

Fact Sheet

Explosions

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Explosive devices are one of terrorists' most common weapons. The materials needed for an explosive device can be found in many places including variety, hardware, auto supply and agricultural fertilizer supply stores. Explosive devices are highly portable, using vehicles and humans as the means of transport. They are easily detonated from remote locations or by suicide bombers. Detonation of an explosive device causes blast damage, fire, and secondary hazards such as broken glass and other missiles hurtling through the immediate area

Know Your Risk and What to Do

- Contact your local emergency management office to learn about community emergency plans and what should be in your emergency plan.
- Get additional information from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (www.ready.gov), the American Red Cross (www.redcross.org) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (www.fema.gov).
- Inquire about emergency plans and procedures at your child's school, your workplace, and any facility where a family member is a resident or receives daycare.
- Whether in an apartment building, highrise office building, or other business or industrial site: Make a disaster plan that includes out-of-town contacts, and neighborhood or other locations to reunite if evacuation or damage causes your family to become separated or your organization to relocate. Be sure everyone knows home, work and cell phone numbers, other contact numbers at new locations, and how to call 9-1-1.
- Assemble a 3-day disaster supplies kit at home with food, water, medical supplies, battery-powered radio and NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, batteries, flashlights, and other items. Also assemble a kit at work in case you have to evacuate directly and reunite later. For more information about assembling a disaster supplies kit, visit www.fema.gov/areyouready/.
- Gather important family or business documents and store them in a fire- and water-safe location or safe deposit box.

Lessons Learned – and Confirmed

We learned much from the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001: That was the first use of a fully fueled airliner as a weapon to destroy a building. The event reinforced the following:

- Evacuation readiness saves lives – tens of thousands at the Twin Towers.
- There can be a great number of casualties and extensive damage to buildings, utility systems, transportation systems, etc.
- Employers need up-to-date information about any medical needs you may have and know how to contact your emergency contacts and designated beneficiaries.
- Workplaces and schools may be closed, and there may be restrictions on domestic and international travel.
- You and your family or household may have to evacuate. You may have to avoid roads blocked for your safety.
- Law enforcement from local, state and federal levels may be on the scene following a terrorist attack.
- Health and mental health resources in affected communities may be overwhelmed.
- Extensive media coverage and public fear of terrorism may persist.
- Young children are especially sensitive to repeated media coverage of the same event. Children may not realize it is repeated video footage, and may think the event is happening again and again.

Before an Explosion

Employers, building managers, schools and other institutions should inform employees, students, residents or inmates about emergency plans and procedures, train an appropriate number in first aid and CPR. and have practice evacuation drills, including evacuation assistance to those needing it.

If you receive a telephoned bomb threat, do the following:

- Get as much information from the caller as possible.
- Keep the caller on the line and record everything that is said.
- Notify the police and the building management.
- Set aside any incoming deliveries beginning immediately, inside if anyone remains, and at the perimeter if evacuated. Place them in a container as far away from anyone as possible, where an explosion would be likely to do the least damage.

During an Explosion

- Get under a sturdy table or desk if things are falling around you. When they stop falling, leave quickly, watching for obviously weakened floors and stairways.
- As you exit from the building, be especially watchful for falling debris.
- Leave the building as quickly as possible.
- Do not stop to retrieve personal possessions or make phone calls.
- Do not use elevators unless expressly directed to them by those directing the evacuation.
- If outdoors or driving in a busy public place when an explosion occurs, move away and out of the area to allow police, fire and emergency medical services unobstructed access.

After an Explosion

Once you are out:

- Do not stand in front of windows, glass doors, or other potentially hazardous areas.
- Move away from sidewalks or streets used by others still exiting the building or officials responding to the emergency.

If you are trapped in debris:

- If possible, use a flashlight to signal your location to rescuers. Or tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can hear where you are, or use a whistle to signal them.
- Avoid unnecessary movement so you don't kick up dust.
- Cover your nose and mouth with anything you have on hand. (Dense-weave cotton material can act as a good filter. Try to breathe through the material.)
- Shout only as a last resort, or to answer a call from someone close enough to hear you. Shouting can cause you to inhale dangerous amounts of dust.

The Recovery Process

- For direct assistance to individuals and families for immediate needs contact the American Red Cross or other local voluntary agencies.
- Check newspapers, television, or radio news for information about disaster assistance available.
- If you have property damage, contact your insurance company as well as the FEMA Disaster Recovery Center as soon as possible.
- For information on helping children deal with disaster, visit www.fema.gov and print a copy of FEMA 478 **Helping Children Cope with Disaster**. To obtain this and other FEMA fact sheets and publications call the FEMA publications warehouse at 1-800-480-2520, code#4.

Dangerous Explosion Myth!	The Facts:
If you are trapped in debris, shout as much as you can so rescuers can locate you.	Shouting should be used only as a last resort, or to answer a call from someone close enough to hear you. Shouting can actually make you inhale dangerous amounts of dust. It is better to tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can hear where you are, or to signal rescuers with a flashlight or a whistle.