

Hazard / Definition

Civil Disorder:

Any incident, the intent of which is to disrupt a community to the degree that police intervention is required to maintain public safety. Terrorist attacks, riots, strikes that lead to violence and demonstrations resulting in police intervention and arrests are included in this category.

Description / Frequency

Civil disorder threatens the safety and well-being of large populations and can damage millions of dollars in property. Riots and protests involving large numbers of people usually occur after a period of unrest. Although not restricted to urban areas, rioting and protests tend to happen more often in and around cities or congested areas. Certain types of facilities are more vulnerable than others. Included are: Federal, State and local government buildings, universities, military bases, and nuclear and correctional facilities.

Historical Score: 2

May 1971: Approximately 150 people riot for two consecutive nights on University Hill in Boulder. Windows were broken, cars burned, buildings fire bombed and traffic was blocked at the bridge on Baseline and US 36.

April 1992: About 500 people at a Hill bonfire toss bottles, rocks and burning branches at firefighters.

July 1993: Approximately 100 people start bonfires when Fourth of July fireworks are canceled.

July 1994: A crowd of about 300 people gather, throwing furniture, and street signs onto a bonfire, then tossing bottles and rocks at police.

May 1997: The worst riot in 25 years in the City occurred on two consecutive nights in the University Hill area and involved approximately 1,500 people, mostly students. Bonfires were lit; dumpsters set on fire; and over 60 vehicles damaged, including 12 police cars. Dozens of students were injured. Twelve law enforcement officers were also injured when rocks, bricks and bottles were pelted at them. Thousands of dollars damage was done to businesses as well as city property.

October 1999: A crowd of approximately 1,000 Halloween revelers overturned vehicles, started bonfires and pelted law enforcement officers during a fracas on University Hill. Fearing that gas from overturned vehicles would ignite, police launched tear gas into the crowd. One policeman was injured when a rock struck him in the face.

Mitigation Options / Strategies

- C Local officials have trained SWAT teams to respond to civil disturbances.
- C SCC Communications and US West partnered together for a warning and evacuation system for Boulder County. It is called the Emergency Warning and Evacuation Service (EWES) and is part of the Emergency Preparedness Network (EPN). The existing 9-1-1 database of telephone numbers and addresses is used in combination with detailed maps to help determine the geographic boundaries of an area impacted. The system is capable of calling up to 2,000 numbers in one minute. It is designed to deliver recorded information to endangered people in advance of a disaster or any major event. Messages can be delivered in various languages, as well as to pagers or the Emergency Alert System (EAS). Multiple floodplain areas can be handled during a single event with priority given to the area most impacted.

Hazard / Definition

Description / Frequency

Mitigation Options / Strategies

Civil Disorder:.....Page 2

August 2000: Approximately seventy (70) police officers responded to a block party out of control on University Hill on August 27, 2000. Tear gas was used to disperse a crowd of 500 to 1,000 people after a large bonfire was started in the street. One arrest was made and two officers received minor injuries when bottles and rocks were thrown at police. Damage, manpower and cleanup costs estimated at \$8,000. The new "Reverse 9-1-1" system was used to notify approximately 4,000 residents in the area.

A civil disturbance occurred in 1991 as a result of the United State's involvement in the Persian Gulf War.

Disturbances have occurred at abortion clinics and on the Campus at the University when the CIA does recruiting.

The proximity of the Rocky Flats Plant located in Jefferson County has always been a concern in Boulder County and demonstrations have taken place several times.

Potential Score: 1

The probability of civil disorder is always a possibility in any major urban area. With the University of Colorado located in the City of Boulder and the Rocky Flats facility nearby, the potential for demonstrations and protests exists.

Impact on Life and Property:

Loss of life and property as well as disruption of services such as electricity, water supply, public transportation, communications, etc., could result from civil disorder. Fear can be a factor and interrupt the normal functioning of a community. The need for increased security for sites vulnerable to civil disorder places demands on local law enforcement organizations.

Revised 2000