THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Updated January 2018
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Introduction

The underlying principle in any crisis, including emergencies and disasters, is to responsibly communicate relevant information to key audiences without irresponsibly over-reassuring them about the nature or consequences of the situation. Effective communications strategies, both internal and external, are key to successful crisis management. **Our primary message is always that our first concern is for the students, faculty, staff, alumni, partners, and participants in our programs.**

The CFAES Crisis Communications Plan provides procedures for notifying appropriate personnel in the event of a crisis, emergency, or disaster situation and outlines policies to determine messages for internal and external audiences.

Definitions

**Crises:** A crisis situation is defined as an event that triggers a real, perceived, or possible threat to life, health and safety, the environment, the economy, or the organization’s credibility. It requires a quick, authoritative, and reliable response to reduce the chance of harm to the college’s reputation and its resources. There are many examples of what constitutes a crisis, including:

- Severe acts of vandalism
- The arrest of a 4-H volunteer or employee for inappropriate or abusive behavior
- A computer-related security breach involving the possible revelation of confidential and personal information
- A foodborne illness outbreak resulting from an organization-sponsored event
- A severe injury or seriously inappropriate behavior at a 4-H camp (e.g., “fight club” among campers)
- A sudden impending threat to important funding sources
- A spill or release of hazardous material in a public space that could have caused harm to public health or the environment

**Emergencies:** Emergency situations require a more involved response. In these situations, personnel should first contact emergency authorities, and campus faculty and staff should follow procedures of their building’s Building Emergency Action Plan (see Appendix A). **However, this CFAES Crisis Communications Plan should be put into effect as soon as emergency officials are notified and the immediate safety of personnel is assured.** Examples of emergencies include:

- Fire
- Flooding
- Violent crime
Fatality
Building evacuations
Chemical spill or other accidental release of a toxin

Disasters: For severe situations that can interrupt normal business operations on a long-term basis (e.g., severe damage from a tornado, fire, or flooding; interruption of business due to pandemic illness), The Ohio State University has instituted a Business Continuity Program. Every department in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences is responsible for developing a Business Continuity Plan and activating it when needed. For information about Business Continuity Planning, see Appendix B.

Note: This CFAES Crisis Communications Plan should be part of all college Business Continuity Plans, and should be put into effect as soon as emergency officials are notified and the immediate safety of personnel is assured.

This plan is primarily focused on the first type of crisis event listed above, but some guidance is offered for emergency and disaster situations.

Examples of crises that could affect the college include:

- Severe cutback planned for county or state budget
- Volunteer/staff member accused of child pornography/child molestation/child abuse
- Fatality occurs at 4-H camp
- Fatality occurs with CFAES student on campus/or at CFAES sponsored event
- Staff person or volunteer steals significant amount of money from college/Extension/OARDC
- Manure storage pond collapses/leaks/overflows
- Pesticide drift with significant resulting damage
- Fish kill in CFAES pond/animal fatality in CFAES facility
- Cow gets loose from Waterman Agricultural and Natural Resources Laboratory, causes severe traffic accident
- Ohio cow diagnosed with bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)
- Ohio deer diagnosed with chronic wasting disease (CWD) (ODNR and ODA would take the lead)
- Ag server goes down for extended period
- High pathogenic avian flu strikes Ohio poultry flock (See Avian Influenza: An Internal Report for the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, February 2006, online at http://ohioline.osu.edu/avi-fact/pdf/0001.pdf)
- Avian flu strain adapts, becomes human pandemic flu
CFAES Crisis Communication Policies

1. At the onset of a crisis, emergency, or disaster situation, any college employee (including those with Academic Programs, Extension, OARDC, and Ohio State ATI) will put this CFAES Crisis Communications Plan into effect by making the appropriate initial contacts and following through with the planned communications strategy.

2. Only spokespersons designated for each situation will talk with the media.
   Spokespersons will be chosen under the guidance of the director of Marketing and Communications and CFAES administration.

3. Key objectives are to demonstrate our responsibility to our students, faculty, staff, clientele, and the public; maintain and strengthen our reputation and relationships with alumni, friends, partners and the communities we serve; and protect CFAES’s name and reputation.
CFAES Crisis Communications Plan

Crisis Communication Action Steps

Step 1: Implement Call Tree

Step 2: Assign communications roles and responsibilities

Step 3: Determine key messages

Step 4: Identify audiences

Step 5: Identify tasks and timelines

Step 1: Implement Call Tree

A. Employees encountering a crisis situation should immediately contact their supervisor, department chairperson, and/or unit director and provide details of the situation.

B. Determine who (you or your supervisor) should contact the appropriate college-level administrator (college, Academic Affairs, Extension, OARDC, and/or Ohio State ATI) or his or her designee, and the appropriate contact in Marketing and Communications.

C. Marketing and Communications contacts University Communications.

D. In certain situations, other personnel may be contacted (to be determined by the college-level administrator, Marketing and Communications, and University Communications).

See Appendix C for Call Tree names and numbers.

Step 2: Assign communications roles and responsibilities

Roles normally include:

☐ **Lead communicator**: Coordinates all aspects of communication about the crisis among all internal parties, and is the liaison with other personnel involved.

☐ **Primary spokesperson**: Assists in crafting and implementing external/internal message; oversees implementation of the media strategy; maintains an open dialogue with the media; and coordinates communications to additional audiences. (See Spokesperson Guidelines, Appendix D)

☐ **Writer**: Responsible for drafting and distributing messages in traditional channels.

☐ **Social media**: Responsible for posting messages on the college's social media outlets. (See Social Media Guidelines, Appendix E)

In addition, web content specialists, photographers, videographers and others may be assigned roles, depending on the situation.
Step 3: Determine key messages/talking points, deadlines

To frame the response, those involved (see Call Tree, above) need to answer these questions:

- What happened?
- Who is affected?
- Who from Ohio State is involved?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- Why did it happen?
- How did it happen?
- Which safety/government agencies are involved (if any)?
- What kind of follow-up is necessary?
- What did we know, when did we know it, and what did we do about it?
- **What are the most important objectives in managing this crisis?**
  See Crisis Communications Objectives (Appendix F).

Messages normally include:

- A statement to distribute to media or a prepared statement to have on hand in case media inquire
- Statements for key publics (e.g., parents, supporters, neighbors, legislators, internal audiences)
- Messages to be shared on social networks (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)

When necessary, pre-prepared initial statements (Appendix G) may be used until more information is gathered and strategic messages are prepared.

Step 4: Identify audiences

Audiences normally include:

- Participants/those involved in situation (and parents, when participants are minors or students)
- Faculty and staff and/or their families
- Students
- Media
- Neighbors
- Alumni
- University personnel (outside of college)
- Elected officials
- Strategic partners

Several tips for addressing a crisis can be found in (Appendix H).
Step 5: Identify tasks and timelines

The team will identify the tasks to be completed, who is responsible for completing them, and when they will be completed. The Crisis Communications Task Log, Appendix I, may be helpful in completing this step.

Deadlines will be determined according to the situation. In crisis situations, a speedy public response (within two hours) is usually warranted.

Some crises require the notification of the university president's office. See Appendix J for details.
Appendix A: Building Emergency Action Plans

Ohio State University's Department of Public Safety lists emergency procedures, including Employee Evacuation Procedures, on its website at http://www.ps.ohio-state.edu/emergency_procedures/.

The university has a Building Emergency Action Plan template on its Emergency Management website, https://dps.osu.edu/emergency-management. Building Emergency Coordinators are responsible for collaboratively preparing and updating the document with the CFAES Health and Safety Coordinator, and distributing the plan to faculty and staff in each building.

CFAES Building Emergency Coordinators (January 2018)
Columbus and Wooster

CFAES – Health and Safety Coordinator
Kent McGuire
mcguire.225@osu.edu
614-292-0588; Cell: 740-341-7589
260C Ag Engineering Bldg

Agricultural Administration Building
Emily Storey
storey.32@osu.edu
614-292-6164
140 Agricultural Administration Bldg

Agricultural Engineering Building
Mike Lichtensteiger
lichtensteiger.2@osu.edu
614-292-9351
216 Agricultural Engineering Building
Alternate: Jim Fowler
fowler.2@osu.edu
614-292-6131
200D Agricultural Engineering Building

Animal Science Building
Sandy Bentley
bentley.3@osu.edu
614-292-2201
614-771-6561 (home)
614-565-2037 (cell)
110 Animal Science Building

Bill Weiss
weiss.6@osu.edu
330-263-3622
314 Gerlaugh Hall, Wooster

Beef and Sheep Facility (cont.)

Beef and Sheep Facility
Martin Mussard (Manager)
mussard.1@osu.edu
614-459-4124
3620 Kays Ave., Columbus, OH 43017

Dairy Barn
John Lemmermen (Farm Manager)
lemmermen.3@osu.edu
614-292-6759 (farm)
614-403-6151 (cell)
2433 Carmack Road

Bill Weiss
weiss.6@osu.edu
330-263-3622
314 Gerlaugh Hall, Wooster

Horse Facility
Daniel Rhodeback (Manager)
rhodeback.1@osu.edu
614-459-4208
3658 Kays Ave.

Kimberly Cole
cole.436@osu.edu
614-292-2625
222 Animal Science

Bill Weiss
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330-263-3622
314 Gerlaugh Hall, Wooster

Howlett Greenhouses
Jim Vent
vent.1@osu.edu
614-292-1666
Howlett Hall Greenhouse G133

Wendy Klooster
klooster.2@osu.edu
614-292-2764
257A Howlett Hall

Howlett Hall
# CFAES Crisis Communications Plan

**Kottman Hall**  
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*powell.10@osu.edu*  
614-292-3518  
201B Kottman Hall

**Swine Center**  
Ken Mays (Manager)  
*mays.4@osu.edu*  
614-538-9551  
3671 Kays Ave, Columbus

**Nationwide & Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center**  
Allen Auck  
*auck.1@osu.edu*  
614-247-8148  
2201 Fred Taylor Dr.

Bill Weiss  
*weiss.6@osu.edu*  
330-263-3622  
314 Gerlaugh Hall, Wooster

**Ornamental Plant Germplasm Center**  
Susan Stieve  
*stieve.1@osu.edu*  
614-292-3726  
100 Ornamental Plant Germplasm Center

**Turfgrass Research Facility**  
Matt Williams  
*williams.1278@osu.edu*  
614-292-6264  
614-374-5968 (cell)  
2710 North Star Road

**Parker Food Science & Technology**  
Gary Wenneker  
*wenneker.1@osu.edu*  
614-247-6865  
165 Parker Food Science & Technology

**Waterman Farm Headquarters**  
Glenn Mills  
*mills.168@osu.edu*  
614-292-7234  
232 Agricultural Engineering Bldg

**Plumb Hall**  
Joan Jerauld  
*jerauld.2@osu.edu*  
614-292-6564  
116 Plumb Hall

**Wetlands Research Park, Heffner Hall**  
Brent Macolley  
*macolley.1@osu.edu*  
614-292-0621  
352 W. Dodridge St.

**Riverwatch Tower**  
Michelle Ball  
*ball.1893@osu.edu*  
614-292-7538  
Suite B-120

**Wooster, OARDC**

**Administration Building**  
Vicki Myers  
330-263-3831  
330-465-4260 (cell)  
*myers.26@osu.edu*

**Feed Mill**  
Jack Bardall  
330-263-3765  
*bardall.1@osu.edu*

**Edgington Hall**  
Linda Michel  
330-263-3749  
330-264-6441 (cell)  
*michel.37@osu.edu*

**Fisher Auditorium, Shisler Center, The Stone House, The Thorne House**  
Tom Cole  
330-263-5502, 330-621-6549 (cell)  
*cole.355@osu.edu*

**Alternate: Daral Jackwood**  
330-263-3964  
*jackwood.2@osu.edu*

**Food, Agricultural, and Biological Engineering**  
Mike Klingman  
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<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Animal Health Research Program</td>
<td>Jeff LeJeune</td>
<td>330-263-3739</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lejeune.3@osu.edu">lejeune.3@osu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerlaugh Hall</td>
<td>Julie Morris</td>
<td>330-263-3908</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gourley Hall</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Hort Insects/Japanese Beetle Lab</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Operations Services Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rice House</td>
<td>Seth Walker</td>
<td>330-263-3665</td>
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<td>Secrest Arboretum Headquarters</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorne Hall and Thorne Annex</td>
<td>Jim Hacker</td>
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<td>330-464-8889 (cell)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Williams Hall</td>
<td>Kimberly Nolletti</td>
<td>330-263-3823</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nolletti.3@osu.edu">nolletti.3@osu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Plant</td>
<td>Martha Bollinger</td>
<td>330-263-3995, 330-464-1600 (cell)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bollinger.70@osu.edu">bollinger.70@osu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Wooster, ATI

ATI Main Campus (Halterman, Skou and Student Activity Center)
Jeff Strouse
330-287-1362
strouse.17@osu.edu

ATI Grace Drake Learning Laboratory
Mark Schleppi
330-698-5021
schleppi.9@osu.edu

Hawks Nest Golf Course
Rhonda Billman
330-263-3660
330-317-8903 (cell)
billman.36@osu.edu
Appendix B: Business Continuity Planning

Ohio State University's Office of Business and Finance coordinates the Business Continuity Program, which assists university departments and offices in developing plans to maintain operations and services in the face of a disruptive event.

For more information, see: http://u.osu.edu/treasurer/risk/buscon/

Or contact:

Matt Baldwin
Business Continuity Coordinator
Phone: 614-247-5360
Email: baldwin.89@osu.edu
Appendix C: CFAES Call Tree

A. Employees encountering a crisis situation should immediately contact their supervisor, department chairperson, and/or unit director and provide details of the situation.

Supervisor: ____________________________
Home: Work: Cell:
Alternate Contact (provided by supervisor): ____________________________
Home: Work: Cell:

For any university emergency or disaster situation (see description on pages 3-4), also contact the Emergency Management Director with Ohio State’s Department of Public Safety
Bob Armstrong, armstrong.349

B. Determine who (you or your supervisor) should contact the appropriate college-level administrator (College, Academic Affairs, Extension, OARDC, and/or ATI) or his or her designee, and other appropriate contacts, particularly those in Marketing and Communications:

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACTS
Vice President and Dean
Cathann Kress, kress.98
Home: Work: 614-292-6164
Alternate: Anne Johnson, johnson.5288
Home: Work: 614-292-6164

Associate VP, Director of Wooster Campus
David Benfield, benfield.2
Alternate: Rhonda Billman, billman.36

Senior Associate Dean
Terry Niblack, niblack.2
Alternate: Josh Hayes, hayes.644
Home: Work: 614-292-4218 Cell:
CFAES Crisis Communications Plan

Associate Dean, Academic Affairs (interim)
Steven Neal, neal.2
Home: Work: 614-688-5612 Cell:
Alternate:
Note: Dr. Neal is available via email both during and after business hours

Associate Dean and Director, OSU Extension
Roger Rennekamp, rennekamp.3
Alternate: Ken Martin, martin.1540

Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Education
Gary Pierzynski

Associate Dean, Operations
Graham Cochran, cochran.99

Ohio State ATI, Director
Kristina Boone, boone.3
Alternate: David Benfield, Associate VP and Director, Wooster Campus Operations, benfield.2

For 4-H-related issues: Ohio 4-H Youth Development
Kirk Bloir, bloir.1
Alternate: Jeff Dick, dick.7
Home: Work: 419-337-9210 Cell: 419-630-6140

For Master Gardener-related issues
Pamela Bennett, bennett.27
CFAES MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS CONTACTS
Michelle Ball, ball.1893, director, Marketing and Communications

Suzanne Steel, steel.7, assistant director, Marketing and Communications

Sherrie Whaley, whaley.3, alternate for Columbus campus or Extension-related situations

Frances Whited, whited.16, primary contact for situations involving ATI

Mitch Moser, moser.26, Social Media

Eric Owens, owens.778, Web Content

John Rice, rice.42, Photography/Videography

Ken Chamberlain, chamberlain.1, Photography/Videography
Note: If not in the office, contact John Rice (see above), who will contact Ken Chamberlain

C. Communications Contacts in University Communications:
Lindsay Komlanc, komlanc.2, assistant vice president, Strategic Issues Management

Chris Davey, davey.8, associate vice president, Media and Public Relations

Ben Johnson, johnson.7149, director, Media Relations, alternate to Chris Davey
D. In certain situations, other personnel may be contacted (to be determined by the college-level administrator, Communications and/or University Communications).

- For crises involving an employee, include Human Resources and Legal Affairs.
- For crises involving 4-H members or volunteers, include Assistant Director, 4-H or designee, and Legal Affairs when appropriate.
- For crises involving protestors or vandalism, include Public Safety and University Communications: Lindsay Komlanc (see above listing).
- For crises involving actual or potential animal, plant or human disease outbreak, include Legal Affairs and University Communications: Lindsay Komlanc (see above listing).
- For crises involving immediate media on site or inquiries: Chris Davey (see above listing).
- For crises involving Public Safety: Bob Armstrong, director of Emergency Management and Fire Prevention (see page 14).

Facilities Operations and Development
Michael Lyles, lyles.17

Health and Safety Coordinator (OSHA)
Kent McGuire, mcguire.225

Information Technology Services
Matt DeVore, devore.38, Chief Information Officer

Rob Clifford, clifford.158, Information Security Officer

Randy Nemitz, nemitz.1, Educational Technology Services Manager
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<th>Department</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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<th>Work</th>
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<td><strong>Legal Affairs</strong></td>
<td>Anne Evans Schira, schira.17</td>
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<td>Alternate: Alexandra Schimmer, schimmer.1</td>
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<td>Cell:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CFAES Government Relations</strong></td>
<td>Adam Ward, ward.311</td>
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<td>Work:</td>
<td>Cell: 937-215-5651</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CFAES Human Resources</strong></td>
<td>Elayne Siegfried, siegfried.20</td>
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<td><strong>CFAES Fiscal</strong></td>
<td>Eric Bode, bode.42</td>
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<td><strong>CFAES Facilities</strong></td>
<td>Terry Niblack, Senior Associate Dean, niblack.2</td>
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<td>Cell: 614-984-0258</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Alternate: Emily Storey, storey.32</td>
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<td>Cell:</td>
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<td><strong>CFAES Sponsored Program Research Activities</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Cell: 330-231-7165</td>
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<td>Work: 330-263-3647</td>
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<td><strong>Extension Assistant Directors</strong></td>
<td>4-H Youth Development: Tom Archer, archer.3</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Cell: 937-726-0540</td>
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<td>Work: 614-247-8103</td>
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<td>Agriculture and Natural Resources: Andrew Londo, londo.2</td>
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<td>Cell: 614-495-6592</td>
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<td>Work: 614-292-4077</td>
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<td>Alternate: Teresa Funk, funk.67</td>
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<td>Cell: 614-309-3487</td>
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CFAES Crisis Communications Plan

Extension Assistant Directors

Family and Consumer Sciences: Pat Bebo, bebo.1 (interim)

Community Development: Greg Davis, davis.1081

OARDC Outlying Branches

Ken Scaife, scaife.1

Campus Police/Department of Public Safety, Columbus
614-292-2121 or 911

Campus Police/Department of Public Safety, Wooster
330-287-0111

External stakeholder(s): Such as Ohio Department of Agriculture; Ohio Department of Health; Ohio Farm Bureau; etc.

Subject matter expert(s): Such as food safety specialist in the case of a foodborne illness outbreak; an animal scientist in the case of a matter involving livestock
Appendix D: Spokesperson Guidelines

_From The Ohio State University Crisis Communications Guide_

- Always defer to civil authorities when asked by the media about things like fires, accidental death, possible criminal activity, injuries, etc. (When in doubt, discuss with legal before commenting.)
- Address our response, not the cause.
- Place most important points at the beginning of a response.
- Be concise.
- Respond with simple answers.
- Do not respond to hypothetical questions. Bridge back to reality.
- Avoid negatives. Be positive.
- It's okay to say, "I don't know."
- There's no such thing as "off the record."
- Stop talking when you feel you have answered the question and don't be baited by silences.
- Learn to bridge to your key messages. ("Well, I can't address that question, but what I can tell you is...")
- Use flagging to underscore the importance of a forthcoming comment. ("I think what's most important to remember is this: ....")

_From CFAES College Communications_

Sample redirect/bridging statements, to be used if question is off-target:

- "I can't really address that, but what I can tell you is...."
- "What's really important is...."
- "I'm not sure where you're going with that, but something I'd like your audience to know is...."
- "The larger question is...."
- "Our first concern is always...."
- "The real issue is...."
- "It's important to point out...."
- "Let's not lose sight of...."
- "From a broader perspective...."
Appendix E: Social Media Guidelines

Based on Social Media Guidelines in Ohio State University Crisis Communications Guide

SOCIAL MEDIA IN A CRISIS: CFAES’s social media tools can be useful in disseminating important information to large numbers of people, almost instantaneously. Facebook and Twitter are the main tools we can use to our advantage. We also can use these tools to see what others are saying about a crisis situation; we may be able to clear up dangerous misinformation and rumors and also may get information from people who are in close physical proximity to the crisis.

Social media is the double-edged sword of crisis management. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram can be an essential communication tool for effectively managing a crisis—but they can also make a crisis worse than ever if they are not used strategically.

For organizations like CFAES, social media has the power to become one of the most impactful crisis communication tools. However, the nature of the medium means that it has to be handled carefully. Only a strategic approach to social media crisis management will enable you to harness its potential while ensuring it works for you and not against you.

Not all crises will warrant a social media presence.

FACEBOOK: Primary administrator is Mitch Moser, social media program manager.

Initially:

- Send an update to fans. Briefly explain the situation and tell fans where they can get the most up-to-date information from the college.
- Post a status update with the same information: What's happened, where the best info. will be.

Then:

- Post status updates as we have new and important information.

To do this:

- Go to appropriate Facebook page.
- Update as needed.
- Watch comments for information and misinformation; pass along pertinent information to communications leader and respond if necessary (i.e. to clear up bad and harmful info).

We may also consider asking affiliated pages to post our updates.
TWITTER: The primary Twitter account for the college is @CFAES

☐ Consider asking followers to "Please retweet" so the information gets out.
☐ Ask university members with Twitter accounts to retweet.
☐ Media Relations may consider asking news media who are active on Twitter to retweet important updates.
☐ Search Twitter for people writing about the crisis. Pass along pertinent information to Media Relations.

INSTAGRAM: Instagram may be a useful tool for communications, but in its current form, it is probably best used for rebuilding after crises. The mobile, desktop, and Internet-based photo-sharing application and service allows users to share pictures and videos either publicly, or privately to pre-approved followers. Messaging hubs like Facebook, Twitter and websites are more effective for delivering multiple types of content and redirecting stakeholders who are seeking information.

In August 2016, Instagram introduced a "Stories" feature, letting users add photos to a 24-hour temporary story, with subsequent updates adding virtual stickers and augmented reality objects. Images and videos are known to be the types of content with the highest viral potential and Instagram is a platform designated to both. As a result, Instagram brings with it a long list of risks that your crisis team needs to be ready for.

YOUTUBE: We can post video to the CFAES YouTube channel as needed.
Appendix F: Crisis Communications Objectives

From Ohio State University Crisis Communications Guide

While general messages will vary from one crisis to another, the communication objectives remain fairly constant. The objectives are the desired results of communication crisis response, and the effective management of the general messages will help Ohio State reach these objectives.

The overall objectives of the communication crisis plan are:

- Demonstrate Ohio State’s responsibility to its students, faculty and staff
- Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with its alumni and friends of the university
- Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with the communities it serves

These strategic objectives will be prioritized for each listed crisis, and supporting tactical responses will be developed and implemented by the public relations group responsible for each individual crisis. A rapid response to all constituencies is an assumed tactic for each of these objectives.

The following table offers Priorities of Key Objectives, By Crisis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pandemic</th>
<th>Major Litigation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Demonstrate Ohio State’s responsibility to students, faculty and staff</td>
<td>1. Demonstrate Ohio State’s responsibility to students, faculty and staff</td>
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<td>2. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with alumni and friends of the university</td>
<td>2. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with alumni and friends of the university</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with the communities it serves</td>
<td>3. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with the communities it serves</td>
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<tr>
<th>Ethical and Legal Issues</th>
<th>Facilities Emergency</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Demonstrate Ohio State’s responsibility to students, faculty and staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with alumni and friends of the university</td>
<td>2. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with the communities it serves</td>
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<tr>
<th>Consumer Advocate Charges/Scrutiny</th>
<th>Serious Financial Problems/Large-scale Layoffs</th>
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<td>1. Demonstrate Ohio State’s responsibility to students, faculty and staff</td>
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<td>2. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with alumni and friends of the university</td>
<td>2. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with alumni and friends of the university</td>
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<td>3. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with the communities it serves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis Type</td>
<td>Key Objectives</td>
</tr>
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<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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| **Executive Death/Incapacitation/Transition** | 1. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with alumni and friends of the university  
2. Demonstrate Ohio State’s responsibility to students, faculty and staff |
| **IT failure/major systems or operational interruptions** | 1. Demonstrate Ohio State’s responsibility to students, faculty and staff  
2. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with alumni and friends of the university |
| **Deranged Employee/Student/Faculty**    | 1. Demonstrate Ohio State’s responsibility to students, faculty and staff  
2. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with alumni and friends of the university |
| **Controversial Business Decisions**     | 1. Demonstrate Ohio State’s responsibility to students, faculty and staff  
2. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with alumni and friends of the university  
3. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with the communities it serves |
| **National Catastrophe**                | 1. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with students, faculty and staff  
2. Demonstrate Ohio State’s responsibility to policyholders and shareholders |
| **Student/Faculty/Staff Complaints or Actions** | 1. Demonstrate Ohio State’s responsibility to students, faculty and staff  
2. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with alumni and friends of the university  
3. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with the communities it serves |
| **Ohio State Air Incident**             | 1. Demonstrate Ohio State’s responsibility to students, faculty and staff  
2. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with the communities it serves |
| **Natural Disaster**                    | 1. Demonstrate Ohio State’s responsibility to students, faculty and staff  
2. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with alumni and friends of the university  
3. Maintain and enhance Ohio State’s reputation with the communities it serves |
Appendix G: Generic Holding Statements, Talking Points

To be used for news media in first hours after an incident, before all information is gathered.

A. Generic
We are deeply concerned about the (incident description) that took place (time and location). Our first priority is for the safety and well-being of (our students/faculty/employees/those involved in our programs). We are currently working with (agency/agencies) to learn more about this incident, and we will communicate more information as it is available.

B. For situations involving inappropriate behavior by 4-H volunteers:
Ohio State University Extension’s 4-H program is aware of the situation involving a volunteer with the 4-H program in (insert location), and we share the concern expressed within the community. It is university policy that we do not discuss specific disciplinary matters regarding paid staff or volunteers; however, we have taken appropriate action. Specific questions should be referred to the appropriate investigating authority.

To respond to questions about our volunteer selection process:
OSU Extension takes very seriously our responsibility to select volunteers who have the necessary skills, interests, and desire to work with young people. Ohio State University Extension has a rigorous volunteer selection policy that requires all new volunteers to complete the following:
(1) receive a position description; (2) complete an application; (3) participate in an interview; (4) submit to a criminal background check; (5) have references collected; and (6) sign a standards of behavior which outlines expectations of individual volunteers.

To respond to questions about a 4-H club as a result of volunteer disciplinary steps:
We are working with the 4-H club volunteer advisors to ensure that the club continues its activities and that members have the opportunity to complete their project work and take part in the events and activities they have planned.

C. For controversial organizational decisions:
It was with regret that (organization) felt it had to (describe decision). We do feel this is the best decision under the circumstances, which include (describe rationale for decision). We have been in contact with the (individuals, other stakeholders) involved and will continue to work with them if they wish to do so.

D. Injuries:
We understand that (number or descriptor) people have been injured and are being treated at/transported to (medical facility). Until we have more information, we will defer to (agency) for information on the condition of those injured.
E. Fatalities
(Note: In most situations, University Communications will take the lead on communications in situations involving fatalities):

We are deeply saddened by this terrible event and mourn the loss of (number) members of the Ohio State family. Out of respect for the families, we are unable to add any information to what the (agency) has confirmed publicly. Our concern is for our students/employees/faculty/program participants, their families, and the community at this time.

Note: Preserving the confidentiality of information in crisis situation

Although Ohio State is a public institution and subject to the Ohio Public Records Act, certain information by law must generally be kept private, even in a crisis situation. That information includes personally identifiable student information (other than directory information), home addresses and phone numbers, Social Security numbers, and medical information. Contact the university's Office of Legal Affairs for guidance.
Appendix H: 5 Tips for Addressing A Crisis

*Based on Meltwater's Media Intelligence for Crisis Communications Guide.*

1. **Never Lose Sight of Your Goals.**

   As things escalate, get yourself prepared to move fast. One of the first steps is to know who you’re talking to and how to best reach them.

   Keep in mind that you’ll be measured on:
   - **Speed:** Even in the best of times, people want results fast. Acknowledge the problem quickly and deliver updates as you can.
   - **Transparency:** It’s getting harder and harder to keep secrets. Getting ahead of a crisis means sharing what you know and being open about your commitment to a solution.
   - **Relatability:** You will also be judged by how easy you make it for people to find and understand what they want to know.

2. **Know Your Audience (Stakeholders).**

   Unlike privately-owned companies, CFAES does not have investors or a stock price. At the same time, our stakeholders are just as important and care about different things. Customize your message and the channels you use to reach each stakeholder group.

   - **Customers/Clients:** These are the people that are usually most affected by a crisis. You need to understand to what extent the crisis has negatively impacted them and how many might be unhappy.
   - **Employees:** Employees act as representatives or brand ambassadors for CFAES. It’s important to provide employees with college-approved messaging that they access if necessary.
   - **Influencers:** An influencer could be a journalist, a blogger, a social celebrity, etc. Some may be established CFAES advocates, and some may be detractors.
   - **Government Officials/Legislators:** Local county commissioners are extremely important for Extension office funding and local support. At the same time, state legislative support is crucial for both CFAES and the university.

3. **Communication Channels: Get Your Message Heard**

   Before releasing or posting any information concerning a crisis, contact CFAES Marketing and Communications. When you’re given the green light to release information, you may want to use owned media such as your website, emails and/or social media.

   - **Owned Media:** Your website and emails are both great ways to provide information. Make sure that the scale of the crisis is reflected by the prominence you give it on your site.

     Social media channels will allow you to communicate directly to your audience. If your message affects them, you can count on them sharing it with their community. Journalists may also be paying attention to these channels as well.
Appendix I: Crisis Communications Task Log

From The Ohio State University Crisis Communications Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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Appendix J: University-Level Notification and Resources

The below information is taken verbatim from the April 15, 2008, Council of Deans item on Emergency Notification.

The effective management of risk requires that significant events are reported quickly and accurately to the University’s senior leadership. In conjunction with the University’s risk management and emergency management programs, a rapid notification protocol has been established to ensure the President and his leadership team is appropriately informed.

Notification of the President’s Office

The President is the senior University administrative official. Therefore, it is critical that he/she be kept informed as appropriate. That responsibility rests with the Vice Presidents and with the President’s staff.

The President, in consultation with the Secretary of the Board of Trustees, will decide how best to inform the Board, as needed.

The following events should trigger automatic notification of the President:

- Homicide on campus
- Terrorist or suspected terrorist incident
- Events resulting in extreme property damage or excessive interruption of campus operations
- Major accident or building evacuation
- Warning of a major weather emergency
- Major fire or environmental threat
- Recommended closing for any reason

The following events may trigger notification, based on size (several individuals affected, involved, injured or dead) and scope (extreme property damage; excessive interruption in operations; employment related; generates public or parental interest):

- Death of an OSU employee or student on campus
- Arrest of an OSU employee or student on campus
- Data breach
- Systems failure
- Demonstrations
- Troubled employee or student
- Threats
- Bomb threat
- Prominent visitor(s)
- Public health problem
- Regulatory mandated reporting that involves research, public safety or could result in significant fines or sanctions
In all cases, the reporting Vice President should also notify these offices:

- Provost
- Board Secretary
- Legal Counsel
- University Relations
- Business and Finance

- Other Vice Presidents should be contacted as appropriate. For example, the Vice President for Student Affairs on anything involving a student; the Vice President for Research on anything involving research, etc.

**Protocol for Notification of Vice Presidents and Equivalents**

It is the responsibility of key managers in various unites to notify their respective vice presidents of significant events that may reach the level of reporting under these guidelines. If the vice president or his designee is unavailable, then the Office of Emergency Management should be notified at 247-4276. Within each Cabinet area, a protocol shall be in place to notify the respective Vice President from within the college or unit. In addition, the appropriate university office with responsibility in that area should be notified. For example, EHS should be notified in the event of a chemical spill.

To assist with the notification of the President, Emergency Management will maintain a current listing of all members of the President’s Cabinet with contact information including e-mail, general phone, direct dial phone, home phone, and confidential electronic list-serve of all Cabinet members. Upon learning of a potential or actual occurrence of one of the above identified events, Emergency Management will encourage a caller to contact the respective Vice President who will then notify the President. If an event occurs after business hours which requires notification, such notification shall be made through the Office of Emergency Management by calling 247-4276. This phone simultaneously rings with a designated cell phone or is forwarded to the Police Dispatch. If answered by Police Dispatch, request to speak to the senior officer.

Notification directly to the President may occur if, in the judgment of Emergency Management or Enterprise Risk Management, such notification is warranted. Actions in these guidelines are intended to be in conjunction with the university-wide Emergency Management Program, the Crisis Assessment (CAT) teams, operations, and other emergency notification and response procedures already in place.

**CAT Teams**

In addition to the events identified as requiring rapid notification to President’s Cabinet, two university-wide teams are in place to provide early intervention in situations that may potentially lead to a threat to the University population or cause physical damage. It is not the purpose of this protocol to alter either function or to require that all CAT team interventions be reported to the President’s Cabinet. The CAT team operation is described below.
The university currently has a model program that provides early detection of problem behaviors and early intervention with students as well as employees. There are two main teams: the Crisis Assessment Team (address faculty and staff issues) and the Consultation and Assessment Team (address student issues) (CAT). These informal consultation teams report to the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Associate Vice President for Human Resources, respectively.

The Consultation and Assessment Team has the main purpose of assessing situations involving students who pose a potential risk of harm to persons or property in the university community or of substantial disruption of university activities. The Team develops and recommends a coordinated plan of action to manage the situation that accounts for community safety, individual and student rights, as well as the preservation of the campus learning, living and work environment.

The Crisis Assessment Team is designed to assess and manage incidents involving imminent danger or violence in the employment setting. The Team determines appropriate action to assist the affected unit and develops an action plan to be implemented to prevent re-occurrence.

Office of Academic Affairs Office of Business and Finance, 3/25/08

The below information is summarized from Attachment B of the Sept. 23, 2008, Council of Deans update on Emergency Notification.

**Methods of Emergency Mass Communications**

The Ohio State University Department of Public Safety has established multiple methods of providing mass emergency communications. These methods are available to CFAES in the event of an emergency. Contact the Department of Public Safety and ask for the senior officer.

**Buckeye Alert Text Messaging System**

Provides rapid notification via text messages to alert students, faculty and staff of an emergency situation that requires them to take immediate action to preserve their safety and security. Participants must sign up to receive messages at http://www. buckeyealert.osu.edu/.

**OSU Cable System Alert**

OSU owns and operates its own cable TV system, primarily viewed in Columbus campus student housing and in some administrative offices. An approved list of personnel has access to provide a live voice interruption of all basic cable channels and/ or an emergency banner to scroll across the bottom of the screen of all channels.

**Bulk Email**

A mass email can be sent to everyone who has an email account on the osu.edu system. It is distributed by the Internal Communications office.
CFAES Crisis Communications Plan

WOSU Radio
University Relations can access WOSU radio to broadcast emergency messages. The Department of Public Safety or Emergency Management will work with University Relations on the message that needs to be conveyed.

Webpage Message
University Communications can place emergency messages on the home page (www.osu.edu) during emergencies.

Media Outlets (TV and Radio)
The Department of Public Safety’s Public Information Officer, in conjunction with University Communications, will provide advisories to the media on any ongoing emergencies.

The below information is summarized from Attachment C of the Sept. 23, 2008, Council of Deans update on Emergency Notification.

Non-Public Safety First Responder Training
Training is available for faculty, staff, students and others to help them recognize events and alert appropriate officials. Training includes:

See Something, Say Something
This Department of Homeland Security initiative is designed to assist the general public in recognizing suspicious behavior and events. Brochures and other materials are available through the OSU Police at 614-292-2121.

Dealing with Disruptive and/or Disturbed Individuals
A PowerPoint presentation on the “Do’s and Don’ts” of dealing with disruptive individuals is available through the OSU Police Community Outreach and Crime Prevention Unit. Contact Craig Stone, OSU Police Chief, at 614-292-2121 or stone.695@osu.edu

Fire and Life Safety Training for Students and Greek Houses
Student Life collaborates with other entities to provide training, including personal and fire safety, for Resident Advisors and for students living in university or Greek housing. Contact Bob Armstrong, director of Emergency Management and Fire Prevention Services, at 614-247-4276 or armstrong.349@osu.edu
Appendix K: Crisis Communications Plan

Update/Schedule

Marketing and Communications will be responsible for reviewing the plan and updating the call list every six months. Substantial changes are noted here.

The most recent version is available online at [http://cfaes.osu.edu/commtech/resources/crisis-communications-plan](http://cfaes.osu.edu/commtech/resources/crisis-communications-plan).

January 2008: Original plan accepted by CFAES Administrative Cabinet

June 2008: University-Level Notification Procedures added

November 2008: University Level Resources added

May 2010: Policy Statement on Working with the Media added

March 2012: Plan streamlined; Elements from Ohio State University Crisis Communications Guide incorporated

October 2012: Updated Appendix A (Building Coordinators lists); Appendix B (Business Continuity contact information) Appendix C (CFAES Call Tree contact information)

October 2013: Streamlined the call tree to ensure Administration and Communications are notified of situations at the same time

January 2016: Adjusted the schedule for revision of plan away from April/October of each year

January 2018: Added Appendix H