

Crisis Communication Plan Team  
School of Communication  
University of Washington

Written April 30, 2019

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Revised June 12, 2019

Tested December 12, 2019

**Rehearsal Dates**

This crisis plan should be rehearsed twice a year and revised when necessary.

Revised: June 12, 2019

Tested: December 12, 2019

**Acknowledgments**

By signing this statement, I verify that I have read this CCP and am prepared to put it into effect.

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Sweet Alchemy Owner

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Signature and Date

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Sweet Alchemy Manager

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Signature and Date

## **Introduction**

As business in the food industry, Sweet Alchemy must account for many potentially disastrous factors when selling their product to customers. Even a simple delicacy such as ice cream can pose many risks for consumers, such as the use of expired milk when making the product, leading to food poisoning, or forgetting to put up a “wet floor” sign, resulting in possible injuries.

In order to prevent these incidents from occurring, the company must prepare for whatever obstacle may come its way, such as an injury sustained within the premise. For instance, in 1972, a Korean war jet malfunctioned and crashed into Farrell’s Ice Cream parlor. As a result, a catastrophic fire ignited and twenty-two people died. The severity of this event could have been limited if the shop had safety resources at the ready, such as a better sprinkler system or a first-aid within reach.

## **Purpose**

In the event of a death with a connection to *Sweet Alchemy*, it is critical that we focus on preparing a response to media outlets and our publics with whatever relevant information we can give them if we are approached. If the media comes to us to create a story, we want to demonstrate level-headedness. In doing this, we can focus on working with the media instead of against the media to ensure that people can remain safe and keep their trust in *Sweet Alchemy*.

If we can maintain honesty about the situation as it develops, then we can remain assured that the crisis will be mitigated.

## **Objective**

1. Initiate the plan within several hours of the crisis.
2. Designate crisis spokesman, either Lois Ko or Liz Gardner.
3. Establish lines of communication with law enforcement first.
4. Prepare any information regarding a potential media inquiry, including preparing for trick questions.
5. Should the media contact us, respond with all prepared materials and be honest with the media.
6. After establishing what happened, inform the shop's publics.
7. Keep all of these groups informed as new information is revealed.
8. Maintain honesty with all groups.
9. Work with law enforcement to come up with ways to prevent this from happening again.
10. Implement these as best as possible.
11. Communicate with publics the results of what you are trying.

## Crisis Inventory

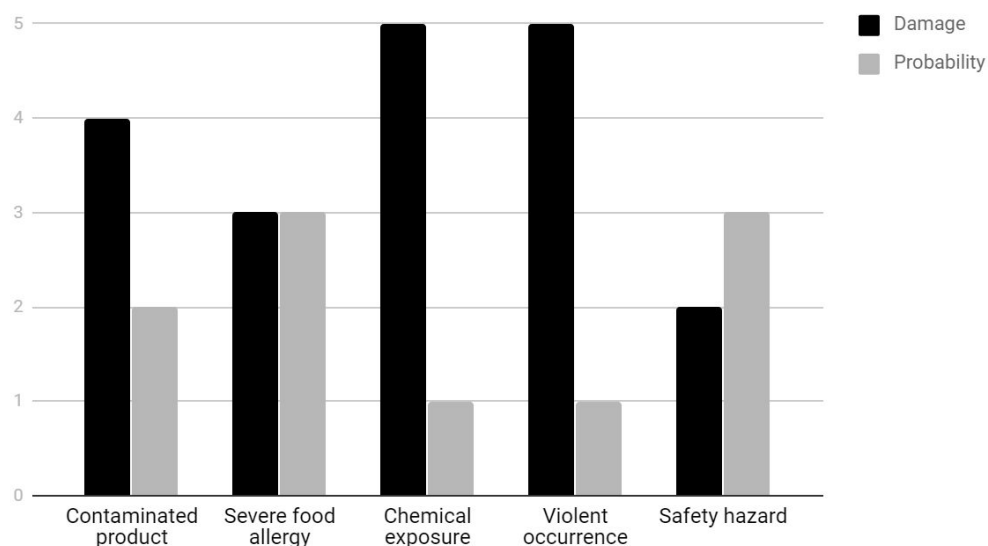
We are preparing for what we believe is the worst possible crisis for Sweet Alchemy: a death on which the business played a major role. Sweet Alchemy, located one block away from the University of Washington, sees many students and visitors visit the shop every day, so it possess a reasonable amount of external publics who it need to account for. For this crisis, we consider various causes of death: contaminated ice cream, severe food allergy, hazardous chemical exposure, violent occurrences, and safety issues, most notably.

A death resulting from any of the aforementioned causes can and should be prevented through responsible production and knowledge of what the business is selling, as well as safety precautions with respect to the ice cream (and other food products) and the space of operation, to name a few. This crisis would immediately give Sweet Alchemy a red flag, leading to a loss of customers, negative status among neighboring businesses and communities, damaged relationships with partners and suppliers, and if not handled well, the closing of the business.

Such an instance would not necessarily only occur because of one person. For example, recalls on products (common) such as milk could be implemented after Sweet Alchemy already used the unsafe ingredient in their ice cream. The entire business would have no idea until the recall is announced after the fact. This example may infer that management is unstable and/or problematic, however this example is rare.

Though death can be a very unpredictable occurrence, people have strong reactions to such a crisis, which could possibly lead to Sweet Alchemy going out of business. Even if it has a completely clean record otherwise, a death (due to its negative consequences) could shut it down. There have been a few notable crises for ice cream businesses.

Crisis Inventory - Sweet Alchemy



## **Fill-in-the Blank News Release**

For Immediate Release

Press Release

(Date)

Death occurring at Sweet Alchemy at (Ballard) location.

A Sweet Alchemy (employee/customer) has died by traumatic head injury, after slipping on a wet floor. An investigation is still being performed, but here is what Sweet Alchemy knows as of now: it is believed that (he/she) (ate at/was near) the (U-District/Ballard) Sweet Alchemy location where the death occurred.

“We are working hard with Law Enforcement to find justice in this terrible tragedy, and we are grieving with (victim name’s) family,” Sweet Alchemy owner Lois Ko said.

Sweet Alchemy has created a set of safety instructions for its employees to keep them safe. The procedures are (emphasize safety precautions here).

(Victim’s name) was (circumstances regarding their death).

Upper management at Sweet Alchemy joined Law Enforcement in performing a timely investigation of the tragedy. This includes (variables/factors of the investigation). If you or anyone you know is aware of the circumstances of (victim name’s death), please call Law Enforcement immediately.

### **Key Messages**

We are deeply saddened by this death, and first and foremost would like to apologize to friends and family of the individual. Our goal is to provide customers with a quality product and experience, so we want to ensure our publics that this issue is not being taken lightly, as any negative event relating to Sweet Alchemy is something we strive to avoid. We are always committed to improving our current systems, and even more so now to emerge a better, safer, and more trustworthy business for those we serve and collaborate with. We are currently working to improve our store policies and procedures in order to prevent future instances and take action in response to what has occurred.

### **Crisis Room Necessities**

- All managers and owner Lois Ko
- Computers, laptops with chargers
- Cell phones with chargers or landline telephones
- Fax Machine/ printer
- Paper, pens, pencils
- Crisis Binder- includes contact lists for media, surrounding businesses, and company locations

### **Contact List**

- University District Store: (206) 632-0243
- Ballard Store: (206) 858-0125

### **Media Contact List**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
KING 5 News	1501 1st Ave. South Suite 300 Seattle, WA 98134	(206) 448-5555	newstips@king5.com
KIRO 7 News	2807 Third Avenue Seattle, WA 98121	(206) 728-7777	newstips@kiro7.com

KOMO News	140 4th Ave. North Suite 370 Seattle, WA 98109	(206) 404-4000	tips@komonews.com
The Seattle Times	1000 Denny Way, Seattle, WA 98109	(206) 624-7323	N/A: Online Contact Form
The Daily of the University of Washington	144 Communications, Box 353720, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195.	206-543-2700	editor@dailyuw.com

### **Key Publics**

#### *Internal Business Public:*

Name	Position	Location	Phone number	Additional Contact Info
Lois Ko	Owner	N/A	206-313-0613	N/A
Liz Gardner	Manager	N/A	808-497-5929	N/A
N/A	N/A	Brick and Mortar 4301 University Way NE Seattle, WA 98105	206 632-0243	N/A
N/A	N/A	Lake City Farmers Market 125th St & 28th Ave NE Seattle, WA 98125	206-632-5234	N/A
N/A	N/A	s&1 cafe 535 W McGraw St Seattle, WA 98119	425-802-1891	dan@cafesel. com
N/A	N/A	Barbecue Smith 7919 Roosevelt Way NE Seattle, WA 98115	206-257-1333	pitmaster@ba rbecue-smith.c om
N/A	Dairy Supplier	Fresh Breeze Organics 9521 Jackman Rd, Lynden, WA 98264	(360) 354-6812	julie@freshbr eezeorganic.c om



*Businesses on the Same Block*

Name	Address	Contact Information	Business Hours
Kai's Bistro & Lounge	1312 NE 43rd St, Seattle, WA 98105	(206) 547-2784	11am-11pm Monday-Thursday 11am-11pm Friday 12-11 pm Saturday
Nasai Teriyaki	4305 University Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105	(206) 632-3572	11am-830pm Monday- Saturday
Samir's Mediterranean Grill	1316 NE 43rd St, Seattle, WA 98105	(206) 633-1778	9:30am-8pm Monday- Friday 10am-8pm Saturday
Wooly Mammoth	4303 University Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105	(206) 632-3254	10am-7pm Monday-Friday 10am-6pm Saturday 12-6pm Sunday
Tight Cuts	4309 University Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105	(206) 294-6070	11am-7pm Monday-Saturday
CVS	4315 University Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105	(206) 632-2388	8am-10pm Everyday
Davis Optical	4323 University Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105	(206) 633-5225	9:30-6 Monday- Saturday
The Varsity Theatre	4329 University Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105	(206) 632-2267	N/A
Earl's on the Ave	4333 University Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105	(206) 525-4493	12-2am Everyday
Suzy Muzy 53	4335 University Way NE #2B, Seattle, WA 98105	(858) 386-7566	N/A
Shawarma King	4337 University Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105	(206) 420-1484	11am-2am Monday-Thursday 11am-3am Friday-Saturday
Just Poke	4339 University Way	(206) 566-6156	11am-9:30 pm

	NE, Seattle, WA 98105		
The Unity Museum	4341 1/2 University Way NE #210, Seattle, WA 98105	(206) 390-9982	N/A
Mee Sum Pastry	4343 University Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105	(206) 632-7298	11am-11:30pm Thursday-Tuesday 12:30 am-10 pm Wednesday

**Competitors (Information is based on proximity to Sweet Alchemy)**

- Local
  - Full Tilt Ice Cream
    - Ice Cream and Frozen Yogurt
    - Proximity to Sweet Alchemy: 0.4 miles
    - Phone Number: (206) 524-4406
    - Email: whitecenter@fulltilticecream.com
  - Molly Moon's
    - Ice Cream and Frozen Yogurt, Desserts
    - Proximity to Sweet Alchemy: 1 mile
    - Phone Number: (206) 525-5140
    - Email: N/A
  - Cold Plate
    - Ice Cream and Frozen Yogurt
    - Proximity to Sweet Alchemy: 0.5 miles
    - Phone Number: (206) 294-5938
    - Email: contact@coldplatedessert.com
  - Citra
    - Ice Cream and Frozen Yogurt, Coffee and Tea, Bubble Tea
    - Proximity to Sweet Alchemy: 0.3 miles
    - Phone Number: (206) 327-9012
    - Email: N/A
  - Salt and Straw
    - Ice Cream and Frozen Yogurt
    - Proximity to Sweet Alchemy: 4.3 miles
    - Phone Number: (206) 294-5581
    - Email: human@saltandstraw.com

- Hello Robin
  - Bakery
  - Proximity to Sweet Alchemy: 3.7 miles
  - Phone Number: (206) 735-7970
  - Email: hellorobincookies@gmail.com
- Hot Cakes
  - Desserts, Bakeries, Chocolatiers and Shops
  - Proximity to Sweet Alchemy: 3.2 miles
  - Phone Number: (206) 453-3792
  - Email: kirsten@kirstengrahampr.com
- Midnight Cookie
  - Bakery, Ice Cream and Frozen Yogurt, Desserts
  - Proximity to Sweet Alchemy: 1.8 miles
  - Phone Number: 206-632-1237
  - Email: Info@midnightcookieco.com
- National
  - Baskin Robbins
    - 31 Flavors of Ice Cream and Shakes
    - Phone Number: (206) 284-3372
    - Email: N/A
  - Cold Stone
    - Ice Cream and Frozen Yogurt, Custom Cakes, Cupcakes
    - Phone Number: (425) 562-2700
    - Email: N/A
  - Menchies
    - Ice Cream and Frozen Yogurt
    - Phone Number: (206)525-4445
    - Email: N/A
  - Dairy Queen
    - Fast Food, Ice Cream and Frozen Yogurt
    - Phone Number: (425) 820-6805
    - Email: N/A

INSERT SAFETY RECORDS HERE

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## Backgrounder



From:  
Sweet Alchemy  
4301 University Way NE,  
Seattle, WA 98105

### Backgrounder Sweet Alchemy

Sweet Alchemy was founded in 2016 by Lois Ko, a University of Washington art graduate. In 2016 Ko decided to pursue her passion for ice cream making and opened the first Sweet Alchemy located right in the University District. The shop encountered enormous success, resulting in the opening of a new location in the Ballard neighborhood at the beginning of April, 2019. Ko's mission is to make the best possible ice-cream the Pacific Northwest has to offer while continuing to use natural and organic ingredients.

Sweet Alchemy specializes in ice cream but also offers other treats such as cakes, coffee, and pastries. The ice-cream served at Sweet Alchemy comes in various unique flavors such as makgeolli, horchata, and Aztec chocolate. All flavors are WSDA certified, produced in small batches and made from ingredients that are obtained from meticulously selected local farms. The sweet cream used as a base is made from organic ingredients, most of them sourced within 100 miles from the store front. Freshness is also a key factor in the ice-cream making process, therefore the milk used comes from a family owned farm in Lynden, Washington. Only one week passes from the time the milk is collected to the time it is turned to ice-cream and served at the shop. Toppings and waffle cones are made by hand and with the best ingredients possible.

Sweet Alchemy not only cares about making extraordinary ice-cream but also about sustainability. In order to take care of the environment and lessen food waste, they partner up with farms who also share the same values. In the stores everything is served in compostable ware which continues to help divert waste from landfills. Along with sustainability they also take a lot of pride in their community relations. Sweet Alchemy offers quite a few "free ice cream days" during holidays and special events, which are aimed towards giving back to local communities. These events allow Sweet Alchemy to maintain a positive image and demonstrate their great relationship with customers.

## **Executive Biography**

Lois Ko - *Owner, Sweet Alchemy Ice Creamery*

Lois Ko is the owner of Sweet Alchemy Ice Creamery, which opened its first location at 4301 University Way NE in Seattle, Washington. Ko graduated from nearby University of Washington in 2005 with an art degree. During her undergraduate career, she began working at Haagen Dazs, to which she gives credit for teaching her useful skills and knowledge about the ice cream industry. In 2006, Ko bought her own Haagen Dazs shop, serving as a franchisee for over nine years. In 2015, she attended the Food Science - Ice Cream program at Pennsylvania State University, where she had the opportunity to visit and work at the oldest creamery in the United States.

Her experience working for Haagen Dazs, in addition to attending Penn State's Food Science program, prepared her to open up Sweet Alchemy in 2016. As the owner of her own ice creamery, she is relishing the chance to do things her way. Knowing and recognizing that ice cream is typically a highly processed food item, Ko makes it a mission to provide delicious yet sustainable ice cream for her customers, highlighting local organic ingredients and creative ideas. Obsessed with combating processed food, she supports small farms around the area, purchasing only organic and responsible ingredients to promote environmental consciousness through unique ice cream creations. Ko is constantly working to formulate new flavors while advocating for the other small businesses in Seattle's University District, all while attending the entrepreneurship program at UW and raising two young children. She praises her staff, who assist her as she lives out her dream with the success of Sweet Alchemy, which has recently expanded to a second Seattle location in Ballard.

## **Fact sheets**

- Founded by Lois Ko in 2016
- WSDA certified creamery
- Most ingredients are within a 100 mile radius
- Dairy comes from Fresh Breeze Organics, a family owned farm in Lynden, WA
- Everything is served in compostable ware
- Hours:
  - Everyday, 11am- 11pm
- Sweet Alchemy Locations and Product Locations:
  - Brick and Mortar (retail and kitchen)
    - 4301 University Way NE  
Seattle, WA 98105  
11am-11pm everyday  
(206) 632-0243
  - Lake City Farmer's Market
    - 125th St & 28th Ave NE  
Seattle, WA 98125  
Thursdays  
Jun 7 to Oct 4  
3pm - 7pm
    - S&1 cafe
      - 535 W McGraw St  
Seattle, WA 98119  
6am-5pm mon-friday  
7am-5pm saturday, sunday
    - Barbecue Smith (pies, baked goods, desserts)
      - 7919 Roosevelt Way NE  
Seattle, WA 98115  
4pm-9pm wed-sunday  
(206) 257-1333
    - The Shambles
      - 7777 15th Ave NE  
Seattle, WA 98115  
noon-9pm sun-wednesday  
noon-11pm thursday-saturday  
(206) 659-0074
  - Offers catering services

## **Community Relations Programs**

- Sweet Alchemy has very concrete values which they enjoy sharing with the community, showing transparency in their supply chain. This is a quote from the website regarding their values: *“We are not only passionate about offering the best desserts in town; sustainability is also one of our core values. We partner with farms whose goals align with our own: to educate our community, lessen food waste, support organic practices, and to take excellent care of our environment. Within our store we do our part to divert waste from landfills by serving everything in compostable ware.”*
- Along with their sustainability transparency, Sweet Alchemy has many deals that involve free ice cream for the community that occur on certain holidays or events. For example on Mother’s Day, the shop gives mothers free ice cream if they dine with their families at the Ballard location. Many of these community events are displayed on Sweet Alchemy’s social media sites, so they are able to reach a large audience

## **Internet Sources**

Website: <http://sweetalchemyicecreamery.com/>

## **Social Media Outlets**

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sweetalchemyseattle>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/sweetalchemyseattle/>

Yelp: <https://www.yelp.com/biz/sweet-alchemy-ice-creamery-seattle>

## **Location of Offices**

<http://sweetalchemyicecreamery.com/findus/>

• Other locations besides Brick and Mortar are places that sell Sweet Alchemy ice cream  
University District: 4301 University Way NE, Seattle, WA

- 11am-11pm everyday
- (206) 632-0243

Ballard (latest opening - April 20, 2019), 555 NW Market St, Seattle, WA



## **Prodromes**

- Recall on milk
  - This could be a potential food poisoning problem for Sweet Alchemy and an inspection would need to take place to prevent any sort of problem
- Bad weather
  - The weather in Seattle combined with the signature copper flooring at Sweet Alchemy could be a potential for slipping or injury, therefore proper safety precautions and signs should be in place
- Electrical issue
  - Any electrical issue could potentially lead to a loss in power that could spoil the milk and/or ice cream at Sweet Alchemy, so electrical maintenance should be checked regularly

## **Previous Ice Cream Business Crises**

- “How Jeni’s Splendid Ice Creams handled a listeria crisis” By Lisa Everson and Kim Bainbridge, NBC news
  - <https://www.nbcnews.com/business/your-business/how-jeni-s-splendid-ice-cream-s-handled-listeria-crisis-n851336>
- “Blue Bell’s comeback continues after deadly listeria outbreak” By Katie Gibcon, CBS News
  - <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/blue-bell-attempts-comeback-after-deadly-listeria-outbreak/>
- “‘Red Indian’ Ice Cream Finally Deemed Racist After Being Sold for 50 Years” by Mike Pomranz, Extra Crispy
  - <https://www.myrecipes.com/extracrispy/red-indian-ice-cream-racist-offensive>

## Photos



## Maps of Site

University District location - 4301 University Way NE



Ballard location - 1555 NW Market St

