



NJOHSP *at a glance*

YOUR WEEK IN REVIEW | JUNE 29, 2015

Tunisia: Attack Shows the Vulnerability of Beach Resorts

A terrorist attack that targeted tourists at the Tunisian resort city of Sousse shows **the vulnerability to terrorism of beach resorts – a key segment of the New Jersey economy during the summer months**. On June 26, a gunman dressed like a tourist pulled an assault rifle from under a beach umbrella and began firing at tourists relaxing in the sun. He continued moving into a luxury hotel, firing as he went, until he was



shot and killed by police. The attack killed at least 38 people and wounded at least 35. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) claimed responsibility for the attack. This is the first terrorist attack in recent years to target a recreational beach area. The beach resort in Bali, Indonesia, has been attacked, but the attack in October 2002 focused on a nightclub, and another in October 2005 struck beachfront cafés and a bar and shopping area. Beach resorts by nature are vulnerable targets, with large crowds in an open, accessible area and the vacationers being in a relaxed mode, sunbathing on the beach or splashing in the ocean. A beach that is contiguous with a luxury hotel may have an added symbolic value for terrorist planners.

Personnel who are responsible for beach safety – including police officers, lifeguards, beach patrol members, and security staff – are encouraged to be vigilant for suspicious

indicators of a potential terrorist attack, in addition to the usual beach security concerns. This alert is especially relevant during the period of increased vigilance associated with the upcoming July 4th holiday.

Faith-Based Institutions: Arsonists Strike Four African-American Churches

Suspicious fires damaged four predominantly African-American churches in the South last week. Three of the fires have been determined to be arson, and the fourth remains under investigation. There is no evidence at this time that the incidents are linked, and other than the timing, there are no indications that the fires are related to the recent racially-motivated shootings at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, or the resulting national discussion on racial issues. An FBI spokesman said that Federal investigators are supporting local law enforcement efforts to identify suspects and determine their motives.



Police have described the first fire, at College Hills Seventh Day Adventist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee, on June 22, as vandalism, and they do not believe it was a hate crime. At God's Power Church of Christ in Macon, Georgia, on June 23, firefighters found the front door wired shut. Investigators determined that the fire was intentionally set, but they do not have evidence that it was a hate crime. At Briar Creek Road Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, which was burned on June 24 (see photo), investigators have "no direct evidence" of a hate crime, but they are investigating the possibility. Investigators have not determined the cause of the fire on June 26 at Glover Grove Baptist Church in Warrenville, South Carolina, but they have not ruled out arson.

France: Additional Details on the Gas Factory Attack

A French prosecutor has provided additional details on the June 26 attack on a U.S.-owned gas factory about 25 miles southeast of Lyon, in southeastern France. The suspect, Yassin Salhi, age 35, was arrested after driving a delivery van into the Air Products and Chemicals plant. He easily gained access to the plant, because he frequently made deliveries there. He accelerated his vehicle toward a hangar containing bottles of gas, liquid oxygen, and acetone, causing a large explosion. Firefighters surprised the suspect while he was opening bottles of acetone, in an apparent attempt to cause a larger explosion. The firefighters overpowered the suspect, and nearby they found the headless body of a man later identified as Salhi's employer, the owner of the delivery company. The victim's head was hung on a fence, between two Islamic flags with the *Shahada*, the Muslim profession of faith. Investigators are interviewing other subjects, but at this stage, there are no signs that Salhi had any accomplices. The headquarters of Air Products and Chemicals, Inc., is located in Allentown, Pennsylvania. In a statement on June 26, the company said that all of its personnel had been evacuated from the plant in France and all were accounted for.

Contact Information

Any agency with information or comments/questions on this or other analytical products, please contact the NJOHSP Analysis Bureau at analysis@njohsp.gov or 609-584-4000.

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