



**SAMPLE LETTER TO RESIDENTS ON
RECENT NON-SPECIFIC, GENERAL THREAT
TO APARTMENT BUILDINGS**

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To: NAA Members and Affiliates,

Many members and affiliates have requested further information to distribute to residents regarding the recent general threat on apartments. The attached SAMPLE LETTER TO RESIDENTS ON RECENT NON-SPECIFIC, GENERAL THREAT TO APARTMENT BUILDINGS may be customized for your use. The FEMA "Your Family Disaster Plan" is attached to this memo for your convenience. You may choose to circulate it to your residents or simply reference the website address where it can be found.

Some questions our members have received from residents have included inquiries about resident screening procedures; on-site security amenities or measures; how to break their lease and move-out; or what insurance coverage the property has.

To reiterate what was relayed to the membership on Friday, May 17, members should contact their **local FBI/Joint Terrorism Task Force Field Office** with any leads on suspicious behavior. For a directory of FBI/JTTF Field Offices go to <http://www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/info.htm>.

NOTE TO APARTMENT OPERATOR: There are sections of this letter that need personalization. They are designated with text written between brackets (<text>).

Attachments.

SAMPLE LETTER TO RESIDENTS ON RECENT NON-SPECIFIC, GENERAL
THREAT TO APARTMENT BUILDINGS

May 20, 2002

Dear Resident:

Your apartment operator has been notified by the National Apartment Association of a possible terrorist threat targeting apartments. This threat advisory was released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in Washington, DC. The general, non-specific threat being communicated by the FBI essentially is that:

There are indications that al-Queda leaders discussed the possibility of renting apartment units in various areas of the United States and rigging them with explosives. The FBI has no information indicating that this proposed plot advanced beyond the discussion stage. The FBI is working with other intelligence agencies to determine the credibility of this information.

The elements that would cause this **general** threat on apartments to become a **specific** threat include:

- Credible information on individuals who are planning this activity;
- Credible information on what the target is (a specific type of apartment building);
- Credible information on the timing of such activity;
- Credible information on the location of the activity (city, county); or
- Other credible information to corroborate the threat.

At this time, we want to emphasize that this is not a specific threat against any particular apartment building or going to occur within a specific time parameter. Please keep abreast of local and national news for emergency information and updates.

All residents are asked to be aware of any suspicious activities and report them to the local FBI Field Office <go to <http://www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/info.htm> to find the field office that is closest to you> and then to the apartment management office <insert the phone number and names of on-site personnel>. If you believe the activity is an emergency, call 911 immediately, and then report it to the apartment management office.

Here are some tips that can help make a difference at your apartment community.

- Report suspicious people or activities at the apartment community to the management. For example, vehicles, visitors, unusual traffic, noise, solicitors, abandoned packages, residents changing their own locks.

- Get to know your neighbors. Terrorists can succeed through the anonymity that apartment communities may provide.
- Keep apartment keys, access cards and amenity access cards in a secure location and let management know if any have been lost.
- Do not give security codes to unknown persons.
- Do not open your door for service/maintenance personnel without first obtaining proper identification.
- As always, we urge you to cover any loss of your personal property by purchasing a renter's insurance policy.
- Make sure the emergency contact information that we have on file for you is up-to-date.
- Know the emergency evacuation procedures for your apartment home, if one is required. <Apartment operator: You may want to attach evacuation procedures to this letter, or instruct residents what to do.>
- Adopt a Family Disaster Plan. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has developed a model plan for you to use.
(www.fema.gov/pte/famplan.htm)

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Your Family Disaster Plan

Disaster can strike quickly and without warning. It can force you to evacuate your neighborhood or confine you to your home. What would you do if basic services--water, gas, electricity or telephones--were cut off? Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone right away.

Families can--and do--cope with disaster by preparing in advance and working together as a team. Follow the steps listed in this brochure to create your family's disaster plan. Knowing what to do is your best protection and your responsibility.

Where will your family be when disaster strikes? They could be anywhere--at work, at school or in the car.

How will you find each other? Will you know if your children are safe?

4 Steps to Safety

1. Find Out What Could Happen to You

Contact your local emergency management or civil defense office and American Red Cross chapter--be prepared to take notes:

- Ask what types of disasters are most likely to happen. Request information on how to prepare for each.
- Learn about your community's warning signals: what they sound like and what you should do when you hear them.
- Ask about animal care after disaster. Animals may not be allowed inside emergency shelters due to health regulations.
- Find out how to help elderly or disabled persons, if

needed.

- Next, find out about the disaster plans at your workplace, your children's school or daycare center and other places where your family spends time.

2. Create a Disaster Plan

Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disaster. Explain the dangers of fire, severe weather and earthquakes to children. Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team.

- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case.
- Pick two places to meet:
 1. Right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire.
 2. Outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home. Everyone must know the address and phone number.
- Ask an out-of-state friend to be your "family contact." After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. Other family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Everyone must know your contact's phone number.
- Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Plan how to take care of your pets.

3. Complete This Checklist

- Post emergency telephone numbers by phones (fire, police, ambulance, etc.).
- Teach children how and when to call 911 or your local Emergency Medical Services number for emergency help.
- Show each family member how and when to turn off the water, gas and electricity at the main switches.
- Check if you have adequate insurance coverage.
- Teach each family member how to use the fire extinguisher (ABC type), and show them where it's kept.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.

- Conduct a home hazard hunt.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit.
- Take a Red Cross first aid and CPR class.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room.
- Find the safe spots in your home for each type of disaster.

4. Practice and Maintain Your Plan

- Quiz your kids every six months so they remember what to do.
- Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.
- Replace stored water every three months and stored food every six months.
- Test and recharge your fire extinguisher(s) according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Test your smoke detectors monthly and change the batteries at least once a year.

EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

Keep enough supplies in your home to meet your needs for at least three days. Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit with items you may need in an evacuation. Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers such as backpacks, duffle bags or covered trash containers.

Include:

- A three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food that won't spoil.
- One change of clothing and footwear per person, and one blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- A first aid kit that includes your family's prescription medications.
- Emergency tools including a battery-powered radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries.
- An extra set of car keys and a credit card, cash or traveler's checks.
- Sanitation supplies.
- Special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members.
- An extra pair of glasses.

- Keep important family documents in a waterproof container. Keep a smaller kit in the trunk of your car.

UTILITIES

Locate the main electric fuse box, water service main and natural gas main. Learn how and when to turn these utilities off. Teach all responsible family members. Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves.

Remember, turn off the utilities only if you suspect the lines are damaged or if you are instructed to do so. *If you turn the gas off, you will need a professional to turn it back on.*

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

Working with neighbors can save lives and property. Meet with your neighbors to plan how the neighborhood could work together after a disaster until help arrives. If you're a member of a neighborhood organization, such as a home association or crime watch group, introduce disaster preparedness as a new activity. Know your neighbors' special skills (e.g., medical, technical) and consider how you could help neighbors who have special needs, such as disabled and elderly persons. Make plans for child care in case parents can't get home.

HOME HAZARD HUNT

During a disaster, ordinary objects in your home can cause injury or damage. Anything that can move, fall, break or cause a fire is a home hazard. For example, a hot water heater or a bookshelf can fall. Inspect your home at least once a year and fix potential hazards.

Contact your local fire department to learn about home fire hazards.

EVACUATION

Evacuate immediately if told to do so:

- Listen to your battery-powered radio and follow the instructions of local emergency officials.
- Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes.

- Take [your family disaster supplies kit](#)
- Lock your home.
- Use travel routes specified by local authorities-- don't use shortcuts because certain areas may be impassable or dangerous.

If you're sure you have time:

- Shut off water, gas and electricity before leaving, if instructed to do so.
- Post a note telling others when you left and where you are going.
- Make arrangements for your pets.

IF DISASTER STRIKES

If disaster strikes

Remain calm and patient. Put your plan into action.

Check for injuries

Give first aid and get help for seriously injured people.

Listen to your battery powered radio for news and instructions

Evacuate, if advised to do so. Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes.

Check for damage in your home...

- Use flashlights--do not light matches or turn on electrical switches, if you suspect damage.
- 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.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline and other flammable liquids immediately.

Remember to...

- Confine or secure your pets.

- Call your family contact--do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.
- Check on your neighbors, especially elderly or disabled persons.
- Make sure you have an adequate water supply in case service is cut off.
- Stay away from downed power lines.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's Family Protection Program and the American Red Cross' Disaster Education Program are nationwide efforts to help citizens prepare for disasters of all types. For more information, please contact your local emergency management or civil defense office, and your local American Red Cross chapter. Start planning now.

Request free family protection publications by writing to: FEMA, P.O. Box 70274, Washington, D.C. 20024.

Ask for: Are You Ready?, "[Your Family Disaster Supplies Kit](#)" and "[Emergency Food and Water Supplies.](#)"

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