

August 2011

Emergency Preparedness Pointers

Be Aware, Be Vigilant, Be Part Of The Solution

Saturday nights around New York City's Times Square are busy. Locals and tourists alike fill the sidewalks; streets are congested as vehicles jockey for a lane or a parking space. It is a very active environment in which something could go unnoticed. Fortunately, on May 1, 2010, the street vendors in this area were very aware of their surroundings. Even in all the hustle and bustle they knew what kind of activity belonged and what did not. The blue Nissan Pathfinder, parked at an odd angle with its flashers on, did not belong. Smoke rising from vents near the back seat was the final indicator that made citizens alert police of the situation.

Thousands of people were evacuated from the area. A crude bomb made of propane, gasoline and fireworks was found in the vehicle. Even though the bomb malfunctioned, the combination of citizen awareness and first responder action helped protect many lives that night. It is a powerful combination that everyone should take part in; keeping our community safe requires everyone to remain aware, because terrorism can happen anywhere.



Photo by Brendan McDermid/Reuters
Police Officer in bomb suit examines vehicle

Eight Signs Of Terrorism

- 1.) **Surveillance:** It can be difficult to determine when someone is performing surveillance. Indicators can include someone monitoring or recording an area. An example of surveillance would be an individual watching or taking video of any security systems more than actually enjoying the surrounding scene.
- 2.) **Elicitation:** This refers to information gathered that is specific to the intended target. This could be by mail, email, phone, or in person. People working in public places should be especially aware of someone asking questions about the security, busiest, most congested times, ventilation and fire suppression systems along with entrances/exits of their location.
- 3.) **Tests of security:** Terrorists may test and analyze local security measures by attempting to breach the security and then observing the reaction strength and timing.
- 4.) **Funding:** Terrorists require money to obtain the tools of their trade. They may raise money by selling drugs or stolen merchandise or they may funnel money through businesses or charities.
- 5.) **Acquiring supplies:** Cash garnered from fundraising will be used to purchase the necessary supplies. These items can include weapons and weapon components, transportation and communications. Some components can be chemicals or materials readily available to the general public; the difference maybe that the amounts are large and the purchase is in cash.
- 6.) **Impersonation:** Terrorists may impersonate facility staff, government officials or another applicable role in an effort to gain information and/or access. Their behavior may seem suspicious or they won't appear to "fit" in the location or role they are portraying.
- 7.) **Rehearsals and Dry Runs:** Groups or individuals will often perform test runs before the actual attack. These events allow them to practice access, timing and response as they relate to the target in real time.
- 8.) **Deployment:** This is the final phase, when attack is imminent and the terrorists are actually deploying resources and personnel. If possible, leave the area immediately and contact law enforcement.

For more information and to watch a video on the Eight Signs visit the Counterterrorism Education Learning Lab at : <http://www.thecell.org/>



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