



Sheridan Police Department
Policies and Procedures
21.5 Replaces 407.1
Chapter 21 – Emergency Operations
Section 5 – Bomb and Bomb Threats

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Signature:

Cases involving explosives and explosive devices pose a serious danger to the officer and public. Bomb threats must always be taken seriously. The personal safety of the officer and public is of paramount importance in handling these cases.

21.5.1 General Information

- A. Evacuation of the premises is at the discretion of the person responsible for the property. The highest ranking officer on scene may order evacuation when information or evidence is compelling that a bomb is present. If the decision is made to evacuate the building, officers may assist in the process.
- B. The decision to re-open the building will be made by the owner or supervisor of the premises. Law enforcement officers can tell them what the search revealed, however it is their decision whether or not to reoccupy the building or area.
- C. No person shall touch, examine or otherwise tamper with any explosive substance except as authorized by the supervisor.
- D. Radio transmissions and cellular phone use at the scene will be limited to areas outside five hundred (500) feet of the possible explosive. Communications will be conducted by phone (landline) within the five hundred (500) foot perimeter.
- E. An incident report will be completed for each bomb threat, actual bomb or bombing.
- F. All inquiries from the news media should be directed to the department information officer or designee in order to furnish the news media with accurate information and to see that additional bomb threat calls are not precipitated by irresponsible statements from uninformed sources.

21.5.2 Communication Technician Responsibilities

- A. When a caller reports receiving a bomb threat, ascertain the following information from the caller, if possible:
 - 1. Name, location, and telephone number of the complainant;
 - 2. Exact location of the bomb;
 - 3. Time the bomb will detonate; and
 - 4. Size and type of bomb or suspected device, if known.
- B. If a bomb threat is made directly to the communication technician, he or she should obtain as much information as possible including:
 - 1. Exact location of the bomb;
 - 2. Time set for detonation;
 - 3. Description of bomb;

4. Type of explosive;
 5. Reason for bombing;
 6. Any information about the caller (i.e. - age, gender, tone) or call (i.e. - background noise, etc.);
 7. Pay particular attention to background noises which may give a clue as to the location of the caller;
 8. Listen closely to the voice: quality (i.e. calm/excited), accent and any speech impediments; and
 9. Attempt to determine source of call.
- C. Record pertinent information and dispatch patrol units to the area.
- D. In cases where the presence of a bomb has been verified or in the event of an actual bombing:
1. Notify and dispatch the command staff; and
 2. Notify and dispatch the fire department and emergency medical services as needed.

21.5.3 Responder Responsibilities

- A. All reports of explosive devices or threats will be handled as bonafide complaints until they are proven otherwise.
- B. Turn off all electronic communication devices, including radio transmitters, cell phones, mobile data terminals, etc., within five hundred (500) feet of the location of the alleged bomb. Communication among officers at the scene will be by voice or hand signal. Assure that everyone at the scene (i.e. - employees, school administrators, fire department personnel, etc.) have turned off all electronic communication devices.
- C. The first officer at the scene will attempt to gain more information from the person who received the actual call and locate the complainant, owner or occupant in charge of the building and suggest that the building be evacuated if the circumstances of the call cause personnel at the location or establishment or the responding officer to reasonably feel the threat is valid. A decision to evacuate prior to the actual discovery of a suspicious package or bomb will be the responsibility of the complainant, responsible person or occupant.
- D. If a suspected bomb, explosive device, or suspicious package is located or confirmed, the ranking police official on the scene will order the immediate evacuation of the building or area and supervise the evacuation to ensure that all persons are moved safely away from the threat area. A secure perimeter shall then be established. Persons in surrounding buildings should be notified of the potential danger.
- E. If a suspected bomb, explosive device, or suspicious package is located, response of the fire department, emergency medical service and a bomb disposal team shall be requested. Gas and other utilities should be shut off to the building.
- F. The shift supervisor should respond to all incidents involving explosive devices or threats, establish incident command system (ICS) and assign other personnel to assist as necessary.

21.5.4 Conducting Searches

- A. The decision to search a building is a building management decision, with law enforcement providing recommendations. Since building employees are most familiar with the building and would be more familiar with any suspicious items or packages, employees of the location should conduct the actual search with the assistance of officers. The personnel involved in a search must be instructed not to touch, move or otherwise disturb any discovered or suspected explosive device.

- B. When the decision to search has been made, the on-scene supervisor will designate search team(s) as needed, depending on the size of the areas to be searched.
 - 1. Officers shall coordinate the search to avoid repetition.
 - 2. A floor plan of the building should be obtained if available for immediate reference by the search team(s).
 - 3. Search teams should communicate by using a runner to relay any necessary messages.
- C. Searchers must be aware that more than one explosive device may be present.
- D. Master keys for lockers, doors, etc. should be obtained prior to the beginning of the search.
- E. The search should be conducted systematically and thoroughly.
 - 1. All areas open to the public shall be given special attention including restrooms, trash receptacles, stairwells, elevator shafts, etc. as should closets and other seldom-used areas which could be used to conceal a bomb.
 - 2. A ground level search of the exterior of the building should be conducted. Attention should be given to piles of leaves and refuse, shrubbery, trash receptacles and parked vehicles.
 - 3. The first level of the building should be searched and work upwards making a complete search of each floor before proceeding to the next level.
 - 4. An individual entering a room during a search should stop and listen for unusual or out of place noises before conducting a physical search.
- F. If the search cannot be completed within the fifteen (15) minutes preceding the time the device is scheduled to be detonated, all police and civilian personnel should be evacuated to a safe distance. That position should be maintained for a minimum of one (1) hour past the scheduled time of detonation.
- G. If an officer is made aware of or discovers any device he suspects to be a bomb or explosive device that cannot be identified by the owner/occupant of the building, it should be treated as an un-detonated explosive substance and not moved or touched. Immediate evacuation of the general area should be started if not already evacuated. All search personnel should be evacuated until the device has been removed or disarmed and the search for secondary devices can be continued. Do not assume that a device that is located is the only hazardous device present.
- H. Nothing shall be done to change the environment of the area searched, such as turning on or off light switches or thermostats until the area has been searched thoroughly using flashlights.

21.5.5 Actual Explosion

- A. Following an actual explosion, prepare for secondary devices.
- B. Secure the scene and notify command personnel.
- C. Request medical and fire units if needed.
- D. Notify ATF and FBI.
- E. Interview the person who received the original call. All details, such as the caller's voice, mannerisms, background noises, and the time shall be gathered. Play back the recording of the bomb call and secure a copy as evidence.
- F. Instruct officers about traffic control and perimeter security as needed.
- G. Explosions may cause structural damage and other undetonated explosives may still be present. People on the scene should use caution and no person should enter the danger zone except to prevent injury or death to another person. This does not apply to detectives or specialists examining the scene.