



MILWAUKEE
JEWISH FEDERATION

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MAGEN DAVID ADOM, ISRAEL'S NATIONAL EMS ORGANIZATION,
TO HOLD TERRORISM- AND EMERGENCY-RESPONSE TRAINING FOR
RELIGIOUS AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN MILWAUKEE

The training, to be held Monday, July 15, through Wednesday, July 17,
is sponsored by the Milwaukee Jewish Federation
in response to recent attacks on religious and public institutions

Milwaukee (July 2, 2019) — Following recent armed attacks against religious and public institutions in the U.S., including attacks at synagogues, churches, schools, and colleges, Magen David Adom, Israel's national EMS service, will be conducting terrorism- and emergency-response training for civilians.

The training, which will be held from Monday, July 15, through Wednesday, July 17, is sponsored by the Milwaukee Jewish Federation, which distributed \$20 million last year to Jewish and non-Jewish organizations locally and around the world, and manages philanthropy through its \$190 million Jewish Community Foundation.

The instruction, known as First 7 Minutes training, will teach course participants how to remain safe amid the chaos of a violent incident and how, in the immediate aftermath of an attack, to render critical first aid and other assistance in the seven minutes it typically takes first responders to arrive.

Much of the training, including the first-aid instruction and emphasis on safety and needs prioritization, is also applicable to other emergency situations, such as building collapses, fires, and natural disasters, providing course participants with skills and a sense of empowerment critical in a variety of situations.

Because of the sheer number of terrorist incidents Magen David Adom has seen in Israel and its role in developing new protocols for responding to attacks, the organization has emerged as the most experienced mass-casualty response organization in the world.

The rise in armed extremist attacks against religious institutions in the U.S. — including lone gunman attacks on churches in Charleston, South Carolina, and near San Antonio, Texas, and the 2012 shooting at the Sikh gurdwara in Oak Creek, Wisconsin — was long a concern of the Jewish community, which has seen repeated terrorist attacks on Jewish targets in Europe and elsewhere in the world. That concern was only heightened following last year's attack at a synagogue in Pittsburgh and one this past April in Poway, California.

"When we saw the need to better prepare Jewish and other institutions for the remote, but very real possibility of a violent attack, we could think of no organization better qualified than Magen David Adom," said Moshe Katz, board chair of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation. "Unfortunately, they've had to contend with more terror attacks than any other EMS organization on Earth, providing them with expertise that's unsurpassed in this area."

While MDA has conducted terrorism-response seminars to EMS and first-responder professionals in the United States, this marks the first time Magen David Adom has offered training for civilians in the U.S.

"Given the frequency and regularity of violent attacks against Jewish targets in Europe," we've long been coordinating training for civilians with the Jewish communities there," said Raphael Herbst, a senior paramedic and instructor with Magen David Adom, who's overseeing the First 7 Minutes program in the U.S. "With the recent attacks in synagogues in Pittsburgh and California and against other minority and religious groups, however, we're now rolling out this program in the States too."

While the inaugural training sessions will be conducted in Milwaukee, Herbst said, the program will be rolled out across the U.S. to virtually any community where institutions fear being targeted for attack.

"Jews don't have a monopoly on being targeted for violent attacks," he said. "Hatred, ignorance, and violence, unfortunately, abound the world over and against many groups. Helping better prepare all members of the community ultimately makes everyone safer."

More than just a first-aid course, the First 7 Minutes instruction provides participants with the knowledge to effectively and simply initiate care and save lives while ensuring people's safety and taking actions that can best assist emergency first responders when they arrive.

“Our decision to conduct this training isn’t about scaring people or changing the way people live their lives,” the Jewish Federation’s Katz says. “It’s the opposite — it’s about empowering people and providing them with the skills they need to better handle an attack, to keep themselves and their loved ones safe, and help save lives should an attack occur. And we can think of few things more in keeping with the values of our community.”

The Milwaukee Jewish Federation is dedicated to caring for the needs of the Jewish community and building a vibrant Jewish future in Milwaukee, Israel, and around the world.

Magen David Adom is Israel’s national EMS, blood-services, and disaster-relief organization, and Israel’s representative to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. A leader in mass-casualty response and in EMS technology, Magen David Adom treats and transports nearly 1 million people to hospitals every year, collects, safety tests, and distributes nearly all the blood to Israel’s hospitals, and, through its affiliation with the Red Cross movement, responds to disasters around the world.