



**Homeland
Security**

Security Awareness for Levee Owners

Historically, terrorist groups have conducted extensive surveillance of potential infrastructure targets to both select a target and plan an attack. These efforts can be conducted over many months or even years. Additional surveillance is usually conducted shortly prior to an attack to assess any security enhancements that have already been implemented, adjusting the attack plan if necessary.

Although there has been no credible information indicating that terrorists have identified levees as potential targets, the Dams Sector-specific Agency within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Dams Sector councils, and Levee Subsector Councils agree that levee owners and operators should be aware of the possibility of a terrorist attack targeting levees and other flood risk reduction structures.

Signs of Surveillance Attempts

Levee personnel should be alert to the following signs of surveillance attempts, particularly during periods of potential flooding or heightened national threat advisories:

- Presence of strangers or unknown vehicles in areas near or adjacent to the levee, particularly if observed over multiple days
- Individuals in accessible areas open to the public who do not fit the typical profile or behavior of walkers, joggers, boaters, or bicyclists
- Persons using cameras, video devices, or optical equipment to photograph or diagram levee structures or their support systems, such as pumps, gates, electrical components, or communications facilities
- Unusual aircraft flyovers or boating activities, such as uncommon low-altitude flights, unattended boats, or unusual recovering or tossing of items
- Cuts in fencing or gates, particularly to key areas of the levee structure with no resulting theft, vandalism, or other petty criminal activity
- Unusual requests for information to levee employees or calling, visiting, or emailing questions regarding the levee operations
- Theft of marked vehicles, work clothes, or identification cards from the levee owner or operator, contractors, or other authorized personnel

The above list should not be considered all-inclusive, and personnel should use good judgment and experience to identify activities deemed suspicious. Some activities are difficult to pinpoint, especially in recreational areas, since many items used in surveillance efforts are also commonly used by campers, hikers, and nature photographers.

Reporting Suspicious Activity

Suspicious activity should be reported promptly according to the levee owner or operator's reporting protocols. At a minimum, suspicious activities should be reported to the local law enforcement agency with the expectation that they

will respond to and investigate the situation. Personnel should also consider whether the incident needs to be reported to the local Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) field office.

The local law enforcement agency is encouraged to coordinate with its respective State or local fusion center to ensure that the information is shared across agencies and entered into State and national data collection and analysis systems. Fusion centers are typically led by law enforcement entities, such as State police or bureaus of investigation. In general they are established as partnerships between State or local law enforcement entities, the FBI, and State homeland security offices. Fusion centers ensure coordination among various agencies and the private sector in the reporting and analysis of suspicious incidents, thereby identifying potential terrorist activities. States may have more than one fusion center.

When reporting the incident, personnel should be prepared to describe the suspicious behavior and to provide a description of the person(s), vehicles, etc. Any type of photographic evidence (for example, photographs taken with a mobile phone) can enhance the report, but care should be taken to ensure that personnel safety is not compromised. Persons should be identified by gender, race, complexion, height, weight, hair and eye color, facial hair, clothing, and any distinguishing characteristics. Vehicles should be described by make, model, type, year, color, markings, and license number. To the extent possible, airplanes should be identified by color, size, and tail number; boats should be identified by type, size, color, registration identification, and any other characteristics.

As an additional measure, levee owners and operators with access to the Homeland Security Information Network-Critical Infrastructure (HSIN-CI) Dams Portal can also report the incident through the Suspicious Activity Reporting tool. This tool can report and retrieve information pertaining to suspicious activities that may be associated with pre-incident surveillance; activities exploring or targeting a critical infrastructure facility or system; or any violation of law or regulation compromising the facility or system, thus jeopardizing life or property. It is important to note that the tool is not indented to replace other reporting mechanisms but rather enhances them by ensuring that levee owners and operators can evaluate reports from other stakeholders, agencies, and organizations.

Additional Resources

A more detailed description of surveillance indicators is available in *Security Awareness Guide: Levees*, developed and endorsed by the Levee Subsector Councils. Copies are available on the Websites of the National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies (www.nafsma.org) and the Association of State Flood Plain Managers (www.floods.org). You may also request one by contacting the DHS Dams Sector-specific Agency.

Contact Information

For questions or additional information, please contact dams@dhs.gov.