KEEP YOUR EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN TOP OF MIND!

Ask yourself the questions in the survey on the next page (in the side panel). If you couldn’t fully answer all or even just one of the questions, your business could be at risk and your people may make some inappropriate decisions if a chemical emergency were to occur.

“Lack of readiness can potentially risk lives, damage property and the environment and put your livelihood and your staff’s at risk,” says Dave Murray of Nouvera Consulting Inc., an Emergency Response Plan (ERP) development specialist who also audits agrochemical manufacturing plants for CropLife Canada. Murray says that finding the right people to help you develop the technical aspects of your ERP is relatively straightforward, provided you make sure you have a plan that stays top of mind. “The binders housing the ERP should be dog-eared with use,” says Murray, advising that regularly scheduled ERP reviews are crucial. It’s important for your staff to know that there are people specifically designated for key tasks during an emergency and who they are. What each person is to do in case of an emergency, especially those with designated responsibilities (such as communications, emergency management co-ordinator, liaison with authorities, etc.), including knowing who is in the “chain of command” during an emergency must be very clear.

“Deciding how and what you will communicate to your staff, stakeholders, the people in your community and the general public is probably the toughest challenge of any ERP,” according to Murray. “Let’s take a look at a potential emergency,” suggests Murray, “a case of retail theft for example.” He explains that retail thefts of agrochemicals can, and do happen. “What if in such a case thieves breaking into a bulk storage unit create a major spill into a waterway? Would your organization’s ERP have helped you to be prepared to deal with this emergency rapidly and keep the damage, physical and media coverage, to a minimum?” he asks.

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“What about the communications?” Murray asks. “Would your business have been prepared to speak to internal, external and stakeholder audiences and media about such an emergency?”

Murray adds that your business should designate a spokesperson who is well prepared and can communicate effectively — in an open and honest fashion — to your staff, concerned people in your community, and especially to the media who may focus on controversy and negative images. A detailed ERP must include a readiness plan for dealing with journalists who might arrive with video cameras shooting the “disaster” and microphones in your face demanding answers. Being prepared and communicating effectively with the media will help reduce the misrepresentation of the facts that could cause undue damage to your business’ reputation.

FACT

Traceability implemented in Canadian food production
Traceability is compliance with advanced requirements of end users and consumers in any given food chain that results in agricultural production with added value. Excellent examples in Canada are the traceability systems put in place voluntarily by the Canadian Cattlemen’s Association to trace bovines back to their place of origin; and by the Quebec Ministry of Agriculture for bovine and ovine traceback capability. Traceability tools are essential to transfer the relevant information and therefore protect this added value throughout the supply chain.

Based on information sourced from: SAF Update, a newsletter for Syngenta employees about Sustainable Agriculture & Food Feed Fibre.

FACT

How can we be sure our food supply is safe?

- The Canadian regulatory system for assuring food safety is based on rigorous, scientific standards — and is regarded as the envy of the world.
- A safety factor of at least 100 fold is built into acceptable exposure levels — this has proven to be extremely effective in protecting people’s health.
- The possibility of even small amounts of residue in the food produced by Canada’s farms is further reduced by modern agricultural practices such as Integrated Pest Management ensures use of crop protection products in a responsible and targeted fashion.

FACT

HACCP – An agricultural process that increases safety
HACCP (pronounced has-sip) stands for Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points. It is a system of process control that was developed by NASA in preparation for space flight and has been adopted by the food industry to identify and prevent microbial and other hazards in food production.

It includes steps designed to prevent problems before they occur and to correct deviations as soon as they are detected. The 7 principles are:

1. Hazard analysis
2. Critical control point identification
3. Establishment of critical limits
4. Monitoring procedures
5. Corrective actions
6. Record keeping
7. Verification procedures

More and more Canadian agricultural businesses, including farming operations, are willingly establishing HACCP processes.

SURVEY

ARE YOU AND YOUR STAFF FAMILIAR WITH YOUR EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN (ERP)? ✔ TAKE THIS TEST

1. Do you have an ERP for dealing with a crisis in your business? □ Y □ N
2. Are all the members of your staff familiar with your ERP? □ Y □ N
3. Does each member of your staff know what to do and whom to go to in case of an emergency? □ Y □ N
4. Where is your ERP manual kept and who is responsible for updates? □ Y □ N
5. Do members of your staff participate in ERP development? □ Y □ N
6. When was your business last certified by Agrichemical Warehousing Standards Association (AWSA)? Is it due again soon? □ Y □ N
7. Have you designated someone to lead the preparation for certification so it takes place on time and all staff members are updated on procedures? □ Y □ N
8. Do you have at least two reviews per year with your staff to go over your ERP procedures to ensure readiness for a crisis? □ Y □ N
9. How often do you create a role-playing emergency, or hold emergency drills to keep your organization fully ready to respond to chemical emergencies? □ Y □ N
10. Do you have a designated ERP spokesperson? □ Y □ N
11. Do you know what your designated spokesperson is prepared to speak about? □ Y □ N
PREPARING YOUR COMMUNICATIONS EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Essential Elements for Risk and Crisis Communication Readiness

Understanding the importance of empathy, openness and honesty in risk communication includes knowing how to ensure these factors are present in your information delivery. Here are a few key points to keep top of mind during the preparation of your communications ERP.

There are 3 areas of questioning surrounding a ‘crisis’ that everyone wants answered:

1. Who is to blame?
2. When did you discover the problem? What did you do before it became a crisis? What are you doing now that you’re dealing with a crisis?
3. How can the interests at stake be protected and/or compensated?

An effective spokesperson builds trust and credibility during an emergency situation.

Factors building trust and credibility

- Honesty and Openness (15% to 20%)
- Empathy and Caring (50% assessed in the first 30 seconds)
- Competence and Expertise (15% to 20%)
- Commitment and Dedication (15% to 20%)

Non-verbal communication is of critical importance and includes body language that communicates:

- Your empathy and caring for the people affected by the crisis.
- Your openness and honesty.
- That you are a person who can be trusted and is credible.

Communicators’ Checklist for your ERP:

- Visually demonstrate your credentials of caring, empathy and credibility by:
  - Listening attentively, being concerned about the situation, using positive body language.
  - Prepare answers to 95% of the questions that you think will be asked.
  - Deliver your messages simply and clearly (aiming at a grade 6-8 language level).
  - The perception of your ethics must increase proportionately with your level of communication skills. The more skilled you are the more empathy and caring you will need to demonstrate.
  - Humour is never appropriate when communicating about topics of high concern.
  - Multiple repetition of not more than 3 key messages you have prepared in advance.
  - Answers must be kept brief, concise and clear. Conclusive statements must be supported with facts.
  - Address what comes next and provide clear direction about how a similar issue arising in the future would be handled.

DOs & DON'Ts FOR THE EFFECTIVE SPOKESPERSON

DOs

1. Be yourself. You can’t be credible otherwise but be the best you can be.
2. Pause and take time to think. You will appear thoughtful and deliberate and it will give you time to organize your key points.
3. Stop when you’re done. Don’t ramble on or over answer. It will dilute your message.
4. Say the most important things first (i.e. headline), and then expand if time permits.
5. Speak with simple and clear language. Avoid jargon.
6. Use facts and figures where appropriate to demonstrate credibility.
7. Be engaging, likeable, enthusiastic, empathetic and caring, without being a cheerleader.
8. Flag key points with phrases like: “The most important thing is…”
9. Stay within your own field of knowledge.
10. Stay cool. You don’t win by arguing.

DON'Ts

1. Assume the camera, microphone or tape recorder is turned off.
2. Use the phrases “no comment”, “off-the-record” or “in my personal opinion”.
3. Agree to speak “off-the-record.” There is no such thing as “off-the-record.”
4. Make a statement if you don’t want it quoted. Journalists can’t read minds. They can’t broadcast what you don’t say.
5. Be intimidated by the interviewer.
6. Argue with an interviewer.
7. Lose your cool.
8. Repeat offensive phrases or words in a question put to you.
10. Over answer. When you’re satisfied with your reply, stop.
11. Speculate or speak for others.

FACTS – food production & agricultural land use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World population over the years:</th>
<th>Food production per hectare*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950 – 2 billion</td>
<td>1960 – 1 hectare fed 2 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975 – 3 billion</td>
<td>1995 – 1 hectare fed 4 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2025 – projected at 8 billion</td>
<td>2025 – 1 hectare will feed 5 people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Calculations based on total land under arable and permanent crops

FACT

FOOD for thought

A nutritional and healthy balanced diet available for people the world over, containing several servings of fresh fruits and vegetables daily, is dependent upon its availability and affordability. Canada’s Food Guide recommends 5 to 10 daily servings of fruits and vegetables.

Source: Gaining Consumer Confidence, Syngenta.
Reference: Canada’s Food Guide.
SAFETY KEY FOCUS FOR CROP PROTECTION INDUSTRY
Warehouse standards enhance community safety

The Agrichemical Warehousing Standards Association (AWSA) was founded and is managed by warehouse operators, manufacturers, distributors and governments working together. Its mission is the continuous improvement of agri-chemical warehouse performance through the establishment of standards to improve environmental protection, working conditions and business risk.

A Matter of Pride

This proactive industry initiative is important for both public and environmental safety. Warehouse operators are justified in being proud of their facilities. The public has proof that the crop protection industry, and in particular its warehouse operators, recognize their responsibilities and have demonstrated their willingness to comply.

The crop protection industry recognizes the importance of agriculture to Canadians and is proud to play a major role in enhancing agricultural productivity. But with that opportunity comes a responsibility for environmental stewardship and human safety. The AWSA, along with other stakeholders in the industry continually improve the practice of agriculture. The AWSA Certified Warehousing Standards represent one example of the industry’s determination to set and maintain a high level of performance while protecting both people and the environment.

Protecting People and the Environment

The AWSA Certified Warehousing Standards are designed to address and manage no fewer than 11 major areas of potential risk:

• Fire
• Spills (minor or major)
• Flood
• Explosion
• Personal injury
• Occupational health
• Personnel training
• Mechanical equipment safety
• Shipping and receiving design safety
• Adequate lighting
• Sources of ignition for flammable liquids

To address these potential risk areas, the Standards have 3 primary components:

• Construction and structural requirements
• Employee training
• Documentation

Structural requirements incorporate the National Fire Code, National Building Code and Canadian Electrical Code, established standards that must already be met by agri-chemical dealers. If provincial or municipal governments have more rigorous codes, bylaws, regulations or legislation, these standards supersede the AWSAs Warehousing Standards.

Standards address possible concerns by ensuring that new pesticide storage facilities are not to be built near homes, schools, hospitals or other highly populated areas. Fire monitoring must be provided on a 24-hour basis and warning and emergency signs must be clearly posted at all storage facilities. For flammable and combustible products, special storage precautions must be provided.

Every warehouse employee must be trained in the safe handling of pesticide products, first aid and emergency procedures. Emergency response planning for each storage facility is mandatory.

Integrity Through Compliance and Enforcement

Signed by the Board of Directors, an open letter to all warehouse operators and retailers of crop protection products expressed support of a “No Certification/No Ship” clause in the manufacturers’ distribution agreements. This means simply that crop protection products will not be shipped to distributors or retailers unless they have complied fully with the Standards by the date required.

IN FUTURE ISSUES: LOOK FOR FEATURES ON SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTION FACTS AND MORE ON HAACP AND ISO PROCESSES FOR IMPROVED FOOD SAFETY.