Pandemic Planning: Practical Steps for Facility Managers

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ProFM Body of Knowledge Topics Covered:
- Operations & Maintenance
- Risk Management
- Communication
- Collaboration
Context

“In the end, it will be impossible to know if we over-reacted or did too much, but it will be quite apparent if we under-reacted or did too little.”

Darrin Peppard
West Grand, CO School Superintendent

“Everything we do before a pandemic will seem alarmist. Everything we do after will seem inadequate.”

Michael Leavitt
Former HHS Secretary under President George W Bush
# Pandemic Planning for FM’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHASE</th>
<th>TRIGGER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec/Jan</td>
<td><strong>ALERT PHASE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• New Strain Identified</td>
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<td>• Media Coverage of Potential Pandemic Strain</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Human-Human Transmission in Disease’s Country of Origin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Potential the Disease Will Affect the Organization and/or its Suppliers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan/Feb</td>
<td><strong>PRE-PANDEMIC PHASE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presence of Strain in Localized Hot Spots</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Minimal Spread Beyond Disease’s Source (Country of Origin)</td>
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<td>• Beginning of Government Reactions (Travel Warnings Issued, Some Transportation Network Closures)</td>
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<td>• Anticipated Impact to the Organization and/or Impact to its Suppliers</td>
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<td>Mar/ ??</td>
<td><strong>PANDEMIC PHASE</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>• Global/Dispersed Proliferation of Pandemic</td>
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<td>• Pandemic Directly Affects the Organization and its Employees (i.e., significant, prolonged absenteeism, quarantines issued in/near major operating locations, and travel restrictions)</td>
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<td>• Higher than Seasonal Average of Absenteeism</td>
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<td>TBD</td>
<td><strong>TRANSITION PHASE</strong></td>
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<td>• Absenteeism Returns to Normal Levels</td>
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<td>• Post-Pandemic</td>
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Matrix from Avolution Consulting
Pandemic Planning for FM’s

Agenda

▪ Pandemic Status
▪ Operations and Maintenance
▪ Risk Management / Business Continuity
▪ Communication
▪ Collaboration
▪ Resources
Status

Too dynamic to be displayed

Too much unverified information

OK to monitor other available sources within limits!

Restrict your actionable information to the official sources
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- National Departments of Health & Human Services
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Regional / Local Health Departments
Information

Infection is caused by human-to-human transmission via respiratory droplets. A secondary way is by touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

- 1-14 day incubation period after exposure.
- Unconfirmed interval of virus survival on general surfaces (est. 3-7 hours).
- Approximately 80% experience mild symptoms (i.e. the common cold), and an estimated 15% experience flu-like symptoms that may require hospitalization. (WHO)
- Variable mortality rates (statistics are still evolving)
Responsibilities for Facility Managers

No time to delay; it is time for composure and action.

A global pandemic is a diverse and extreme crisis evolving:

- health
- operations
- economic
- security
- logistics
- sustenance
- endurance
- etcetera

To any and all extent possible, the FM *must* contribute to the response and to the solutions.
Operations & Maintenance

HVAC

Increasing fresh air intake for HVAC and increasing MERV ratings of air filters provides narrow benefit. Correcting deferred maintenance, adhering to scheduled activities and MERV-13 filter ratings are generally recommended.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

First clean to remove soiling with detergent mix, then disinfect with a diluted bleach solution, 70% alcohol solution, or EPA-registered disinfectant. Increase the frequency and thorough activity on commonly touched surfaces. Employ daily steam cleaning for rest room facilities.
Operations & Maintenance

Plan for Temporary Closings

- Program BAS to reflect unoccupied settings
- Implement shut-down protocols
- Define minimum staffing (Security, Maintenance, Cleaning)
- Consider performance of disruptive activities
- Plan for limited one-off entries
Operations & Maintenance

Staff Support examples

Educate employees on infection control and personal hygiene and courtesy matters.

Develop a robust observation / surveillance process to identify and manage circumstances where there has been virus transmission or infection.

Ensure adequate supply of supplies and PPE. (tissues, disposable gloves, N-95 masks, disinfectants, etc.)

Be flexible with planning and staff management.
Other O&M Examples

Reduce gathering space use

Increase telework / work from home

Reduce / limit visitors

Use of gloves for mail/parcel handling

Changed / flexible work hours

Increase provision and convenience of hand soap and hand sanitizers

For more information, see ProFM Module 5
Cleaning Examples

Extra cleaning with appropriate disinfectants and PPE

Exceptional and robust cleaning when a person suspected or confirmed having the virus has been present.

Commonly touched surfaces, for example:
- Elevator call buttons
- Coffee / catering handles
- Shared writing implements
- Conference furnishings
- Door handles / push pads
- Office technology controls
- Telephones
- Chair arms

For more information, see ProFM Module 5
Risk Management

Review existing Business Continuity Plans for guidance

Critical Operations  Potential Disruptions

Alternative Actions

Consider compliance and legal implications.

OSHA – ‘workplace free from recognized hazards’

> protection from potentially infectious materials

> protection from chemical hazards (disinfectants, etc.)

Obligation to protect customers, clients, vendors

For more information, see ProFM Module 3, Section 5
Risk Management Examples

✓ Restrict visitors from the sites or limit the extent of entry.

✓ Increase provision of well-being supplies (tissues, masks, hand sanitizers).

✓ Provide factual information for persons to take steps to protect themselves.

✓ Implement strong mandate for ill persons to stay at home.
Risk Management Examples

✓ Encourage at-risk employees (those with underlying health issues, over 60 years old) to work from home.

✓ Reduce or eliminate travel and in-person meetings

✓ Shut down non-essential site services; eliminate group gatherings

✓ Actively promote and support telework / work from home.
  ➢ Provide the tools and supplies needed for effective performance.
Risk Management Tasks

✓ Understanding alert levels from external agencies.

✓ Assembling a pandemic team.
  ▪ Prioritizing activities and schedules
  ▪ Ensure understanding of roles and responsibilities

✓ Reviewing pandemic-related policies and documentation

✓ Navigating the Business Continuity declaration process

For more information, see ProFM Module 3, Sections 1-4
Communications - Operations

- Post signs to advise visitors and contractors the limits of engagement
- Post reminder placards to encourage enthusiastic hand washing.
- Constantly reinforce other health-related recommendations
  - (Social Distancing, use of hand sanitizers, keep up personal awareness)
- Use appropriate electronic media to share information

For more information, see ProFM Module 1, Section 3
Communications – Management

- Inform occupants and stakeholders of ‘official communications channel’ to advise actions implemented or curtailed.

- Advise vendors/suppliers steps taken and how it will impact them.

- Contribute to or become the corporate clearinghouse for relevant factual and accurate information.

- Strongly control rumors and mis-information.

For more information, see ProFM Module 1, Section 3
Collaboration

- Liaise with other departments (Execs, Risk, HR, Insurance, Production) with a consistent corporate message and implement the BC Protocols.
  - If not yet in place, participate in development.

- Liaise with other departments to be the resource – to provide required support for alternative working settings.
  - Increase spacing between employees
  - Home deliveries
  - Technology / equipment

- Become the source for relevant current, factual and accurate information.

For more information, see ProFM Module 1, Section 6
Summation

- For most people in the United States, including most types of workers, the risk of infection with COVID-19 is currently low. (OSHA)

- Prudent measures and planning involving O&M and Risk Management can improve conditions and reduce disruptions.

- Effective Communications can reduce uncertainty, reduce myths / rumors, and build respect for the FM unit.
Summation

- Existing BCP can provide a good basis for understanding the enterprise risks and enable responses that protect the employees and the business.

- Cooperation and Supportive actions will reduce tension and anxiety.

❖ BE AWARE  ❖ BE RESPONSIVE  ❖ BE BOLD  ❖ BE THE FM LEADER!
Resources Links

www.ProFMi.org    www.FM-adviso.com

www.CDC.gov    www.WHO.int

www.ASHRAE.org/technical-resources/resources

www.drii.org/    www.OSHA.gov

https://bcinthecloud.com/c-19-daily/?utm_campaign=DRJemail