

TEN YEARS LATER...

A CLOSER LOOK BY CROKER FIRE DRILL CORPORATION

By Marc Connor

The tragic events of September 11, 2001 will never be forgotten. It has forever changed our nation and has given us a sense of humility as to just how vulnerable we can be. This day has given us all the realization that more aggressive measures were needed to address the safety and security of building occupants in the event of an emergency. Since that day numerous laws have been passed to better prepare us all when an emergency situation arises. At the tenth anniversary of the September 11th terrorist attacks, we are once again evaluating how prepared we are as a nation. Although we may never be able to predict when or where an emergency will happen, we can take action now to be prepared for these unknown future events.

INDUSTRY LEADERS

Croker Fire Drill Corporation has done just that. As the pre-eminent fire safety/emergency disaster consulting firm, they have been a leader and an innovator in the related industry for over 100 years. They have dedicated their time and resources in serving New York and many other cities in preparing for catastrophic events such as 9/11, as well as fires and natural disasters that may occur without warning. With over 1,600 buildings, encompassing over 250 million square feet of real estate, they are focused on helping to raise the bar.

“Effective preparedness programs save lives, minimize injury and protect our cities. The time to prepare is now. Do you have a plan? Are you ready?”

Ray Weinstein, President/CEO, Croker Fire Drill Corp., Croker Fire & Life Safety Institute

Local, state and federal codes have been passed, such as Local Law 26, initiated after the events of 9/11, requiring commercial office buildings to prepare Emergency Action Plans (EAP) to support buildings and instituting procedures to follow in non-fire related emergencies. Having a well articulated plan in place is only the start. Conducting the necessary fire and emergency drills and training are just as equally important. EAP drills are required to be conducted twice a year for the first year upon FDNY acceptance of the Plan and once a year thereafter, with fire drills being conducted semi-annually. Knowing what to do in an emergency and being able to effectively carry out that plan can save lives. For this reason, Croker Fire Drill Corporation strongly believes that not only training, but proper training by a highly experienced professional, is a necessity in this day and age. Once in place, fire and EAP drills collectively ensure that everyone knows exactly what to do in an emergency. Occupants are also trained on shelter-

ing-in-place, in building relocation, partial evacuation and full building evacuation.

WHICH OPTION IS THE RIGHT ONE?

The recent 5.8 magnitude earthquake was an important reminder of the need to know which of these options to follow based upon actual, local conditions. As some buildings shook and swayed in New York some property managers immediately called for full evacuation when that may not have been the correct approach—imagine large crowds out on the streets imperiled by falling debris from shattered windows and broken cornices. Clearly, in that instance and in certain other types of emergencies, a full evacuation may not be the first or best



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option. Fortunately, no reports of popped out windows and falling masonry were reported in New York, while in Washington, near the epicenter, there was exterior damage to many buildings, including cracks in the façade of the Washington Monument and collapses of the towers of the historic Washington National Cathedral.

Croker creates plans to address all kinds of emergencies and factors in the level of severity so their clients can respond appropriately. For their clients, Croker will assist in conducting both fire and emergency drills and training and answer any and all questions that may arise to ensure everyone completely understands the direc-

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Croker Fire Drill Corporate Headquarters in Islip Terrace, New York

tion and the actions that need to take place during an emergency.

THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

Croker has taken their responsibilities one step further when they created educational programs to ensure Fire Safety Director and Emergency Action Plan Director Candidates have the comprehensive knowledge necessary in the event of fire and non-fire related emergencies. Croker Fire & Life Safety Institute has grown to be one of the most widely recognized institutions accredited by the New York City Fire Department. Their school preaches the importance of fire and life safety with intensive programs designed to educate prospective Fire Safety Directors for fire related emergencies and Emergency Action Plan Directors for non-fire related emergencies. Their instructors are of the highest caliber, offering comprehensive knowledge combined with extensive experience and expertise in all phases of fire, disaster and emergency action procedures. With unique and diversified backgrounds, their instructors and in-depth course manuals offers a broad scope and expansive awareness.

Effective August 1st of this year, The New York Fire Department (FDNY) has enacted a new Code RCNY 404-01 & 02—combining the Comprehensive Fire Safety & Emergen-

cy Action Plan (FS/EAP) documents. This will provide for the continuity needed in this industry. The Code now calls for Fire Safety and Evacuation Plans and Emergency Action Plans for office buildings to be combined into one submittal. Croker Fire Drill Corporation remains at the forefront in preparing these types of plans making sure that buildings are in compliance with the FDNY. Croker is able to create and provide Fire Safety and Emergency Action Plans along with full consulting and training services.

ARE YOU READY?

Although Croker Fire Drill Corporation is the largest fire safety consulting firm of its kind, they continue to demonstrate a personal touch with their clients. When the President and CEO of Croker Fire Drill, Ray Weinstein, was asked what has made his company the most prominent name in the fire safety/emergency disaster industry, he simply responded: "Passion...being passionate is what drives us all to be successful. My passion is life safety and the well being of society. Effective preparedness programs save lives, minimize injury and protect our cities. The time to prepare is now. Do you have a plan? Are you ready?" ■

For more information, please visit www.crokerfiredrill.com or call Ray Weinstein at (631) 277-7602.