

Threat of Terrorism: A Community Response

A guide for Winchester's residents, workers, and visitors



**This Guide Will Help
You To:**

**Identify and help
prevent a terrorist
threat**

**Learn what to do
before, during, and
after an emergency**

**Create an Emergency
Plan for your family**

**Prepare an Emergency
Supply Kit**

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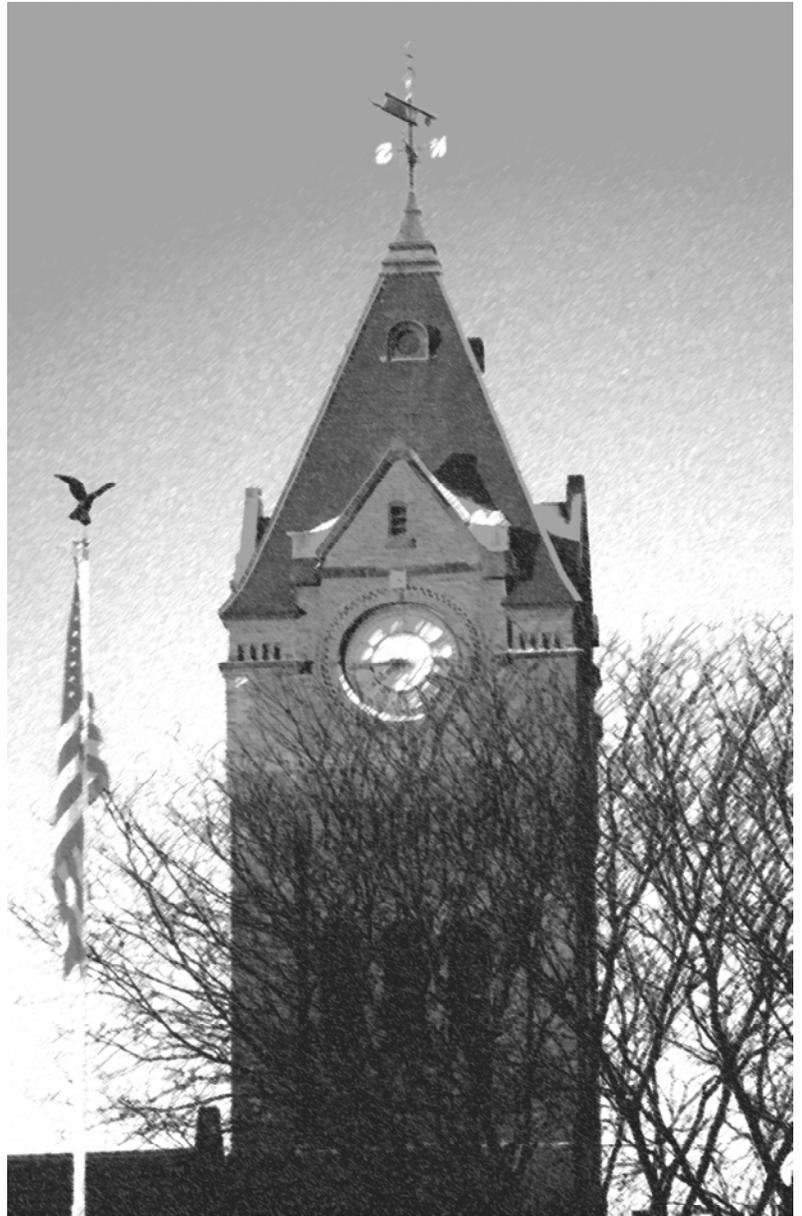
Threat of Terrorism: A Community Response

A guide for Winchester's residents, workers, and visitors

Contents

This **guide** will help you to identify and help prevent a terrorist threat, and learn what to do before, during, and after an emergency.

- ☑ Preventing terrorism.
- ☑ Preparing for an emergency.
- ☑ Responding to an emergency.
- ☑ Important phone numbers and websites.



Note: This publication was produced in February 2003. Future changes to this guide can be found at www.winchestermass.org

Message from the Town Manager:

Dear Winchester residents:

The Town of Winchester takes great pride in our community, our architecture, and our ability to look towards the future. In today's world this means we must be prepared for emergencies that may face us.

The Town of Winchester has been working hard preparing for all hazards, both natural and manmade. *Threat of Terrorism: A Community Response* provides practical information on how you and your family can prepare for any disaster. This guide has been written to help you and your family prepare for the types of emergencies that Winchester may face in today's world, such as flooding, hurricanes, severe winter storms, and more recently potential acts of terrorism. It is a resource for preventing, preparing and responding to all types of emergencies. In addition you will find relevant phone numbers and web sites, which you can access for further guidance.

Although we cannot always predict when disaster strikes, there are many things we can do together as a community to be better prepared. Please take a moment to look over this guide. Future changes to this guide can be found at www.winchestermass.org.

Sincerely,

Brian F. Sullivan
Town Manager

Message from the Emergency Management Director

Dear Neighbors:

While our nation is threatened with uncertain terrorist acts, the Town of Winchester has continued to enhance our abilities to cope with any critical incident that might effect our community. Specific steps have been taken to prevent the potential for terrorist activities. Winchester's public safety departments have met the challenges of the future with enhanced training and response capabilities.

Please use this guide to prepare for what emergencies may impact you and your family, neighbors or community. While we are reminded daily of the threats of terrorism in our world, preparation for such an event is very similar to those preparation required for natural events, such as floods, blizzards, or hurricanes. All households should be prepared to manage such an emergency with a duration of three to seven days. In doing so, you will also assist in preserving the resources of our public safety departments.

Preparation is the first step towards the elimination of fear and anxiety associated with unknown threats to our health and safety. Please be prepared, be healthy, and be safe.

Sincerely,

John F. Nash
Emergency Management Director

The Threat of Terrorism

Terrorists try to intimidate or coerce a government, or its citizens, into making changes to further their political or social objectives. They use violence, or the threat of violence, to achieve their goals. Acts of terrorism range from threats of terrorism, bomb scares, and cyber attacks, to the use of chemical, biological and radiological weapons. Terrorists often use threats to create fear among the public and to get immediate publicity for their causes.

Terrorists may target government facilities, international airports, large cities, and high profile landmarks. They may also target critical infrastructure such as transportation systems and utilities, water and food supplies, institutions such as hospitals, schools, and hotels, or other areas where large public gatherings are expected.

Without a specific threat, there is no reason to avoid these places. The Winchester Fire and Police Departments, as well as other public safety and government agencies are working hard every day to protect the people of Winchester and prevent terrorism. But there are some things that you can do, too.

National Threat Levels

Homeland Security Advisory System

The Homeland Security Advisory System was designed to provide a comprehensive means to disseminate information regarding the risk of terrorist acts to federal, state, and local authorities and to the American people. This system provides warnings in the form of a set of graduated “Threat Conditions” that increase as the risk of the threat increases.

How the public should respond:

Low Condition (Green)

This condition is declared when there is a low risk of terrorist attacks.

- Develop a household disaster plan and assemble a disaster supply kit.

Guarded Condition (Blue)

This condition is declared when there is a general risk of terrorist attacks.

In addition to the measures taken in the previous threat condition;

- Update their disaster supply kit;
- Review their household disaster plan;
- Hold a household meeting to discuss what members would do and how they would communicate in the event of an incident;
- Develop a more detailed household communication plan;
- Apartment residents should discuss with building managers steps to be taken during an emergency; and
- People with special needs should discuss their emergency plans with friends, family or employers.



Elevated Condition (Yellow)

An Elevated Condition is declared when there is a significant risk of terrorist attacks. In addition to the measures taken in the previous threat condition;

- Be observant of any suspicious activity and report it to authorities;
- Contact neighbors to discuss their plans and needs;
- Check with school officials to determine their plans for an emergency and procedures to reunite children with parents and caregivers; and
- Update the household communication plan.

High Condition (Orange)

A High Condition is declared when there is a high risk of terrorist attacks.

In addition to the actions taken for the previous threat conditions;

- Review preparedness measures (including evacuation and sheltering) for potential terrorist actions including chemical, biological, and radiological attacks;
- Avoid high profile or symbolic locations; and
- Exercise caution when traveling.

Severe Condition (Red)

A Severe Condition reflects a severe risk of terrorist attacks. Under most circumstances, the protective measures for a Severe Condition are not intended to be sustained for substantial periods of time. In addition to the protective measures in the previous threat conditions;

- Avoid public gathering places such as sports arenas, holiday gatherings, or other high risk locations;
- Follow official instructions about restrictions to normal activities;
- Contact employer to determine status of work;
- Listen to the radio and TV for possible advisories or warnings; and
- Prepare to take protective actions such as sheltering-in-place or evacuation if instructed to do so by public officials.

What you can do to prevent a terrorist attack

Be Aware

As you go about your daily business, take note of your surroundings. This will help you to learn the normal routines of your community. Understanding these routines will help you to spot anything out of place. Get to know your neighbors at home and while traveling. Be on the lookout for suspicious activities such as unusual conduct in your neighborhood, in your workplace, or while traveling. Learn to spot suspicious packages, luggage, or mail abandoned in a crowded place like an office building, an airport, a school, or a shopping center.

Take What You Hear Seriously

If you hear or know of someone who has bragged or talked about plans to harm citizens in violent attacks or who claims membership in a terrorist organization, take it seriously and report it to law enforcement immediately.

Be extra vigilant in the area of potential targets

Terrorists are known to conduct surveillance of potential targets. They seek to gain as much information as possible before attempting an attack, and may even conduct rehearsals. You should be extra vigilant whenever you are near a potential target.

Avoid Stereotyping

When looking for suspicious activities, avoid stereotyping individuals based on race, religion, gender or other classifications. Too often, people allow biases or prejudices to influence the way they perceive others. This is wrong, and does nothing to increase safety. In fact, terrorists often attempt to blend in with their surrounding environment and may be overlooked by those who are blinded by prejudices.

Report Suspicious Activity

If you detect what you believe to be surveillance or other suspicious activity, report it immediately to law enforcement. In observing suspicious activity, some key points to remember are:

The person(s) involved:

In trying to describe someone's physical characteristics, it is best to go from top to bottom, or head to toe. After going from top to bottom, you have created a mental image of the person and it is easier to remember hair color, facial features, race, height, weight, and attire such as clothing, hats or glasses.

Vehicle(s) involved:

In trying to describe an automobile, it is best to go from front to back. In doing this, you have created a mental image of the vehicle and it is easier to remember color, make and model.

Recording the information:

In trying to remember what you have observed, it is best to record the information as soon as possible. You may want to jot down the information on a piece of paper or anything available. You might also call any of your telephone numbers that has a voice mail service and record the information.

Use Caution

Whenever you encounter suspicious activity, be careful not to draw the attention of the individuals involved. You should avoid taking action on your own or otherwise placing yourself in harm's way. In any emergency situation, you should call 9-1-1 immediately.

What you can do to prepare

Despite all of your efforts and those of law enforcement and government agencies, there are no guarantees that all acts of terrorism can be prevented. However, **you** can prepare for an attack in much the same way you would prepare for other emergencies. An emergency can occur without warning, leaving little or no time for you and your family to plan what to do next. It is necessary for you to learn about the things that you can do to be prepared-*before* an emergency occurs.

Below are some of the steps you can take:

Be aware of your surroundings

When in buildings or public spaces away from home, take note of exit paths, stairwell access, and exterior exits. While there is no reason to avoid public places, one should always recognize the potential for fire or other emergency that may require immediate evacuation.

Create an emergency communications plan

Choose an out-of town contact your family or household will call or e-mail to check on each other should a disaster occur. Your selected contact should live far enough away that they would be unlikely to be

directly affected by the same event, and they should know they are the chosen contact. Make sure every household member has that contact's, and each other's, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers (home, work, pager and cell). Leave these contact numbers at your children's schools, if you have children, and at your workplace.

Your family should know that if telephones are not working, they need to be patient and try again later or try e-mail. Many people flood the telephone lines when emergencies happen but e-mail can sometimes get through when calls don't.

Establish a meeting place

Having a predetermined meeting place away from your home will save time and minimize confusion should your home be affected or the area evacuated. You may even want to make arrangements to stay with a family member or friend in case of an emergency. Be sure to include any pets in these plans, since pets are not permitted in shelters and some hotels will not accept them.

Assemble an Emergency Supply Kit

If you need to evacuate your home or are asked to "shelter in place," having some essential supplies on hand will make you and your family more comfortable. Prepare a disaster supplies kit in an easy-to-carry container such as a duffel bag or small plastic trash can. Copies of essential documents-like powers of attorney, birth and marriage certificates, insurance policies, life insurance beneficiary designations and a copy of your will should also be kept in a safe location outside your home. A safe deposit box or the home of a friend or family member who lives out of town is a good choice.

Emergency Supply Kits

- Foods (canned goods and nonperishable foods) that do not need cooking
- Utensils, such as, a manual can opener, disposable plates, cups, forks, knives spoons, etc.
- Drinking water in non-breakable containers (1 gallon per person / day)
- Special dietary food if required
- Cash
- Identification, valuable papers, passports, licenses, policies and photographs in a waterproof container
- Personal hygiene items, such as, soap, deodorant, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush, washcloth, towels, sanitary items
- First aid kit
- Medications, prescription and over the counter, such as aspirin and antacid
- Specific medical information
- Personal aids, such as, eyeglasses, hearing aids, canes, etc.
- Infant care items, such as, diapers and formula
- Books, magazines, toys
- Battery-operated radio or television
- Flashlight
- Extra batteries
- Sleeping bag or blanket, sheet and pillow for each family member
- Change of clothing for each family member
- Rainwear
- Toolkit
- Container for your disaster supply kit, should be waterproof

School Emergency Plans

If your child is enrolled in a Winchester Public School, please know that every school has an emergency plan in place and a team of teachers and administrators to ensure the safety of our children. The Winchester Fire and Police Department have worked extensively with school staff to minimize the effects of any emergency.

The Winchester Public Schools believe that in the event of an emergency, children are safer in schools than in transit. If an emergency is declared, students are to remain in school unless instructed otherwise by public safety officials or unless parents elect to pick up their child or children at the school.

When an Emergency Strikes

General Guidelines

- Remain calm and be patient.
- Follow the advice of local emergency officials.
- Listen to your radio or television for news and instructions.
- If the disaster occurs near you, check for injuries. Give first aid and get help for seriously injured people.
- If the disaster occurs near your home while you are there, check for damage using a flashlight. Do not light matches or candles or turn on electrical switches. Check for fires, fire hazards and other household hazards. Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater.
- If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows, and get everyone outside quickly.
- Shut off any other damaged utilities.
- Confine or secure your pets.
- Call your family contact and do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.
- Check on your neighbors, especially those who are elderly or disabled.

Opening Mail

Teach your family and friends to be aware when opening the mail.

Signs of suspicious mail include the following:

- It is unexpected or from someone you don't know.
- It is addressed to someone no longer at your address.
- It is handwritten, has no return address
- Bears a return address that you cannot confirm is legitimate.
- It is lopsided or lumpy in appearance.
- It has wires or other unusual contents that are protruding or can be felt through the envelope or wrapping.
- It is sealed with excessive amounts of tape.
- It is marked with restrictive endorsements such as "Personal" or "Confidential."
- It has excessive postage.



What you should do with a suspicious piece of mail:

- Do not handle a letter or package that you suspect is contaminated.
- Stay away from the package and don't shake it, bump it, or sniff it.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after handling.
- Notify local law enforcement authorities immediately.

Protective Actions

In the event of an emergency, you will likely be asked to take one of two protective actions. Protective actions are steps to be taken to protect you and your family from harm. These protective actions are evacuation and shelter-in-place. The protective action you should take will depend on the nature of the emergency, and your location in proximity to it. During and after an event, stay tuned to your local radio or television station or listen to emergency personnel to know which protective action you should use.

Evacuation

Should you be asked to evacuate, stay tuned to your local radio or television station or listen to emergency personnel for instructions on the location to which you are evacuating, and the route you should follow. Listen carefully to any evacuation instructions, as your location at the time of the emergency will likely be a factor in whether or not you should evacuate, as well as your evacuation route and destination. In the event of a power outage, treat non-working traffic lights as stop signs and proceed cautiously.

Shelter-In-Place

Shelter-in-place involves simply staying in your house or inside any other location where you might be, so as to avoid harm. In the event of an emergency such as the release of a hazardous material, it is not always recommended to immediately evacuate, as leaving your house might expose you to harmful agents that have been dispersed into the air.

Chemical, Biological and Radiological Emergencies

If you are notified or become aware of a technological hazard such as a chemical, biological, or radiological emergency, do not panic. The best defense from any of these emergencies is education and awareness. In the unlikely event that there is a technological emergency, knowing how to respond will greatly reduce confusion and fear. If you need to get out of the surrounding area or are directed to evacuate, do so immediately and:

- Take your Emergency Supply Kit;
- Lock your home;
- Travel on routes specified by local authorities;

If You Have Pets

In the event of an evacuation you should take your pet with you. Make necessary preparations in advance and be sure to include the following items in your Emergency Supply Kit:

- Identification collar and rabies tag.
- Carrier or cage and leash.
- Any medications (be sure to check expiration dates.)
- Newspapers and plastic trash bags for handling waste.
- At least two-week supply of food, water, and food bowls.
- Veterinary records (most animal shelters do not allow pets without proof of vaccination).
- Travel with car windows up and air vents, air conditioner, and heater turned off; and
- Head up-wind of the incident.



If you are instructed to stay inside and not to evacuate (Shelter-In-Place)

- Close and lock windows and doors;
- Turn off ventilation systems, water, and gas;
- Seal gaps under doorways and windows with tape;

- If you suspect chemical or biological agents have entered your house, move to a safe room and the interior of the house on a higher floor if possible. Many harmful agents that could enter a house will fall and accumulate at lower levels;
- If harmful vapors do enter the house, covering your nose and mouth with a cloth can provide minimal breathing protection; and
- Stay inside until authorities say it is safe.

If you are asked to shelter-in-place, but are caught in an unprotected area, you should:

- Attempt to get up-wind of the contaminated area;
- Attempt to find shelter as quickly as possible; and
- Listen to your local radio or emergency personnel for official instructions.

Important Telephone Numbers & Websites

Phone:

Winchester Police	911
Winchester Fire	911
Winchester Ambulance	911
Winchester Board of Health	781-721-7121
Winchester Town Manager’s Office	781-721-7133
Winchester Department of Public Works	781-721-7100
Winchester Water & Sewer Department - Emergency	781-721-7109
Winchester Animal Control	781-729-5151
FBI (Boston Office).	617-742-5533
Federal Emergency Management Agency.	202-566-1600
Centers for Disease Control.	404-639-3311
NSTAR Electric.	617-424-2000
KeySpan Gas	617-742-8400
Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency.	508-820-2000

Web Sites:

www.ready.gov	US Department of Homeland Security
www.epa.gov	Environmental Protection Agency
www.fema.gov	Federal Emergency Management Agency
www.cdc.gov	Centers for Disease Control
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp	Department of Justice, Office for Domestic Preparedness
www.usdoj.gov	Department of Justice
www.mass.gov/mema	Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
www.fbi.gov	Federal Bureau of Investigation
www.whitehouse.gov/deptofhomeland	US Department of Homeland Security
www.aapcc.org	American Association of Poison Control Centers
www.redcross.org	American Red Cross
www.cateyesprogram.com	Community Anti-Terrorism Training Institute

Source note: Some information included in this publication comes from the City of Boston, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, the American Red Cross, the National Crime Prevention Council, and the Government of the District of Columbia.