

The Source Information Radio Newsletter

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Event Security 2018: Taking Nothing for Granted

What Happened Can't Happen Everywhere

WEST PALM BEACH, FL: With recent shootings at a Las Vegas concert venue fresh in memory, event security planners are doubling down on the details of "what if's" and considering even the least likely of scenarios to protect patrons. Many are using Information Radio Stations as one means of disseminating security information to inbound visitors before arrival to speed efficiency and safety.

At this January's South Florida Fair, which just concluded the 28th, Security Chief Randy Hoffer is in the third year with technology his event has branded "1690AM #Fair Radio." Mingled with parking and orientation information in the broadcast are key safety and security messages that the Fair needs patrons to be aware of before approaching gates:

- Prohibited items that can't be brought into the venue, including illegal weapons, drugs and alcohol.
- That guests will be required to pass through metal detectors prior to entry.
- How to find help if a patron suspects something is amiss.
- The location of emergency medical services.

"With the escalating security concerns in our country and world today, it's imperative that we have rapid and available communication with the general public at our venue," states Hoffer. "With this powerful tool in our hands....we can quickly and accurately reach our patrons to provide directions, warnings, and vital information. Our event has 500,000 paying customers who need and deserve rapid and accurate information in a format they can access."

Should attendees be required to exit quickly due to a safety threat, the station stands ready to direct guests away from the fairgrounds in an orderly fashion.

The broadcast can be heard for miles around the fairgrounds, which is located between I-95 and Florida's Turnpike. Portable changeable message signs direct inbound patrons to the 1690 frequency, as they exit local highways and approach parking entrances. The broadcast is used to announce daily schedules and schedule changes.

Hoffer continues, "We thought we were prepared for everything [in 2015], until torrential rains caused the Fair to delay opening by six hours. Our pre-recorded radio messages all had the original opening time in them....But, in a matter of minutes we were able to record a new message with a updated opening time. This certainly made it obvious what a flexible system this truly is in an emergency."

Disaster Strikes Twice

Montecito Fire Protection District Pulls Out All Stops to Deliver Critical Information to Evacuating Residents by Radio, Internet Stream Technology

MONTECITO, CA: In December, the largest fire ever recorded in California's history burned to the doorstep of Montecito, located just east of Santa Barbara. The Thomas Fire had consumed a staggering 300,000 acres as fierce Santa Ana winds whipped its flames across Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties. More than 200 fire trucks were prepositioned, awaiting its arrival.

On the 11th, the Montecito Fire Protection District issued the order for 10,000 residents to evacuate utilizing its **ALERT AM Emergency Advisory Radio** System (<http://www.theradiosource.com/products/alert-am.htm>), which it had the forethought to install a decade before. Once residents were out of signal range, the District continued to utilize the system's **StreamCast** (<http://www.theradiosource.com/services/streaming.htm>) internet audio streaming feature, accessible from the District's website, to funnel the broadcast to evacuees via their smartphones and PCs. Listeners who monitored the audio stream jumped by a factor of 6. Then came the 16th, when north winds blew the fire right into Montecito itself. Grid power and the District's emergency generators were off line causing both the radio station and the audio stream to fail once the Uninterruptible Power Source (UPI) was depleted. Arrangements were quickly made for Information Station Specialists to produce the audio stream at their Michigan headquarters and send it to the Montecito website to maintain the service.

"Mere pictures cannot describe this. It was devastating. I have never seen anything like it and I have worked in the fire service for 31 year." ...Jackie Jenkins

Montecito Fire Protection District's StreamCast Link on Their Website

(<https://www.montecitofire.com/streaming-am-1610-radio>)

But it wasn't over.

The area whose name translates "little mountain" was presented with an even bigger problem. Emergency management officials anticipated that approaching rains could destabilize the ground in burned areas and issued Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) to warn everyone in the region. In the predawn hours of January 9th, precipitation began to pour at the rate of a half-inch every 5 minutes. As predicted, the ground began to move. The Fire Protection District's Communication Coordinator Jackie Jenkins was sleeping in her office when the power went off.

"We heard a rumbling in the distance. We thought it was thunder. I looked out the window and there was a glow – which turned out to be a fire caused by a huge gas explosion." The landslide that residents had feared had materialized ([video link from CHP dashcam](#) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JNl2wUIynvY&feature=youtu.be>). Down the slopes thundered tons of mud containing rocks the size of semi trucks, destroying dozens of homes and damaging hundreds more. US 101, which parallels Montecito's picturesque shore, was closed by some 12 feet of mud and debris, prompting a 260-mile detour for coastal travelers.

At last count, 29 people had lost their lives and not all are yet accounted for.

In the three weeks that have followed, some residents have been allowed to return to their homes. Services have been restored in some places. In Jenkins' words, "The local residents are strong;...but some aspects of Montecito will never be the same."

Editors note: Emergency Advisory Radio technology was also utilized by neighboring UC Santa Barbara and the Cities of Ojai and Wildlands Residents (HOA) Association at San Marcos Pass, CA, in conjunction with these events.

Opioid Info on the Air

Broadcast Messages Created Specifically for Information Stations to be Distributed by AAIRO

ITASCA, IL: [Our December newsletter](http://www.theradiosource.com/articles/news-2017-dec.htm) (<http://www.theradiosource.com/articles/news-2017-dec.htm>), which featured the opioid crisis as a public health emergency, spurred the National Safety Council (NSC) to contact the American Association of Information Radio Operators (AAIRO) with a question: Why isn't someone creating messages specific to the crisis for broadcast on our nation's Information Radio Stations?

Answer: Now they are.

At AAIRO's encouragement, NSC writers went to work creating draft scripts. The result is [a combination of short messages that could be combined into longer ones](http://www.theRADIOsource.com/downloads/Audio_Script_Opioids_1418.pdf) (http://www.theRADIOsource.com/downloads/Audio_Script_Opioids_1418.pdf). The Council then utilized their professional announcers to record the messages in precisely the format required for Information Radio Station broadcasts. AAIRO has edited them into a short (30 sec) medium (60 sec) and a detailed "infomercial" version that runs 3.5 minutes. [Hear sample.](http://www.theRADIOsource.com/sounds/demo-opioid.mp3) (<http://www.theRADIOsource.com/sounds/demo-opioid.mp3>).

AAIRO members can receive the messages at no charge. Readers can join AAIRO at AAIRO.org at no cost. The Association will be reaching out to members in the next weeks with download instructions. Or, you can reply to the email that brought you *The Source* and we will provide the link to you when it becomes available. The messages are provided in their original form and also processed for an operator's specific radio station's broadcast..

The National Safety Council is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to eliminate preventable death. For some time now it has had [an initiative directed toward reducing the death rate due to opioid dependence](http://www.nsc.org/learn/NSC-Initiatives/Pages/Timeline-Prescription-Drug-Initiative.aspx) (<http://www.nsc.org/learn/NSC-Initiatives/Pages/Timeline-Prescription-Drug-Initiative.aspx>)

In 2016, more than 42,000 died of opioid-related overdoses, the worst year on record. This resulted in the recent emergency designation and qualified the topic for broadcast on Information Radio (TIS/HAR) Stations nationwide.