



COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

SUBJECT: **BOMB THREATS**

NEW REVISED RESCINDS

APPROVED: *GM*
GEORGIA MILTENBERGER
ACTING CHIEF OF POLICE

Effective Date 8/22/2018

I. POLICY

The Department will not take lightly bomb threats in the village, regardless of their location. Officers dispatched to bomb threats will respond safely and quickly in accordance with Department procedures. Upon arrival of the first responding officer(s), the primary concern will be the safety and security of individuals occupying the threatened facility and the safety and security of those in close proximity.

II. RECEIPTS OF BOMB THREATS

A. By Public Safety Communications (9-1-1Center)

1. On receipt of a bomb threat at the Public Safety Communications Center, call takers shall be governed by their Standard Operating Procedures.
2. Notifications of Fire/Rescue, the F.B.I., and other persons or agencies will be made by communications.

B. By Cottage City Station Personnel

1. In the event station personnel receive notification of a bomb threat call for a location outside Cottage City, the call taker will treat the call as an emergency and instruct the caller (but not the person making the threat) to hang up and call 9-1-1 in accordance with established Department procedures.

2. In the event station personnel receive notification of a bomb threat call for a location inside Cottage City, the call taker will treat the call as an emergency, request basic information so that a Cottage City police officer can be assigned, and instruct the caller (not the person making the threat) to hang up and call 9-1-1 in accordance with established Department procedures.
3. If the caller is the person making the threat, station personnel will attempt to obtain as much detailed information from the caller as possible. Station personnel, preferably the one who talked directly with the caller, will call 9-1-1 to advise communications of the threat.
4. Since communications is responsible for all notifications in this situation, this procedure will ensure that all appropriate notifications are made.

III. FIRST - RESPONDING OFFICERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Upon arrival at the scene, responding officers must know who is in-charge until the arrival of a higher ranking officer.
- B. To ensure an orderly and coordinated response to this type of incident, the first-arriving officer will be the officer-in-charge until the arrival of and relieved by an officer of higher rank.
- C. Until the scene is secured and determined to be safe, all mobile and portable radio transmissions will be discontinued within 300 feet of the threatened facility.
- D. Necessary communications will be made by land-line telephone (not cellular or portable phone).
- E. Interview the person in charge of the threatened facility and evaluate the validity of the threat. Some factors to consider when evaluating the validity of the threat are;
 1. The amount of detail provided by the caller when the threat was made.
 2. The type of place threatened.
 3. The notoriety of the person(s) who occupy the threatened facility (if a person was threatened).
 4. The number of prior false threats received by the facility or person threatened, if known.

5. Whether the caller identified himself/herself with an organization known to carry out bombings.
 6. Any other pertinent information in the officer's judgment.
- F. If the owner/agent decides to disregard the threat, this will be noted in the Event Report, along with the owner/agent's name and position.

IV. EVACUATIONS AND SEARCHES

- A. If the owner/agent decides that they want the premises searched, the highest ranking officer on scene will request via communications, a bomb detection canine team to search the premises and the area will be secured until the team arrives.
- B. If investigating officers are requested to assist with the search by an owner/agent, the Sergeant or Chief of Police will be contacted for authorization.
- C. In the event a bomb detection dog is utilized in the search, the officer will advise the owner/agent that the premises must be evacuated prior to the dog's utilization.
- D. If an evacuation of the threatened facility is deemed necessary, the officer will notify the supervisor, if not already on the scene, and assist the facility's owner/agent in coordinating an orderly and safe evacuation.
- E. Prior to the beginning the evacuation, the highest ranking officer on the scene should consider developing and implementing a brief "evacuation message" to:
 1. Convey the nature of the threat.
 2. Encourage every occupant to visually check his/her work areas for any suspicious packages/objects and not to touch anything.
 3. Advise occupants to take only their personal belongings with them as they evacuate.
 4. Advise occupants before they exit the building, where they are to assemble after they get outside.
 5. Advise occupants to report any suspicious sightings to the first police officer they see upon exiting the building.

V. SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

Upon Arrival at the Scene

- A. Establish a command post,
- B. Assign officers, as necessary and appropriate, to:
 - 1. Divert and control traffic,
 - 2. Assist with crowd control, and
 - 3. Staff any staging area designated by the Chief.
- C. Meet with the facility's owner/agent and obtain a floor plan, if available.

VI. IF A DEVICE IS LOCATED

Procedures

- A. Officers will not make any attempt to touch, move, disarm, or otherwise tamper with any device that is suspected to be a bomb.
- B. If a suspicious object that officer's believe to be a bomb, or the suspected device is encountered, officers will:
 - 1. Note its exact location,
 - 2. Note whether it is making a noise, and
 - 3. Leave the area and proceed directly to the command post to advise the supervisor of the sighting. Do not use the radio.
- C. If a supervisor or OIC is advised by searching officers or the bomb detection canine team of the location of a suspected device, the supervisor/OIC will:
 - 1. Order all police personnel out of and away from the threatened facility,
 - 2. Ensure that everyone is at least 300 feet from the threatened facility/suspected device,

3. Request additional officers through communications for purposes of possibly expanding the outer perimeter,
 4. Have communications notify fire department bomb disposal unit and assign an officer to escort them to the scene, if necessary,
- D. The Fire Marshall of Prince George's County or his/her Deputy, or State Fire Marshall, upon their arrival, shall inherit responsibility for the incident and officers remaining at the scene will take direction from the Fire Marshall and render whatever assistance is requested.

VII. IF AN EXPLOSION/BOMBING OCCURS

A. Procedures

1. Advise communications of the detonation and have them make all notifications.
 2. Request an alternate radio channel from communications, unless the incident is already on an assigned channel.
 3. If Fire/Rescue apparatus is in the staging area, have them respond to the scene for fire suppression, assist with search and rescue, etc.
 4. Officers will not enter any structure, except when immediately necessary to save lives and/or prevent serious injuries.
 5. Officers must make every reasonable effort to maintain order and to protect any physical evidence, while still allowing Fire/Rescue personnel to perform their tasks.
- B. If the Fire Marshall is on the scene, officers will provide assistance as necessary and/or as directed.
- C. If the Fire Marshall is not on the scene, officers will ensure that the scene remains secure until the Fire Marshall arrives.