Officer Safety Principles

Scott Kirshner, M.Ed.

"It takes only one act of violence to dramatically change your world for the worse. Generally, you don't get to choose the time, location, or circumstances. It matters not that you are tired, sick, injured or distracted. You are either prepared to respond appropriately or you are not. There tends not to be a middle ground when violence is directed at you."

Scott Kirshner
Chapter 1, Page 1
Officer Survival for Code Enforcement Officers

There is no inspection

you conduct that is

worth risking your life!

Officer Safety Principles

- Never intentionally place yourself or remain in a dangerous situation
- If you find yourself in a dangerous or violent situation, attempt to leave as soon as possible without placing yourself in further jeopardy
- Avoiding confrontations and de-escalation is a better option than using force.
  - ⇨ But use force when it is **reasonable** and **necessary** based on the action of the threat(s) you encounter.
- You can always come back to a potentially dangerous situation with back up such as a police officer.

DANGER

This inspection will turn violent and potentially deadly.

1. **Slow Down or Stop When Necessary**

   - Do not rush into a situation

     - ⇨ Many of the tasks you perform tend to be routine so do not let this lead to complacency on your part!

     - ⇨ Do not lose sight of the reality that the citizen you are contacting may not be happy about your presence or the situation. Never assume that anyone will be compliant or non-violent.

   - Use your senses: vision, hearing and smell

     R e m e m b e r : N o t h i n g i s R o u t i n e

2. **Perceive**

- Scan the environment for threats to your safety

- **Observe** the environment before proceeding

  ⇨ Who is around?

  ⇨ What are people doing?

  ⇨ Do you observe any suspicious activity?

  ⇨ Are there signs of illegal activity?

  ⇨ Do you notice potential safety issues?

  ⇨ Are you being observed?

  ⇨ Identify emergency exit routes.

3. **Analyze**

- What is happening?

- What are your options?

What is your plan?

4. **React**

- React appropriately based upon the situation.

    Options include:

    ⇨ Make contact and conduct your inspection

    ⇨ Utilize verbal de-escalation skills

    ⇨ Leave

    ⇨ Disengage

    ⇨ Observe from a safe distance

    ⇨ Call 9-1-1 for police response

Know All Exits

A valuable safety principle is to know a minimum of two exits for each location you visit in case you need to leave in a hurry. While this is a "basic" concept many people fail to practice it to the point where it becomes a habit. Practice this for every location you go to both on and off duty.

Remember this truth:

It's all good until it isn't.

You must make a conscious decision to be proactive with your safety. Only you can implement safety principles and tactics that will make you safer in the performance of your job duties. This is a personal responsibility. When it comes to safety there are no guarantees but the goal is to prevent or mitigate acts of violence.

It is easy to fall into the complacency trap especially if you have been on the job a while and no safety incidents have occurred. It becomes easy to believe all the faulty assumptions that help you to rationalize that you are safe. But it only takes one act of violence to shatter your paradigm and potentially your world. Again, choose to be proactive with your safety.

Choose safety starting today. From today forward choose to implement and practice safety principles and tactics that will keep you safer as a code enforcement officer. A good motto to use is: "***Every Day; Every Inspection***". This means that you will choose to be safe every day and with every inspection that you complete.

About the author

Scott Kirshner, M.Ed. has been a Parole Administrator, Supervisory Probation Officer, and Corrections Officer. He has extensive experience as an officer survival trainer and has been a lead defensive tactics instructor, firearms instructor, and use of force instructor. He is the author of **Officer Survival for Code Enforcement Officers** *which is available on Amazon.com. Mr. Kirshner is the owner and Lead Instructor of Dedicated Threat Solutions, LLC. The author can be reached at:* info@dedicatedthreatsolutions.com *or to learn more visit:* www.dedicatedthreatsolutions.com

Available on Amazon.com

Officer Survival for Code Enforcement Officers by Scott Kirshner is a comprehensive doctrine on survival skills for those tasked with prevention, detection, investigation, and enforcement of violations of laws and ordinances pertaining to public health and safety. Code Enforcement Officers go by variety of titles such as Code Compliance Officer, City Inspector, Neighborhood Preservation Inspector, and other variations. A Code Enforcement Officer may be a sworn peace officer or a non-sworn inspector. Therefore, there is a wide variation between authority, training, and safety equipment issued to officers. Yet, job titles and authority do not protect you against violence.
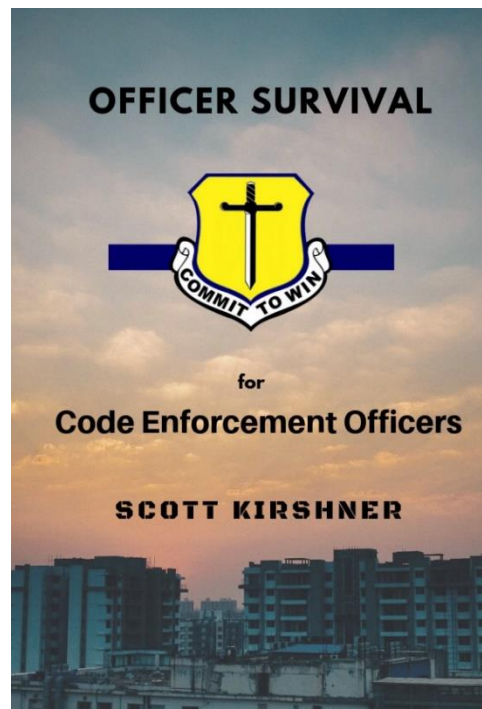
Code Enforcement Officers have been killed and seriously injured in the line of duty. It is critical that officers and inspectors train survival skills in a manner that is realistic, dynamic, and under stressful conditions. If you are not training for the **"worst-case scenario"** against a **"dedicated threat"** then your training will not prepare you for the realities of a dynamic and violent encounter.

Officer Survival for Code Enforcement Officers covers:

⇨ Self-Assessment

⇨ Combat Mindset

⇨ Survival Fundamentals

⇨ Use of Force

⇨ Officer Safety Practices

⇨ Self-Aid and Buddy-Aid

Officer Survival for Code Enforcement Officers contains multiple valuable exercises to increase your officer survival skills. Whether you are a new officer or seasoned veteran this book will provide you with specific information you can immediately implement to be safer.

https://www.amazon.com/Officer-Survival-Code-Enforcement-Officers/dp/1798218607/