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Greening Juvenile Justice

By Robert Kravitz

Published: 04/06/2009



Editor's Note: Robert Kravitz is a former building service contractor who has written two books on the professional cleaning industry. He may be reached at rkravitz@rcn.com.

In 2007, the Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center opened in San Leandro, California. The ultramodern building was designed to meet the county's current detention needs as well as those several years into the future. The 379,000-square-foot facility houses five courtrooms, nine related agencies, and 360 beds.

But the building has a plus that might not be noticeable upon first inspection. It was

planned, was designed, and is now operated as a Green facility. In fact, it has met so many health and environmental standards as well as levels of efficiency, it is a LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold-certified building.

Among the building's Green attributes:

- Water-efficient irrigation systems save more than 5,000,000 gallons of water annually.
- The 850 kW solar panels on the rooftop meet more than 60 percent of the facility's electrical needs.
- More than 90 percent of the construction waste was recycled.
- Waterless urinals and water-efficient plumbing save about 2,000,000 gallons of water annually.
- Cleaning is performed using Green-certified cleaning chemicals and products.

“In order for a facility to be LEED certified, it must use Green cleaning chemicals,” says Steven Ashkin, President of The Ashkin Group, the leading advocate for Green cleaning in the professional cleaning industry, and the person in charge of putting together a Green cleaning program for the facility. “And even if the center had not sought LEED certification, there would have been plenty of reasons for it to use Green cleaning products anyway.”

Greener, Safer, Healthier, and More Cost-Effective Why would a detention center choose to use Green cleaning

chemicals even if it is not seeking LEED certification or any other environmental designation or honor? The answer is simple, according to Ashkin. “Environmentally preferable cleaning chemicals are safer, healthier, and surprisingly cost-effective,” he says.

Additionally, and more specific to a detention center, Ashkin mentioned the following:

- Prisoners have been known to drink cleaning chemicals. Sometimes they do this so they can be transferred to the infirmary, which is usually more comfortable than the actual detention center; in other situations, they are simply trying to harm themselves. Green products tend to be less toxic, minimizing the ramifications of such abuse.
- Cleaning tools including chemicals, mop handles, and equipment have been used as weapons; Green products tend to be less harmful if misused, and tools and equipment are typically made of more durable materials, preventing a mop handle, for instance, from being broken off.
- There is less fear of mixing chemicals by accident. Non-Green chemicals such as bleach and ammonia are used in many cleaning situations. However, when mixed together, they can be deadly. Environmentally preferable cleaning products do not contain either of these ingredients.

Ashkin adds that not only are Green cleaning chemicals safer but many of today’s Green products have proved to be very effective, which is also of great concern in a detention center. “Hundreds of people are packed together in a detention center,” he says. “This means infection, disease, and illness can spread quickly. Many if not most environmentally preferable cleaning chemicals and products perform as well as conventional products at eliminating bacteria and infection, helping to keep building occupants healthy.” **Floors a Green Cleaning**

Concern

Among the big maintenance concerns in a detention facility are the floors. In most settings, the facility has hard-surface flooring throughout—typically vinyl tile—and administrators want these floors to be as clean, shiny, and healthy as possible. “The appearance of the floors plays a significant role in a detention facility,” says Mike Sawchuk, Vice President of Enviro-Solutions, a leading manufacturer of Green cleaning chemicals who works with distributors that have detention center clients. “[If a floor is] messy, dirty, or unkempt, it can lower morale for inmates and staff alike and even encourage disorder. [When floors are] clean and well maintained, they can do just the opposite.”

However, Greening floorcare can be a problem, according to Sawchuk. It has proved more difficult for manufacturers to produce Green floorcare products—such as strippers, restorers, and finishes—that meet the performance levels of conventional products. “This is because most finishes, as an example, contain zinc and other heavy metals that can negatively affect human health,” he says. “Substitutes that do not contain these ingredients have not always proved to be effective.”

Sawchuk sites one situation: a facility owned and operated by the New York state government tested 23 different finishes before they found two that performed as well as the conventional finish they had used before. “Green-certified finishes and strippers do exist, and some are proving to be excellent performers and cost-effective,” he says. “Managers and administrators may need to try different brands in their own facilities to see which works best for them.”

Green Means Green

Many years ago, one reason facility managers were reluctant to select environmentally preferable cleaning products was because they tended to be much more costly than conventional ones. However, after years of

research and new technology, most Green cleaning products cost the same or even less to use than conventional products.

One reason for this is the fact that Green cleaning chemicals are usually highly concentrated, allowing them to go further, which saves money. Additionally, auto-dispensing systems are usually part of a Green cleaning program. Depending on the use of the product, these systems dilute the concentrated cleaner with water so just enough chemical is used to do the job satisfactorily so there is no waste.

And the savings can add up. The city of Santa Monica, California, reports that their costs for cleaning chemicals has been reduced by 5 percent simply by switching to Green cleaning products. Savings such as these have been replicated by the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Chicago Public School System, and the states of Minnesota, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and others.

“And don’t forget the ‘intangible’ savings that often result from the use of environmentally preferable cleaning products,” says Ashkin. “We now know that a number of health problems—from respiratory ailments such as asthma to headaches, dizziness, and fatigue—have been tied to conventional cleaning products. When inmates get sick, it costs the facility—and ultimately the taxpayer—more money.”

With the current economic situation and virtually every state struggling to decrease costs and expenditures, it is a rare opportunity when a facility can be cleaner, healthier, and more fiscally responsible all at the same time. The use of Green cleaning chemicals offers that opportunity. When used in a detention facility, this may also translate into a more peaceful, optimally run center as well.

Sidebar:

More than Chemicals

Although Green-certified cleaning chemicals play a significant role in keeping a facility healthier, it should be understood that they are just one component of a Green cleaning system. Ashkin says that a Green cleaning system also involves such things as:

- High-performance mats at key entries to help capture soils and contaminants and keep them outside
- Microfiber cloths and mops that require less water and chemical to work effectively
- HEPA-filter vacuum cleaners to help protect indoor air quality
- Floorcare equipment with built-in vacuum systems to reduce airborne particulates

Comments:

1. *jfn3253* on 04/09/2009:

This makes great common sense. Anyone interested in really green products should check out www.WowGreen.net. These are brand new enzyme based products for cleaning that are used in industry and homes - safe for infants and even us older adults. One salesman actually drank the cleaning product in front of us to show it's safe. The product was designed

by Ezyme Environmental Solutions in Fort Wayne and WowGreen just took over the distributions rights. It's a network marketing group so find a representative near you. If you're in Fort Wayne area and interested in learning more about it, contact me.

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The Evolution of Security Threat Groups into the Twenty-First Century - Part I

By *William Sturgeon*

Published: 04/27/2009



Editors note: Corrections.com author, William Sturgeon, is an emergency preparedness and counterterrorism planning expert. He has more than 35 years of experience in the criminal justice field, and has managed security operations for sheriffs' offices and correctional agencies across the United States.

It is hard to believe that it has been almost thirty years since the first “formal” Gang Intelligence Units were formed. Through the years, Gang Intelligence Units have developed the knowledge, skills, and abilities to manage Security Threat Groups within correctional institutions.

As the influence of ‘formal’ prison gangs and other groups became clear to correctional professionals, they initiated gang management techniques. They gained gang intelligence and disseminated it to the administration and line staff; they monitored housing and working assignments of gang members; and, they identified and validated gang members and leaders.

It was the Gang Intelligence Units that “coined” the term “Security Threat Groups.” It became clear to the Gang Intelligence Units that more than the traditional prison gangs were threatening the security of the institutions. There were white supremacy groups who were religious based as well as racist; there were members of organized crime groups; there was an influx of organized street gang members, and domestic terrorists; and, there were members of the major motorcycle gangs, etc. The dynamics of jail/prison life was changing as the Security Threat Groups gained power.

Yet, for more than a decade, Gang Intelligence Units have been able, for the most part, to disrupting the activities of the Security Threat Groups within correctional institutions. Now, however, I believe that the Gang Intelligence Units will soon be facing new challenges. These new challenges are directly associated with the criminals that who up the Mexican Drug Cartels and their associates.

What makes the Mexican Cartel members different from other Security Threat Groups is the level of military training, violence and organization of some of their members? Currently, the drug cartel wars are being waged

in Mexico and along the American border with Mexico. Currently, it is the border states that are dealing with the cartel members, while there is evidence that the cartels are extending their influence throughout the United States. Many of the Mexican Drug Cartel members belong to an extremely violent and well-trained group call Los Zetas or Zetas. Who are the Zetas? They are former members of the Mexican Army's elite airborne Special Forces group who have gone to work for the Mexican Drug Cartel.

The leaders of the Zetas were trained at Fort Benning, GA. "They weren't just any military officers...They were special elite forces trained in the United States...They were trained in counterinsurgency strategies, in which extreme degrees of cruelty are allowed...They seek not only to eliminate their adversaries but to leave a message for those remaining alive and to intimidate, paralyze, terrorize the population." [1]

A Justice Department memorandum has been issued warning "that Mexican commandos were trained by U.S. forces, but switched sides. They are now using their deadly skills to work for the drug cartels." The Zetas' extreme violent tentacles have breached the Mexican border into many states of the United States, specifically, but not inclusively, Arizona, Texas, California, and New Mexico. The group may also have ventured as far as Nashville, TN, and Atlanta, GA. [2]

Many law enforcement agencies believe that the Zetas have started their own drug cartel as well as continuing to act as "muscle" for the existing Mexican Drug Cartels. Additionally, there is significant evidence that Zetas use street gangs to distribute their drugs in the United States. In fact, the FBI has reported that Los Zetas has control over such U.S.-based gangs as the Mexican Mafia, the Texas Syndicate, MS-13, and Hermanos Pistoleros Latinos. [3] It is only going to be a matter of time before "official" Zetas will join their American-gang associates (STGs) in American correctional and detention facilities. In fact, if the truth were known, some public and private detention facilities are presently incarcerating numerous Mexican Cartel members, both males and females, and some Zetas.

The influence of the Los Zetas on offender populations can be dramatic. Because of their military training they present an overall threat to every facet of an institution's security operations. This is how the Los Zetas offenders could influence the security of an institution:

- Their elite military training in counter-insurgence tactics has trained them in escape and evasion, martial arts, etc. (As part of their escape and evasion training they have been trained to compromise fences, defeat intrusion detection and video surveillance.)
- They will use the "traditional" prison gang members to do the grunt work (Those who refuse will be dealt with in a violent way – they eliminate their rivals.) They will elevate the level of violence directed at rivals and staff - this group does not hesitate in killing law enforcement officers.) At least 20 inmates died inside the high security area of a prison in the border city of Ciudad Juarez...in what looks to have been a massacre carried out by members of one gang against rivals... [4]
- They will use every tactic to include fear, intimidation, money, sex, etc., to compromise the staff and the administration

The administrators of correctional or detention facilities who incarcerate Zetas will have to pay special attention to the staff who interact with Los Zetas, to ensure that the staff does not get compromised by the Zetas offenders. Agencies must guarantee that staff is rotated frequently, have a direct route to reporting incidents where they have been threatened or approached to break the rules, and receive special training on how to interact with Zeta offenders.. What must not be forgotten is that Zetas have the "real world" ability to reach outside the institution and go after the families of staff – a tactic that they are more than willing to employ.

On April 18, 2009, eight people were killed during an assault on a prison convoy west of Mexico City. "At least 20 assailants launched a running gun battle... Saturday. Police called it a well-planned attack intended to free Jeronimo Gamez, cousin of Arturo Beltran Leyva, the reputed leader of one of Mexico's most powerful cartels." [5]

I believe that the Los Zetas, because of their highly specialized training, propensity for violence, organizational sophistication and total disregard for the law, are the catalysts for the next wave of gang evolution. As this evolution unfolds, violence on American streets, as well as in correctional and detention institutions, will escalate radically.

Part II of this series will be a discussion on what security measures, technology, and training will be needed to manage Security Threat Groups in the Twenty-first Century.

References and Suggested Reading

[1] Schroeder, HSToday Magazine March 2009 pp 29.

[2] Mexican Drug Commandos, INFOWARS.COM, May 2005,

http://www.infowars.com/articles/worl/mexican_drug_commandos.

[3] Grayson, George E. Los Zetas: the Ruthless Army Spawned by a Mexican Drug Cartel, May 2008 Foreign Policy Research Institute. <http://www.fpri.org/enotes/200805.grayson.loszetas.html>

[4] Intellpuke, Free Internet Press, March 04, 2009, <http://freeinterpress.com/story>. [4] Intellpuke, Free Internet

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Writer, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20090420/ap_on_re_la_am_ca/lt_drug_war_mexico

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1. **wsturgeon** on 04/27/2009:

Here is the web site <http://www.niagarafallsreporter.com/column408.html> the web site - It's old age. Bill Sturgeon

2. **wsturgeon** on 04/27/2009:

3. **wsturgeon** on 04/27/2009:

Checkout this web site for information on Los Zetas. Does anyone think the current "Swine Flu" scare will cause additional troubles for American law enforcement and corrections.

Checkout your pandemic contingency plans. Bill Sturgeon

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CDC Health Update: Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Update: New Interim Recommendations and Guidance for Health Directors about Strategic National Stockpile Materiel

By *CDC*

Published: 04/25/2009

CDC Health Update: Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Update: New Interim Recommendations and Guidance for Health Directors about Strategic National Stockpile Materiel

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Situation Update

As part of an ongoing investigation into an outbreak of swine influenza A (H1N1) in the United States and Mexico, CDC today announced confirmation of an additional 13 human cases of infection with swine flu in the U.S, bringing the total number of cases to 21 so far. At this time, cases of swine influenza have been confirmed in California, Kansas, New York City, Ohio and Texas. Based on the rapid spread of the virus thus far, public health officials believe that more cases will be identified over the next several weeks. Case counts are updated daily and available at <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>.

CDC has activated its Emergency Operations Center to coordinate the agency's response to this emerging health threat and today the Acting Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services declared a public health emergency in the United States. CDC's goals during this public health emergency are to reduce transmission and illness severity, and provide information to assist health care providers, public health officials and the public in addressing the challenges posed by this newly identified influenza virus. To this end, CDC has issued a number of guidance documents in the past 24 hours. In addition, CDC's Division of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) is releasing one-quarter of its antiviral drugs, personal protective equipment, and respiratory protection devices to help states respond to the outbreak. This Health Alert Network update is intended to alert recipients to newly available guidance and provide information regarding the deployment of the SNS.

In addition, clinicians should consider swine influenza infection in the differential diagnosis of patients with acute febrile respiratory illness who have either been in contact with persons with confirmed swine flu, or who were in one of the five U.S. states that have reported swine flu cases or in Mexico during the 7 days preceding their illness onset.

Patients who meet these criteria should be tested for influenza A, and specimens positive for influenza A should be sent to public health laboratories for further characterization. Clinicians who suspect that a patient has a swine influenza virus infection should obtain a nasopharyngeal swab from the patient, place the swab in a viral transport medium, refrigerate the specimen, and then contact their state or local health department to facilitate transport and timely diagnosis at a state public health laboratory. CDC requests that state public health laboratories promptly send all influenza A specimens that cannot be subtyped to the CDC, Influenza Division, Virus Surveillance and Diagnostics Branch Laboratory.

This is a rapidly evolving situation and guidance should be considered interim and will be updated frequently.

Newly Available Guidance

New guidance is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/recommendations>, including:

* Interim Guidance on Antiviral Recommendations for Patients with Confirmed or Suspected Swine Influenza

A (H1N1) Virus Infection and Close Contacts * Interim Guidance for Swine influenza A (H1N1): Taking Care of a Sick Person in Your Home * Interim Recommendations for Facemask and Respirator Use in Certain Community Settings Where Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Transmission Has Been Detected * Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Biosafety Guidelines for Laboratory Workers * Interim Guidance for Infection Control for Care of Patients with Confirmed or Suspected Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Infection in a Healthcare Setting * Interim Guidance on Case Definitions to be Used For Investigations of Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Cases

Strategic National Stockpile Guidance

Health directors should be aware that the CDC Division of Strategic National Stockpile (DSNS) has been given the authority from HHS and CDC leadership to initiate shipment of materiel for the swine flu influenza outbreak. At this point, DSNS has been given permission to release 25 percent of states and localities allocation of SNS held antiviral drugs, personal protective equipment, and respiratory protection devices.

Realizing the significant quantity of materiel, CDC Strategic National Stockpile personnel will be working with state and local health department staff to ensure that CDC provides you with as much flexibility as possible as we prepare to ship the first 25 percent of your allocated materiel. SNS staff are currently in the process of contacting state and local Preparedness Directors and SNS Coordinators to facilitate the receipt of SNS allocated materiel.

Please be advised that once this materiel leaves federal control, it becomes a state responsibility to maintain, store, secure, and deploy. If the materiel should go unused, states should be prepared for long term storage.

For more information about swine flu: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu> Additional information is also available by calling 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)

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