



Potential Terrorist Use of Self Storage Facilities Notice

Federal Bureau of Investigation

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is requesting the assistance of storage facility owners, operators, and employees in the fight against terrorism. There have been recent discoveries indicating that Al-Qaeda may be planning an attack using improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Historically, terrorist plots that involve IEDs have utilized rental storage facilities to house parts of the bomb or other supplies until the plotters have the time to assemble the weapon or prepare for the attack. Examples of these plots include the following:

- In April 2004, eight individuals were arrested in the United Kingdom for their involvement in a plot to set off an ammonium nitrate bomb in London. The plotters had stored over 1,200 lbs of ammonium nitrate in a rented storage unit in the outskirts of London.
- In 1993, the members of the cell that conducted the first attack on the World Trade Center in New York had chemicals, 105 gallons of nitric acid and 60 gallons of sulfuric acid housed in a storage unit in New Jersey.

Analysis of terrorist preparations for past attacks overseas and in the United States suggests pre-operational indicators may be present in the days or weeks prior to an attack. Alone, each indicator can result from legitimate commercial activity or criminal activity not related to terrorism; however, multiple indicators combined with other factors can possibly suggest a terrorist threat. By providing the following information to employees of storage facilities, we hope to enlist their help in preventing any future attack. To that end, owners, operators, and employees should be aware of the following:

Suspicious activity by self storage customers may provide a possible indication of pre-operational activity. **Behaviors of concern include customers who:**

- insist on paying in cash, sometimes weeks or months in advance;
- seem overly concerned about privacy;
- visit the storage facility late at night or at unusual times;
- exhibit suspicious behavior when approached by rental employees or security personnel;
- have unusual fumes, liquids, residues or odors emanating from storage units;
- display burns or chemical exposure symptoms and provide vague or irrational explanations for the injuries; and
- discard chemical containers in storage unit dumpsters.

Storage of the following items may also be cause for concern:

- Quantities of fuel.
- Agricultural or industrial chemicals.
- Agricultural equipment, such as commercial sprayers.
- Explosives, blasting caps or fuses.

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- Weapons or ammunition.
- Flight manuals or other similar materials.
- Laboratory materials (e.g., flasks, sealed containers) or protective clothing (e.g., surgical masks, gas masks, rubber gloves, self-contained breathing apparatuses), incinerators, incubators, cell cultures, agricultural sprayers, improvised showers and eye baths, and textbooks and journals discussing biology, chemistry, explosives and poisons.
- Pesticides.
- Large delivery vehicles, vans, cargo containers, trailers or related equipment.

Storage unit personnel are encouraged to contact their local FBI office should any concerns arise regarding possible terrorist activities or behaviors. Contact information for field offices may be located by calling their local police departments or referring to www.fbi.gov.