



NJSARS SUCCESS STORIES

NJOHSP encourages the public, law enforcement, first responders, and our private- and public-sector partners to report suspicious activity that could be related to terrorism. In the last few years, such reports in the tristate area led to investigations that thwarted several terrorist plots. Here are a few incidents in which a suspicious activity report helped uncover and frustrate possible attacks.



NEW JERSEY SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTING: SUCCESS STORIES



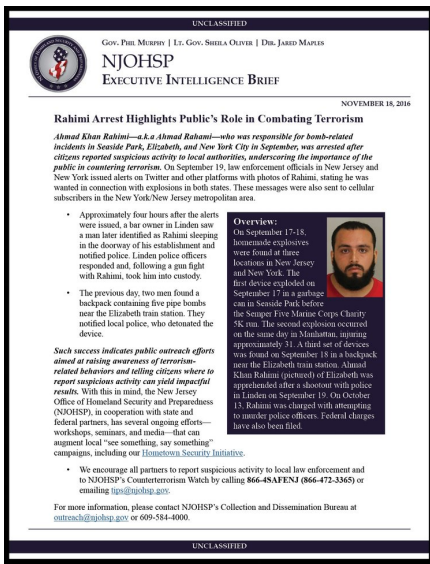
Incident	Location	Success
In May 2017, a Point Pleasant man was charged with plotting to build a pressure-cooker bomb and detonate it in New York City in support of ISIS. The suspect, Gregory Lepsky, stated to authorities that he wanted to become a suicide bomber and "kill as many people as possible." He claimed he joined ISIS after communicating with the terrorist group through social media and had purchased plane tickets to travel to Turkey.		Prior Lepsky's arrest, Point Pleasant police submitted a suspicious activity report after a family member notified law enforcement that he had a weapon and was going to kill the family dog. During the course of the investigation, police discovered Lepsky had conducted research on how to make a pressure-cooker bomb, specifically the article "How to Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom," published in al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula's English-language magazine, Inspire. Lepsky has been federally charged with attempting to provide material support to ISIS.
In September 2016, homemade explosives were found at three locations in New Jersey and New York. The first device exploded on September 17 in a garbage can in Seaside Park, New Jersey, before the start of the Semper Parvum Marine Corps Charity 5K run. The second explosion occurred on the same day in Manhattan, injuring 31. The third set of devices was found on September 18 in a backpack near the Elizabeth train station. The suspect, Elizabeth resident Ahmad Khan Rahimi, was apprehended after a shootout with police in Linden on September 19.		Rahimi's arrest was due to citizens reporting suspicious activity to local authorities. Four hours after law enforcement officials issued alerts with photos of the suspect, a bar owner in Linden saw a man sleeping in the doorway of his establishment who resembled the suspect. He notified Linden police, who took the suspect into custody following a gunfight. The previous day, two men found a backpack containing five pipe bombs near the Elizabeth train station. They notified local police, who detonated the device. On October 13, Rahimi was charged with attempting to murder police officers. In October, Rahimi was found guilty of eight charges in federal court in New York.
In 2015, six men were charged with plotting terrorist acts in the name of ISIS. The cell, which included Samuel Topaz, Nader Saadeh, and Alaa Saadeh, as well as several individuals in New York, including Fareed Mumuni and Munther Saleh, planned to travel to Syria to join ISIS.		A tip from a private citizen, in addition to law enforcement spotting Munther Saleh heading toward the George Washington Bridge two days in a row, led to a search of the suspect's computer, which contained ISIS propaganda. As of February 2017, all six men have pleaded guilty to federal terrorism charges, including conspiracy to provide material support to ISIS.
In November 2014, a phone call from a private citizen in St. Louis, Missouri, to the SAFE-NJ tipline alerted the NJOHSP Counterterrorism Watch (CTWatch) to a violent Facebook post from an individual in Newark. The post stated, "Today I am going to walk up to a cruiser and shoot a cop in the ... head."		CTWatch alerted the New Jersey State Police and the Newark Real-Time Crime Center of the post. The lead was entered into the New Jersey Suspicious Activity Reporting System (NJSARS) and other law enforcement agencies, including the Newark FBI-Joint Terrorism Task Force, were notified. The individual was identified in less than an hour and subsequently arrested.
In December 2011, a pile of newspapers was set on fire on the front porch of the Army ROTC office at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, which was followed by an attempt to insert additional burning newspapers through the mailbox slot. The following January, there were attempted attacks on synagogues and Jewish institutions in Bergen County involving Molotov cocktails.		These incidents were reported to NJSARS and in addition to citizen tips, assisted in identifying the individuals responsible. Aakash Dalal and Anthony Graziano were charged with criminal mischief, conspiracy, aggravated and bias intimidation arson, possession of a weapon, and counts of attempted murder. They became the first to be convicted under New Jersey's anti-terrorism statute following guilty verdicts for terrorism and bias intimidation.
In June 2010, Mohamed Alessa and Carlos Almonte were arrested for attempting to travel to Somalia to provide material support to al-Shabaab, a foreign terrorist organization. Authorities were first alerted in 2006, when Alessa threatened to bomb his school. In the subsequent four years, Alessa and Almonte threatened Bergen County College students and then desecrated a Coptic Christian Church in Jersey City.		The culmination and proper reporting of these incidents ensured these individuals were on authorities' radar. In 2010, federal authorities arrested Alessa and Almonte at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York for attempting to travel to Somalia in support of al-Shabaab. On March 3, 2011, they pleaded guilty to conspiring to join al-Shabaab to kill US troops overseas. Both men received sentences of over 20 years in prison.
In May 2007, a group of self-radicalized men conspiring to attack US military personnel at Fort Dix was arrested. Their intent was to kill as many soldiers as possible in the name of Islam.		The individuals, known as the Fort Dix Six, were caught due to the actions of a store technician. They asked the technician to convert a videotape of their weapons practice to a DVD. The technician reported the video's content to his manager, who then informed local police. The County Prosecutor's Office was notified and the information was entered into NJSARS. An FBI investigation resulted in six convictions and sentences ranging from 20 months to life in prison.

We encourage all partners to report suspicious activity to local law enforcement and to NJOHSP's Counterterrorism Watch by calling 866-4SAFENJ (866-472-3365) or e-mailing tips@njohsp.gov.

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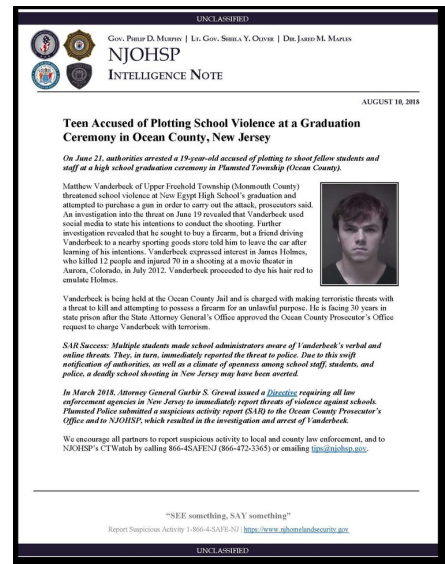
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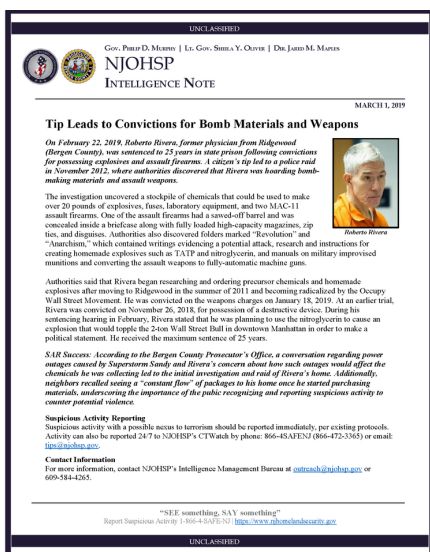


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