

# Neighbourhood Support New Zealand



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## Neighbourhood Support Fact Sheet

### Terrorism Awareness

#### Introduction

New Zealand's relative isolation suggests the likelihood of a terrorist incident is less likely than other places in the world. However, terrorist incidents such as threats or hoaxes do occur. Incidents need to be treated as if they are real until the safety of the public is assured and the threat confirmed as false.

The Police actively investigate terrorist incidents as crimes and take precautionary measures to protect the community and property from the possibility of terrorism.

Everyone should be aware of the potential for terrorist incidents and take some basic precautions. Many of the suggestions made here apply equally to preparing for other emergencies and disasters.

#### General Awareness

- During your daily routines remain alert to any unusual activity, particularly in public areas where people naturally gather such as shopping malls, sporting events, train stations, bus terminals and airports.
- Look out for abandoned packages and bags. Police deal with all such items as if they may contain an explosive device or other dangerous substance. If you see a suspect package leave it where it is.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel something is wrong, ring the Police immediately. This has proved to be vital in many cases.
- If you have information about possible bomb threats or other immediate threats of any kind, call the Police on 111.
- Take time to appreciate your surroundings, so you can readily identify items that are out of place or have been recently introduced into the environment. Police attending incidents will ask you questions relating to items within your workplace, home and other surroundings.

#### Be Prepared

Ensure your list of handy phone numbers is up to date and includes local Police, Local Authority, Gas / Electricity / Water companies, family members and neighbours.

Be aware of local networks like Civil Defence and Neighbourhood Support that can distribute information quickly.

Ensure that you can quickly locate the main switches and taps for electricity, water and gas located in your home, as you may need to turn them off in an emergency. A map of your house and the service locations can be valuable in an emergency.

Consider increasing the precautions you have in place to cope with the impact of natural disasters likely to disrupt normal services (power, water and telephones).

Basic supplies should include:

- Canned non-perishable food
- Torches and batteries (replace frequently)
- Water (three litres per person per day)
- Toilet paper, plastic bags and bucket
- BBQ and other means of cooking (depending on the incident it may not be suitable to cook outside)
- Blankets
- A portable battery operated radio
- Disposable face masks, preferably carbon impregnated and with exhaust valve (available from protective clothing and some hardware stores)
- Natural rubber gloves

### **Think Terrorism**

Terrorism requires forward planning, preparation and finance. Terrorists try to remain anonymous or seek false identities to achieve their purpose. Therefore:

- Ensure your personal documentation such as passports, driving licences, identity cards, and credit cards are protected from opportunist theft. See the fact sheet on [identify theft](#).
- Be aware of what is occurring around you at all times so that you notice suspicious or unusual activities.
- Consider keeping personal protective equipment on hand, such as facemasks and gloves. Terrorist activity had been confined to the use of bombs, however terrorists have begun threatening to release chemical or biological agents. Such agents enter the body through three primary routes, namely: respiration (lungs), digestion (mouth - food/drink), and through cuts and abrasions to the skin. Basic cleanliness and the use of facemasks, gloves and non-absorbent clothing (such as wet weather attire) to cover exposed skin will provide some protection.
- Cautionary Note: In some countries people hoping to protect themselves from threatened chemical attacks have taped gaps in windows and doors. In doing so they have dramatically reduced the oxygen flow. Combining a reduced airflow with the use of heaters and cooking units can result in severe oxygen depletion and death.

### **If Managing a Business**

- Know your customers. Maintain an audit trail to ensure the identity of customers is certain.
- Develop rigorous systems and procedures for the movement of inward and outward goods.

- Develop tight access controls, to ensure:
  - All visitors are identified, and escorted when moving throughout the premises.
  - Maintain a record of visitors, including confirmed names, purpose of visit, and staff member who vouches for them.
  - Never leave visitors alone.
  - Visitors should be readily identifiable through Identity cards or visitor passes.
- Maintain and routinely practice Emergency Response Plans.
  - Appoint someone to be responsible for contingency planning.
  - Regularly practice to ensure staff are capable of reacting quickly and efficiently if the need arises. Such exercises will identify problems that can be remedied and incorporated into the plan.
  - Maintain copies of plans off-site in the event that the premises can't be accessed.
  - Develop separate systems to notify staff of different types of emergencies. For example, don't use the 'Fire' alarm to warn of a 'Bomb Threat'. During a fire it is desirable to reduce airflow fuelling the fire by closing doors and windows, whereas in a Bomb Threat it is preferable to open access doors and windows to reduce the effects of a blast.
  - If evacuation is considered necessary, its essential procedures are in place to ensure personnel are not forced or guided into areas of potential risk. In the event of a Bomb having been located, personnel must not be permitted to exit the premises past the device, which is most likely to be located in easily accessible public access areas, as it could detonate at any time. The Police and Fire Service can provide advice on such issues.
  - Ensure that in an emergency access keys can be rapidly provided to arriving emergency services.
  - Know who is on the premises at any given time.
  - Good security procedures will provide wide benefits (staff protection, less theft, reduced disruption after evacuation following threats) to your business at minimum cost.
- Provide for security of computer systems and information.
  - Consider if changes in your business circumstances or relationships might increase the threat of electronic attack to your organisation.
  - Check that protective security measures are properly implemented and up-to-date.
  - Anti-virus software should be updated regularly.
  - Patches should be applied to eliminate known software vulnerabilities.
  - Internal security policies should provide appropriate protection from interference from within your organisation.
- Ensure changes in staff performance and behaviours are monitored to detect undue interest in company procedures and sensitive information. Particular attention should be paid in this regard to contractors and temporary workers.

## Travel

When travelling overseas ascertain whether travel to your intended destination is recommended at that particular time. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade provide this advice. Refer to their [website](#).

Additional security measures have been implemented since the attack on New York's Twin Towers on 11 September 2001. Ensure that you:

- Pack your own bags.

- Check that you are not packing goods or items that could be perceived as a potential weapon or a dangerous substance that could jeopardise the safety of the aircraft and other passengers. Refer to the Aviation Security Service's [website](#) for further information.
- During processing at airports, don't joke about possessing bombs or other weapons. Such threats are taken very seriously. You may be excluded from flights and have criminal charges laid against you.
- International travel also involves the possibility of contracting diseases that are not common in this country. Precautions should be taken to minimise the risk of contracting such diseases and bringing them into New Zealand. Refer to the Ministry of Health publication [Passport to Healthy Travel](#).

Remember, a terrorist goal is to force their political / religious or ideological beliefs upon our country by scaring you. It is essential that you meet this challenge by getting on with your normal lives. But just as you look for cars before you cross the street, you should also keep yourself safe by preparing and paying attention to abnormal activities and telling the Police.