

Telegram.com » TelegramTowns.com » » Real-life murder is raining lesson at Holden safety center

SHARE Larger text Smaller text Print this article Email this article

Friday, January 6, 2012

# Real-life murder is raining lesson at Holden safety center

By Sandy Meindersma CORRESPONDENT



Manchester, Conn. Police Chief Marc Montminy discusses a 2010 mass murder in his town during a public safety class at the Holden Police Department on Jan. 4. He is pointing to a surveillance video of his officers entering the building. (T&G Staff/RICK CINCLAIR)

[Add a comment](#)

**HOLDEN** — Police Chief George Sherrill's vision for the new public safety center as a regional training center is becoming a reality. And, according to Manchester, Conn. Police Chief Marc Montminy, that's exactly what needs to happen.

Chief Montminy was at the station Wednesday to present the lessons he and his department learned when they dealt with a shooting at a beer distributorship in 2010. It's the first of what the Holden Police hope will be many training sessions for police throughout the area.

Officers from nearly a dozen area departments packed the room to hear Chief Montminy's thoughts on what worked and what didn't when dealing with an active shooter situation.



**Banks Forced to Write Off Billions in DEBT!**  
[See if you qualify for this program](#)

"The shooter stops when he is confronted," Chief Montminy said.  
 "The quicker the confrontation, the better."

The Manchester department got its experience with an active shooter on Aug. 3, 2010, when a disgruntled employee who had just been fired began shooting, first in the office and then in the distribution warehouse.

Chief Montminy said he received assistance from several other area departments as well as the state police. The shooter, Omar Thornton, eventually locked himself in an office and killed himself as he heard police approaching.

"The immediate entry and confrontation tactic was a success," Chief Montminy said.

While the death toll was minimized by the department's approach, Chief Montminy said the reunification process of workers with their families, the distribution of information to the press and the location of the command post should have been handled differently.

"The command post was too close to the building," he said. "With a rifle, we were easily within range of the shooter.

"Because everyone worked together and knew each other, the Teamsters had published a list of the dead to the press before we could even verify it."

The most important thing Chief Montminy said that he took away from the shooting was that active training should happen as a region.

"I asked one of my guys who was on the third team into the building who was with him, and he said he had no idea," Chief Montminy said. "He said there were two state troopers and a guy from South Windsor, but had no idea who they were.

"Train together, because if the party happens in your town, everyone is coming."

The session was the first of several training sessions the Holden Department is offering to other area forces. Upcoming sessions include an FBI Officer Safety and Survival Training program on Jan. 12, a federal rail car program on Feb. 7 and a "Dangerous Minds" program on March 7 that will look at the Oslo, Norway shooting last summer.

There is no cost for these programs.

"We're trying to get as many programs in here as we can," Chief Sherrill said. "Our goal is to become a real training center."

*To stay connected to the latest news from Holden, "like" [TelegramHolden](#) on Facebook.*

[Add a comment](#)

## "The shooter stops when he is confronted. The quicker the confrontation, the better."

Marc Montminy, Manchester, Conn. Police Chief



Manchester, Conn. Police Chief Marc Montminy discusses a 2010 mass murder in his town during a public safety class at the Holden Police Department. (T&G Staff/RICK CINCLAIR) [Enlarge photo](#)