



# DESCHUTES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Policy Title: <b>Bomb Threats and Searches</b>	Effective Date: November 20, 2023	Policy Number: <b>5.25</b>
Accreditation Reference: 1.2.2, 2.3.2	Review Date: November 20, 2026	Supersedes: June 28, 2016
Attachments: <a href="#">Threat Assessment</a>	L. Shane Nelson, Sheriff	

## I. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this policy to provide deputies with a protocol for dealing with bomb threats to include response, deployment, search, evacuation, and assistance to specialized units.

## II. POLICY

While many bomb threats are later determined to be hoaxes, they all present particularly serious response requirements for law enforcement agencies. It is the policy of the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office that all responses to bomb threats or emergencies be conducted systematically, efficiently, and in a manner that gives primary consideration to the protection of human life.

## III. DEFINITIONS

*Bomb Threat* means a condition exists when an explosive device has been reported or is suspected to be at a given location.

*Bomb Emergency* is when a suspected or actual explosive device has been located or has been detonated.

## IV. PROCEDURES

### A. Communications Responsibilities

- Members receiving bomb threats or warnings from callers shall, if possible:
  - keep the reporting party on the line;
  - identify the location of the device with as much precision as possible and determine when it will be or if it has been detonated; and
  - determine what type of explosive device is involved.
- Members shall also attempt to determine:
  - what the device looks like;
  - the type of bomb involved;
  - what will make it detonate, (e.g., radio signal, time delay fuse); and
  - why it was placed.
- Members shall be alert to:

- a) exact wording of the threat;
  - b) estimate of the gender, race, and age of the caller;
  - c) nature/character of the caller's voice including accents or speech impediments; and
  - d) nature of any background noise.
4. Dispatch appropriate patrol units and other emergency service personnel.
5. Members receiving reports from individuals or organizations that have received bomb threats shall:
- a) alert the supervisor;
  - b) determine the location, time of detonation, appearance, and any other available information concerning the nature of the threat or the identity of the perpetrators;
  - c) if no explosive device has been identified, ask that the caller alert employees and others to unusual parcels or items on the premises;
  - d) dispatch requisite patrol units and emergency personnel;
  - e) ensure that the watch commander is notified as soon as possible.

**B. Responding Deputies' Responsibilities**

- 1. Responding patrol units shall use only hand-held radios for communication within 300 feet of the location in question. (Some explosive devices may be detonated by stronger radio signals.)
- 2. If applicable, contact the individual who received the threat to obtain additional information, to include:
  - a) Whether previous threats have been received;
  - b) Possible motives and/or suspects;
  - c) Vulnerabilities of equipment and personnel; and
  - d) Review of any basic information provided to 9-1-1 Dispatch.
- 3. All threats should be carefully evaluated. One must consider the facts and the context, and then conclude whether there is a possible threat. See attached threat assessment overview.

**C. Deputy in Charge**

Based on the nature of the threat, the deputy in charge will, as appropriate and/or required, alert:

- 1. Oregon State Police bomb disposal unit;
- 2. Authorized fire and rescue units;
- 3. HAZMAT units;
- 4. Bomb detection canine team(s);and
- 5. On-duty watch commander.

**D. Searching for Explosive Devices**

- 1. In bomb emergencies, establish and secure a suitable perimeter. The on-scene commander should initiate the Incident Command System, if appropriate, as early as possible in the event. Refer to [Policy 5.20 Incident Command System](#).
- 2. The deputy in charge should consider the use of an unmanned aerial system (UAS) to assist in locating and/or further identifying a suspected explosive device.
- 3. If an explosive device is alleged to be within a building but has not been located, the deputy in charge will contact building owners, management, or other responsible persons to determine if a search of the facility is desired.

4. In the event that a detonation time has been announced, personnel shall not search for any explosive device within 15 minutes before or after the received detonation time.
5. The decision to search, evacuate, or to re-enter a structure/location during a bomb threat will be the responsibility of the individual in charge of the property.
  - a) The deputy in charge at the scene shall provide information, as available, to the responsible parties to assist them in making decisions on searching, evacuation, or re-entry.
  - b) If building management or the responsible agent does not wish that a search be conducted, no further action of this agency is warranted with the exception of standardized agency reporting requirements.
  - c) Only in cases where a real or suspected explosive device has been detected shall an evacuation be conducted regardless of the desires of building management.
6. Searches of target buildings shall be conducted only with the direct assistance of employees or others knowledgeable of the contents and layout of the building.
  - a) The deputy in charge may request the assistance of a bomb detection canine and/or bomb disposal personnel to assist in conducting the search.
  - b) A search plan shall be developed to identify the extent of the search depending upon the type of establishment, motivation of the perpetrator and accessibility of the building.
  - c) A floor plan shall be obtained whenever possible and a systematic search organized by the deputy in charge.
  - d) In no case shall agency personnel declare that no bomb is present or in any way make the representation that the building is safe to occupy, no matter how thorough the search.
7. When conducting a search without the assistance of bomb disposal personnel, deputies should be particularly alert to the following items as indicators that there may be explosives at the location. Deputies should be cautioned that absence of the following paraphernalia does not assure that there is no bomb present.
  - a) explosives-related pamphlets, periodicals and books;
  - b) excessive amounts of galvanized or PVC pipe nipples and end caps, especially if they have drill holes in the nipple or cap;
  - c) low-explosive powders or other incendiary mixtures;
  - d) fuses of any type to include homemade burning fuses, such as string soaked in a burning powder;
  - e) electrical switches;
  - f) electrical matches, blasting caps or similar initiators.

#### **E. Located Explosive Devices**

If a device has been located or explosive device paraphernalia identified, deputies shall:

1. Not attempt to move or otherwise disturb the device(s);
2. Use only hand-held radios for communication within 300 feet of the device(s);
3. Proceed with immediate evacuation of the structure and/or the area to a point consistent with the threat but not less than 500 feet from the device(s);
4. Define and secure the perimeter;
5. Initiate the Incident Command System and notify emergency services personnel;
6. Contact 9-1-1 Dispatch by telephone and request assistance from the designated bomb disposal unit.
  - Oregon State Police Bomb Disposal Unit.

- United States Army Ordinance Disposal Unit, Fort Lewis, Washington.
7. The deputy in charge is responsible for command of the scene and briefing of investigators and ordinance specialists as appropriate.
  8. The responding bomb disposal unit supervisor shall have functional authority at any bomb emergency to direct agency personnel in a manner necessary to accomplish its mission in a safe and efficient manner.

#### **F. Post-Explosion Investigation**

Our agency will assist the responding bomb disposal unit. The responding bomb disposal unit shall have primary responsibility for investigating bombing incidents, including:

1. Checking the site for unconsumed explosives or secondary devices;
2. Supervising evidence recovery in accordance with agency guidelines;
3. Requesting the assistance of other agencies to determine the nature and construction of explosives and the identification of perpetrators;
4. Coordination with intelligence operations of this agency, and those of state and federal sources; and
5. Assisting in the evaluation of evacuation procedures, area and perimeter security, the availability of emergency services, and coordination with the incident commander.