

College and university campuses may be safer environments than the “real world” around them, but recent years have made it clear that they are not immune to frightening and dangerous events, either natural or manmade. Today’s campuses and their facilities professionals have to be prepared to respond to crises caused by both nature (think of hurricanes Katrina and Eric, and the floods in Iowa) and people (such as the shooting incidents at Virginia Tech, Northern Illinois University, and several other schools). Rather than being reactive or relying on traditional risk management and crisis-planning models, APPA and eight other higher education associations are working together to create an innovative, proactive approach to this important concern—and facilities professionals are essential to the process.

APPA

PARTICIPATES IN
INNOVATIVE EFFORT
TO ENHANCE
CAMPUS SAFETY
AND SECURITY

9 Associations
collaborate on
proactive approach;
facilities called
KEY to process

BY RUTH E. THALER-CARTER

**Dry floors in
RECORD
TIME!**

The Studebaker AirPath™
dries floors in minutes --
not hours.

- ▶ Save time, save labor
- ▶ Patented 360° design
- ▶ Dry carpets, tile, vinyl & more

Visit
EnvironmentsHQ.com
get a complimentary \$10 Starbucks card

\$10

DRIEAZ

DRY | DEHUMIDIFY | COOL | PURIFY | DEODORIZE
PORTABLE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL
866.932.3233 | ENVIRONMENTSHQ.COM

AN ENCOMPASSING APPROACH

The National Safety and Security Project is a five-stage effort, launched and led by the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) under James A. Hyatt, NACUBO project director and principal investigator, and now senior vice president for business and finance and chief financial officer at the University of South Florida in Tampa. The other participating associations are APPA and the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), University Risk Management and Insurance Association (URMIA), American College Personnel Association (ACPA), International Association of Campus Law Enforcement (IACLEA), National Association of College and University Attorneys (NACUA), EDUCAUSE, and Campus Safety Health and Environmental Management Association (CSHEMA).

“Institutions are subject to a wide variety of emergencies, both natural and man-made,” said Hyatt. “When a crisis occurs, everyone pulls together, but the idea here was that we should do so *before* an emergency occurs. We’re taking an ‘all-risks’ approach.”

What makes the Safety and Security Project unique, Hyatt said, is that “nine associations have come together and said this is a concern to all of us that we should address together.”

Hyatt, who was at Virginia Tech at the time of the campus shootings there in April 2007, designed the process. The first three steps involved literature research on the current state of affairs in the safety and security arena; a survey of NACUBO members that has received 400 responses to date; and site visits to a broad range of campuses—both two- and four-year institutions in Arizona, Maryland, New York, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania to date—to create case studies. The remaining steps will include a symposium on findings by mid-2009 and producing a white paper with the results of all

project activities, which may include an assessment tool that institutions can use to improve their systems. NACUBO started the ball rolling and the Lilly Endowment has provided support for the project’s site visits.

“This has been a masterful process,” said APPA President Bill Elvey, APPA’s representative to the project, who is currently director for facilities management at the University of Texas at Dallas and also was working at Virginia Tech at the time of the shootings there. “This project is all-encompassing, involving university presidents, provosts, chief academic officers—the whole spectrum of university officials collectively who are all responsible for the safety and security of campuses. We’re looking at New York state legislature ideas for course credit in the aftermath of disaster, and at mental health issues and threat assessment from a prevention standpoint.”

Elvey reinforced the recognition of the Virginia Tech events as an impetus for the project. “The Virginia Tech tragedy, when viewed in the context of events both before and since that time, provided a unique opportunity for circumspection and investigation into how higher education can better position itself with respect to its safety and security programs,” he said. “There is no doubt that a university’s record of dealing with safety and security is a decision-making factor by prospective students and their parents who are shopping for a college or university to attend. In many cases, even a perception that a university may not be focused on these issues can be a problem. The idea behind this project is to provide a timely review of the issues surrounding safety and security on college campuses and to share the results of the research, survey, site visits, and a national symposium on the subject with the at-large higher education community.”

As a member of the project Steering Committee, Elvey has reached out to several other APPA member facilities professionals by asking them to participate in several site survey visits and help prepare business case studies on the topic. They include Harvey Chace of the University of New Mexico, who visited Arizona State University; Jeff Foster, University of Rochester, who visited Cornell University; Terry Ruprecht, University of Illinois/Urbana-Champaign, who visited Purdue University; and Glenn Smith, Bryn Mawr College, who visited University of Maryland/College Park. Elvey himself visited Tulsa Community College.

“The country as a whole is aware of the precipitating factors for this project, but there are other, less-public concerns,” including a pandemic, according to Anne Gross, NACUBO’s vice president for regulatory affairs and parent of a Virginia Tech student herself. “We’re looking at the whole area of risk management and mitigation. It’s increasingly at the top of mind on all campuses,” she said. “We have to plan for an emergency, not respond differently to all emergencies.”

Colleges are still “very safe places compared to crime statistics for the country as a whole, but that doesn’t mean they’re without problems,” Gross noted, “Students are young—we’re dealing with a population that feels invulnerable. Schools clearly need to be prepared.”

THE ROLE OF FACILITIES PROFESSIONALS

One rewarding finding of the National Safety and Security Project is its acknowledgment of the importance of facilities and physical plant professionals to ensuring campus safety. “Facilities people are absolutely critical, not only in dealing with a crisis but as a key to getting things back into operation,” said Hyatt. “Before an emergency, facilities managers should be part of the emergency-preparedness team. In project site visits, we are seeing facilities as part of that process. Facilities are also essential because they are involved in new buildings and in renovations.”

Said Elvey, “Facilities management is just one stakeholder on a college campus when it comes to safety and security. This is why we have partnered with NACUBO and eight other influential higher education associations to ensure that as many perspectives as possible are obtained during the research project. As representatives of the higher education facilities manager profession, we want to ensure that our roles and responsibilities are both understood and appreciated across the board when it comes to campus safety and security issues.”

Gross sees the role of facilities management as essential to the process of protecting campuses against risk and danger. “If we can engineer around risks, that’s better than relying on the human factor,” she said. “Schools on the West Coast have been strengthening buildings against earthquakes. Others are installing equipment to warn people of danger, or installing high-tech locks to protect people. People in facilities management are all over their campuses, so they’re a good set of eyes for danger or risks, and for noticing anything suspicious.”

Elvey said that one obvious area for facilities involvement is in access controls. “On one level, that could be buildings and locks, but even that has evolved to a higher level of technology, such as biometrics and electronic card access; I’ve got a system for a three-story office building that uses a wireless key fob,” he noted.

Teamwork that includes facilities is also essential to a safe and secure campus, Gross noted. “The only way schools can succeed is if everybody comes together as a team that functions across the campus,” she said. “The impetus (for better teamwork) can come from anywhere in the campus community, but we need to be prepared. We need to spend time and money on being prepared.”

In Elvey’s eyes, that means enhancing the role of the profession. “From a facilities standpoint, we need to ensure that we provide a strong supporting role to the university administration in the area of emergency management planning, response, and recovery,” he said. “By being as proactive as possible, we should not only be able to plan for all threats that might occur on our campuses, but also be better trained in responding in case should something happen.”

The reality is that “we play a big role on the response and recovery side of the equation during and after an emergency,” Elvey said. “I was at Virginia Tech when that tragedy occurred, and facilities management played a major role in

The Participating Associations

American College Personnel Association (ACPA) www.myacpa.org

APPA www.appa.org

Association of Governing Boards (AGB) www.agb.org

Campus Safety Health and Environmental Management Association (CSHEMA)
www.cshema.org

EDUCAUSE www.educause.edu

International Association of Campus Law Enforcement (IACLEA) www.iaclea.org

National Association of College and University Attorneys (NACUA) www.nacua.org

National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO)
www.nacubo.org

University Risk Management and Insurance Association (URMIA) www.urmia.org/urmia.cfm

recovery operations. We had to decontaminate and restore facilities so they could go back to being used as intended. We will always play that kind of role.”

EARLY RESULTS

The project site visits were conducted in October and November 2008 and had not yet been completed at press-time for this issue of *Facilities Manager*. However, in those completed by presstime, Elvey said, “We are seeing a variety of approaches and frameworks that have been applied at different locations depending on a highly unique set of environments. In other words, one size doesn’t fit all, when it comes to either the challenges or the opportunities to approach the rather complex topic of maintaining a highly safe and secure campus at all times.”

The very diversity of facilities management responsibility can add to the challenge of enhancing safety and security on campus, Elvey noted. “We manage the portfolio of buildings and grounds; it could be different for everyone at each campus—there’s no one cookie-cutter model. When I was at Virginia Tech, for instance, I was also responsible for parking and transportation functions,” he said. “What we’re

finding out with our surveys and site visits is that every university is organized differently. Emergency response can be handled by the academic or the business side. In fact, that is one of the challenges – whether it’s handled by facilities vs. emergency management per se, vs. the police/security department.” At his campus, Elvey added, “We try to keep who has access to what on the police or security side—we make sure locks and doors operate properly, but we don’t decide who gets the keys.”

THE APPA ADVANTAGE

Just by being involved in their professional association, APPA members “should already be highly engaged team members at their institution in this area,” said Elvey. “By being members of APPA, they have the opportunity to network to obtain information about success stories and best practices through a number of professional development programs, such as local, regional, national, and international conferences and meetings. APPA’s discussion list is also a useful tool for sharing knowledge on the topic of safety and security.”

FUTURE INVOLVEMENT

As the project moves into its final stages in the new year, Hyatt would like to see the participating associations make its results part of their annual reports, documentation processes, and more. “The amount of outreach we can do will be significant before another Eric, Katrina, Northern Illinois, or Virginia Tech occurs,” he said—and that could make prevention possible and responses far more effective, should they be needed.


Hyatt also sees an important ongoing role for facilities professionals. “We absolutely want more involvement,” he said. “That’s why we’re doing the site visits. Facilities needs to be engaged in the whole issue of emergency preparedness, and facilities people are vital to the team.” He urged APPA members to “get engaged, review your institution’s plan, and—more importantly—get involved in *creating* a plan.” ☛

Ruth Thaler-Carter is a freelance writer/editor based in Rochester, NY and a regular contributor to APPA publications. She can be reached through www.writerruth.com.


RETHINK LIGHT

A Whole New Approach to Lighting


For Full Line of Products Visit: www.eclipselightinginc.com



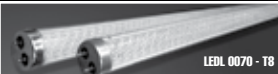
MUNICH Series
Dark Sky Friendly




VTC Series
Vandal Resistant




KAISER Series
Energy Saving Induction



LEDL 0070 - T8




LEDL 0049 - MR16



LEDL 0116 - PAR38

Benefits of Using LED:

- Longer Life Span (50,000 Hrs.)
- Reduced CO² Emission
- Mercury Neutral
- Better Energy Efficiency
- Lower Power Consumption
- Durable, High Abuse
- Reduced Maintenance Cost



9245 Ivanhoe St, Schiller Park, IL 60176 ☉ phone: 847-260-0333 fax: 847-260-0344
quotes@eclipselightinginc.com ☉ www.eclipselightinginc.com

