organizations are now one of the top five “at risk” sectors in the world, beating many other secular industries.
4. **You have liability:** besides the implications of injury and loss of life that these risks hold, there is liability that every Christian organization faces if there are not plans, policies and procedures put into place to protect staff, volunteers and guests.
5. **Determine your risks:** before any measures are put into place, a risk assessment must be completed for the Christian organization. Because each is different, the risks will be different, thus the security plans will vary. Whether you do it yourself or have someone do it for you, this should be your first step.
6. **Use free resources:** consult with your insurance company, local law enforcement, and emergency services when doing your risk assessment. They are free and may open your eyes to risks you may not even be aware.
7. **Five plans you must adopt:** at a minimum, you must develop plans and procedures to address
1) Emergency Evacuation 2) Shelter-in-Place 3) Medical emergencies 4) Lost/Missing Children
5) Violent confrontations (or “active shooter”).
8. **Background checks:** you must have an effective and accurate program in place to screen staff and volunteers. If you are using a “cheap and easy” company to conduct these, you are probably not getting accurate information. If you are not conducting background checks at all, you need to start immediately.
9. **Training:** once plans are developed, they must be communicated and practiced regularly by all staff and volunteers. Remember, in an emergency, people do what people practice.
10. **Funding:** there are grants for security and emergency programs, however most Christian organizations never apply for them. In 2007 alone more than \$24 million in Homeland Security grants for not-for-profits were available and most went to Jewish organizations and one Muslim organization; no known Christian organizations applied, even though they were eligible for up to \$100,000.

For more information and resources visit our website: www.christiansecuritynetwork.org