

King County Office of Emergency Management Podcasts

Disasters: Are you ready?

Violence in the Workplace

- What prompted this topic today is the recent shooting tragedy at the Jewish Federation here in Seattle
- While this particular act of violence was apparently acted out by a person with mental health issues, on a broad and philosophical note, it appears to me that there are many forces at work in our society who's end result is to drive a wedge between us.
- These can be economic forces that are slowly eliminating the middle class and creating two communities, one of the "Haves" and another of the "Have-nots."
- Where religion can be a unifying force it has been used to divide us. Unfortunately diversity of thought about God is being used not to unite us, but separate us.
- I give a talk I call the "Power of We," In it I mention that in the world of "We" they and them are dirty words. It again appears to me that these four letter words of "They and Them" are being used way too often these days.
- "Security Alert, Security Alert" is a phrase my wife uses to call my attention to my leaving a door unlocked or worse "open" at our home
- We are looking for security in our neighborhoods, at our workplace, and in our nation.
- Homeland Security is a term used with many connotations. The emphasis is really on the word security.
- How do we ensure security in our neighborhood, at work and in our country?
- Is the solution to buy more guns, hire more guards, or install more security cameras and locks?
- These are all physical measures that we employ to make us feel more secure.
- But, I think what is needed is some heavy lifting in the area of talking more with one another. Creating opportunities for each of us to achieve understanding of feelings and expectations.

- And, it is just not about talking at one another, but really listening and achieving a dialog that helps us understand where the other person or group is coming from.
- If we let our differences divide us – we are doomed in the longer term to more hatred, more anger and more violence.
- As in disaster preparedness, we all have a role to play and an individual responsibility to look for opportunities to come together as individuals, communities and regions to carve a better future.
- May I suggest you examine who it is that you mean when you say “we” and also think about who you mean by “they and them.” Then create opportunities for a meaningful dialog with those who are not currently part of your we—to bring about a positive change for the future.