

Where “Safety is Always Priority One” Port Washington Schools and Police Embrace SituCon Technology & Panasonic Security Cameras

OBJECTIVE

Recognizing the recent nationwide increase in school violence, the Port Washington Union Free School District (PWUFSD) was looking for a better way to proactively ensure the safety of its students and staff. The PWUFSD Emergency Preparedness Committee, authorized by the Board of Education, consisting of first responders, district personnel and local community leaders with safety expertise sought a solution, that should a dangerous incident occur, would instantly alert school administrators, the police department and responders to remotely observe the situation.

In addition to finding a video-based safety solution that was affordable, expandable, and easy to deploy, one of the greatest challenges the PWUFSD faced was continuing to provide a proper learning environment by not allowing cameras to infringe upon student and teacher privacy.

SOLUTION

The PWUFSD deployed SituCon Systems' Emergency Awareness Solution with Privacy Protecting Technology. Now, in the event of a dangerous incident, a faculty member can simply push a wireless SituCon “Instant Alert” button to immediately provide school administrators and the police with critical information such as the individual's name, location and phone number. **Simultaneously, SituCam Privacy Protecting “eyelids” open, exposing Panasonic Security cameras that provide high quality real-time video of the situation at the police dispatch center, in the cruisers, and on responding officers' smartphones.**

At all other times, SituCam's eyelids remain closed preventing camera operation and making it obvious that monitoring is not possible thereby guaranteeing student and teacher privacy.

BENEFITS

Knowing that help is only a push of a button away, everyone feels safer. Students and teachers are better protected as authorities can respond quicker and get the necessary assistance on the way without delay. Additionally, officer safety is improved as responders no longer need to blindly venture into a potentially dangerous situation – they see what is going on before going in.



ORGANIZATION

Port Washington Union Free School District

LOCATION

Port Washington, NY

INDUSTRY

Education

CHALLENGES

- Rapidly notifying school administrators and police in the case of an incident or emergency
- Providing responders with real-time video of emergency situations while guaranteeing student and staff privacy at all other times
- Obtaining an easy-to-use and cost effective solution consistent with today's budget restraints and currently available resources

“Safety is always priority one... we will be viewed state, and perhaps, nationwide for our leadership in safety and protection...”

Superintendent Dr. Geoffrey Gordon, Port Washington Union Free School District

Privacy is the Norm, Surveillance the Exception

The PWUFSD, recognized for having an emergency plan that is among the most highly regarded in New York State, is extremely pleased with the expanded police department partnership made possible by SituCon's technology which, unlike “always on” surveillance systems, allows school personnel to make camera images available to the police when they feel the need for extra safety. In a letter to the community, Superintendent Dr. Geoffrey Gordon lauded the deployment of SituCon's technology, “Safety is always priority one... we will be viewed state, and perhaps, nationwide for our leadership in safety and protection, and for all of us that remains a most important priority”.

Getting Help When Every Second Counts

In Port Washington, school district personnel wear SituCon's miniature wireless “Instant Alert” buttons around their necks. If danger strikes, with the push of a button, emergency email notifications and text messages are immediately sent to school administrators and the police, which detail who pressed the button and their location in the building. At the same time, SituCams eyelids open making live video of the situation available to responders. No longer is critical time wasted getting to a phone and having to describe what is happening. According to Port Washington Deputy Police Chief Ron DeMeo, it's “9-1-1 on Steroids”.

Resolving Incidents Before They Escalate

The police and other first responders are now better prepared for situations as they can immediately see first-hand exactly what is happening giving them an accurate understanding of the situation. As James Salerno, Assistant Police Chief of the Port Washington Police Department points out, “It's important for us to be able to observe a situation in real time so we can dispatch our officers appropriately.” **With Panasonic's extended optical zoom and Day/Night capabilities, incidents can be monitored regardless of where they occur or the lighting conditions.**

SituCam Privacy Protecting Cameras



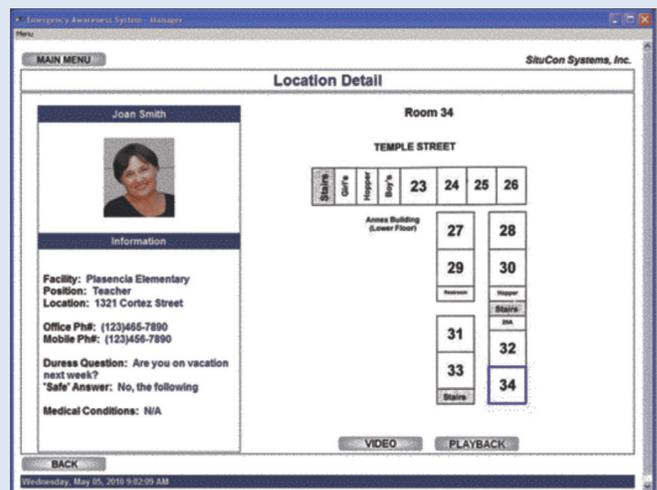
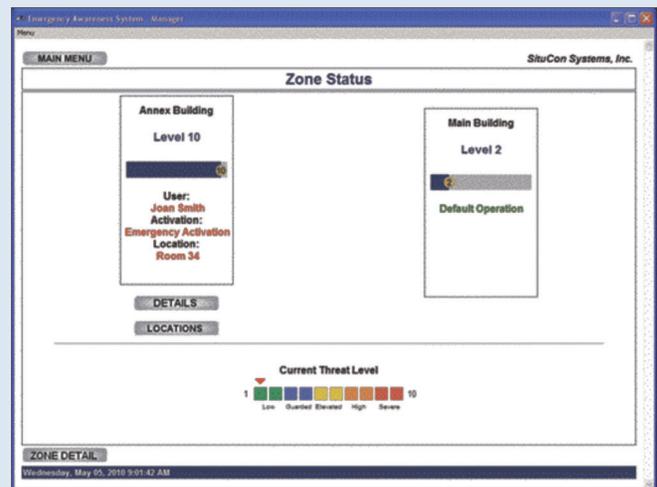
“Eyelids” Closed



“Eyelids” Open

An Easily Deployed, Cost Effective Solution

The combination of SituCon and Panasonic technology provided the PWUFSD with a solution that was simple to install and expand when desired. SituCam Privacy Protecting Cameras require only a single Ethernet cable to be run to each camera and the replacement of an existing ceiling tile with a SituCon provided “Drop-In” SituCam Suspended Ceiling Mounting Tile. **At the same time, Panasonic's bandwidth efficient, dual stream i-PRO cameras provide high quality images over Port Washington's existing wired and wireless data networks without requiring any infrastructure upgrades.** This provided just what the district was looking for, the ability to start with a small program and build out to include additional areas as needed and as budgets allow.



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