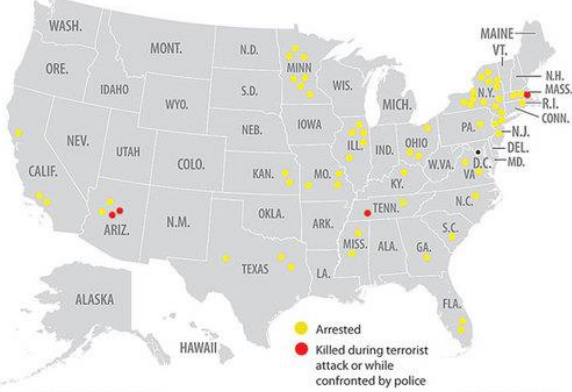


Where ISIS recruits have been arrested

Fifty-eight men and women have been arrested so far in 2015 for supporting the Muslim extremist group. Three others have been shot either during a terrorist attack or when confronted by police. One man was killed during what has been classified as a lone wolf attack in Chattanooga, Tenn. His motives remain unclear.



SOURCE: ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE

GRAPHIC: JOHN KEHE/STAFF



UMAA
ADVOCACY

ISLAMIC HOUSES OF WORSHIP SECURITY ADVISORY

SECURITY REPORT

ISLAMIC HOUSES OF WORSHIP

SECURITY ADVISORY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(WASHINGTON DC – OCTOBER 6, 2015) UMAA hereby issues an Islamic House of Worship Safety Advisory, and urges Islamic centers and mosques to institute enhanced security measures as well as “common sense” safety measures.

In light of growing incidents of anti-Islam sentiment, culminating in more than twenty armed rallies set to take place this week in front of mosques; and growing incidents of anti-Shia radicalism from purported members of ISIS in the United States, this safety advisory provides critical advice on how Islamic houses of worship can best prepare themselves to respond to any emergency.

All mosques are urged to enact enhanced security measures in the face of growing anti-Muslim sentiment, and in particular Shia Muslim mosques are counseled to do so in preparedness for the programs and rituals associated with the holy months of *Muharram* and *Safar*.

Recently, UMAA representatives met with security and civil rights experts from the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to discuss concerns regarding both anti-Muslim groups and sectarian radicals and their threats to America’s mosques in general, and Shia centers more specifically.

BACKGROUND

This past week, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), urged Muslim community leaders to consider instituting additional safety measures in response to hate rallies by possibly armed anti-Muslim extremists targeting mosques nationwide on October 10.¹

Other prominent groups, such as Muslim Advocates, are holding community meetings in coordination with the Department of Homeland Security, to help Islamic centers plan for the anti-Muslim rallies.

Next month marks the Islamic month of Muharram, the annual series of holy days commemorated by Shia Muslims. Muharram has been the target for extremists in the United States in the past. Muharram is set to begin on October 14th, and culminate with large scale services on October 23 and 24, and on again near December 2-3, 2015. There are large Shia communities in every major city in the United States, and in surrounding suburban areas.

¹ (CAIR), C. (2015). CAIR Asks Mosques Nationwide to Take Added Safety Measures Prior to Anti-Islam Rallies October 10. Prnewswire.com. Retrieved 5 October 2015, from <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/cair-asks-mosques-nationwide-to-take-added-safety-measures-prior-to-anti-islam-rallies-october-10-300153799.html>

RADICALISM IN THE UNITED STATES

ANTI-ISLAM GROUPS

An anti-Islam group has called on "patriots" to hold demonstrations in front of mosques across the country in October. Responding to the call, protests organized under the name "Global Rally For Humanity" have already been scheduled for Oct. 9 and 10 in at least 20 locations, including Charleston, South Carolina; Atlanta; Dearborn, Michigan; and Phoenix. Some of the organizers have encouraged demonstrators to leave their weapons at home, while others have encouraged participants to utilize their right to bear arms, the website said.

"As this invasion of Muslim colonization continues unchecked on American soil, we can only expect the same suffering now endured by EUROPE [caps sic]," a Facebook page for a protest in Dearborn, a city outside of Detroit with a large Muslim population, said. "Now is the time to act. Now is the time to save our Republic."

ISIS IN AMERICA

Almost one year ago this week, CDN News reported "ISIS graffiti appeared in multiple locations in Washington DC, drawing the attention of the local and federal law enforcement agencies. The vandalism appeared near Dupont Circle, and in two other locations, and featured Arabic writing depicting the phrase "Allah Hu Akbar" (God is Great) and the letters 'ISIS' in English." At the same time, the following image was posted on Twitter with the caption "We are in your state We are in your Cities We are in your streets You are our goals anywhere."²

² Communities Digital News,. (2014). FBI asks for tips regarding ISIL agents in the United States. Retrieved 5 October 2015, from <http://www.commdiginews.com/breaking-news/fbi-asks-for-tips-regarding-isil-agents-in-the-united-states-27555/#EXUY1u0du8j5zP5C.99>



Last year in Texas, 2 individuals claiming to be members of ISIS infiltrated a Shiite mosque in Houston, TX and interrupted regular services by screaming that Shias needed to "repent" and join "the right way" under the Caliph of ISIS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.³

In previous incidents in New York, a Shia Imam was physically assaulted by a Salafi extremist. Last year, Secretary Hagel stated that the Department of Defense was aware of 100 American citizens who had joined ISIS, stating that there might be more.

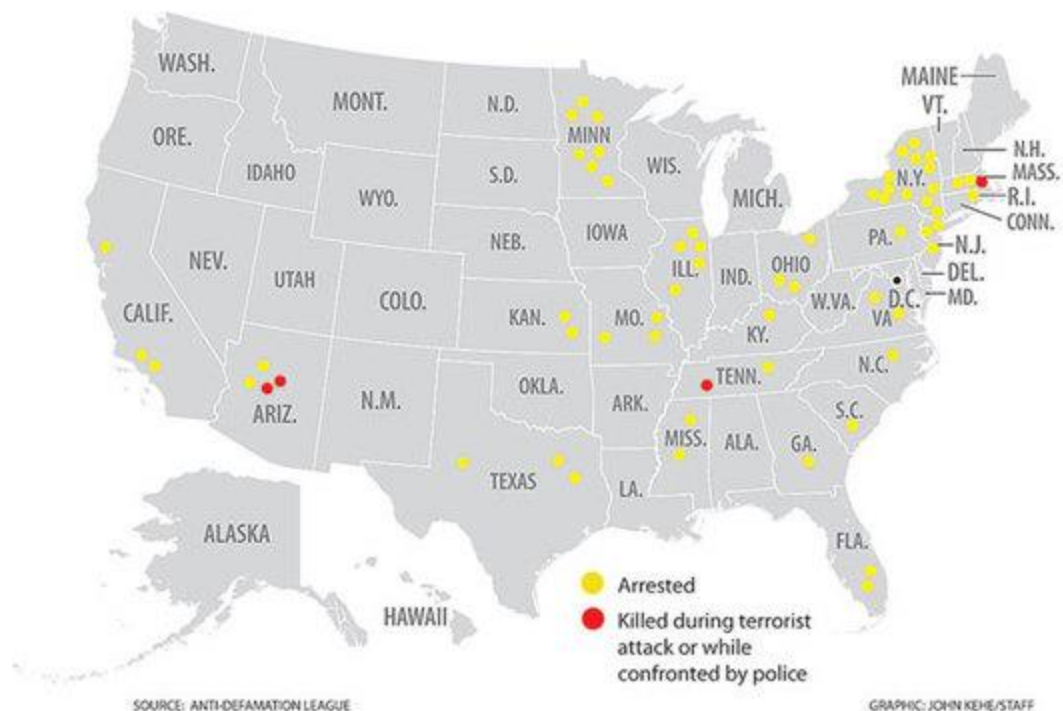
As of September 2015, NBC News reports the number has reached 250 US citizens who actively support ISIS.⁴

³ Washington Times. (2015). HUSAIN: ISIS attempts to establish foothold in U.S.. The Washington Times. Retrieved 5 October 2015, from <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/sep/5/husain-isis-attempts-establish-foothold-us/#ixzz3CSdjIkik>

⁴ NBC New York,. (2015). Number of Americans Trying to Join ISIS Doubles: DOJ. Retrieved 5 October 2015, from <http://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/local/Americans-ISIS-Double-in-Year-Terror-Recruiting-Concerns-Justice-Department-330005201.html>

Where ISIS recruits have been arrested

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So far, 58 Americans have been arrested in 2015 for plotting violence or attempting to join the so-called Islamic State.⁵

In addition to these individuals and organizations, there is a growing extremist sentiment among “anti-Muslim” Americans, who in past months have held armed rallies in front of various mosques throughout the United States. For such individuals, witnessing the large crowds and rituals of Muharram may be cause for anger and resentment towards American Muslims.

⁵ The Christian Science Monitor,. (2015). ISIS in America: how doomsday Muslim cult is turning kids against parents. Retrieved 5 October 2015, from <http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Justice/2015/0928/ISIS-in-America-how-doomsday-Muslim-cult-is-turning-kids-against-parents>

SECURITY PREPAREDNESS

COMMON VULNERABILITIES

Security experts have identified key common vulnerabilities of religious facilities, and provided a list of protective measures:

- Significant numbers of people of like faith gathered in a single symbolic location at specified times
- Generally unrestricted access to religious services
- Unrestricted access to peripheral areas, such as contiguous parking areas and separate educational facilities
- Building systems that are vulnerable to fire, contamination via heating and cooling systems, explosives, and blocked emergency exits
- Access by workers and maintenance staff who may not undergo background checks
- Easy facility identification either by facility configuration, design, or signage
- Non-profit status, which may result in limited resources for security

PROTECTIVE MEASURES

Protective measures include equipment, personnel, and procedures designed to protect a facility against threats and to mitigate the effects of an attack. Protective measures for religious facilities include:

PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS

- Designate an employee as security director with instructions that the director is to
 - Form a security committee of men and women responsible for securing facility perimeter, approaching unknown or suspicious individuals and creating car entry checkpoints
 - Develop a comprehensive security plan and emergency response plan for the facility
 - Consider an off-site parking and shuttle plan to keep areas immediate to the center free of cars
- Establish liaison and regular communication with local law enforcement and emergency responders
- Conduct regular exercises with facility employees to test the security and emergency response plans

PERSONNEL

- Conduct background checks on all employees
- Incorporate security awareness into employee training programs
- Maintain an adequate security force using both employees and congregation volunteers

ACCESS CONTROL

- Define the facility perimeter and areas within the facility that require access control
- Limit access to congregation members and visitors to a level consistent with facility operations
- Keep vehicles away from critical assets and from areas where large numbers of people congregate
- Require that all illegally parked vehicles be moved or have them towed immediately
- Provide adequate door and window locks, barred entryways, and fencing and gate locks to areas where access is to be limited; add intrusion detection systems and alarms as appropriate
- Train mail room and receiving personnel to recognize suspicious mail, packages, shipments, or deliveries

COMMUNICATION AND NOTIFICATION

- Install system(s) that provide communication with all individuals at the facility, including employees, security force personnel, congregation members, and visitors
- Develop a notification protocol that specifies who should be contacted in emergencies

MONITORING, SURVEILLANCE, INSPECTION

- Evaluate needs and design a monitoring, surveillance, and inspection program that is consistent with facility operations and security requirements
- Provide visual surveillance capability for sensitive and critical assets at the facility
- Continuously monitor all people entering and leaving the facility; train monitors to detect suspicious behavior

INFRASTRUCTURE INTERDEPENDENCIES

- Ensure that the facility has adequate utility service capacity to meet normal and emergency needs
- Secure dumpsters and other trash containers to prevent the hiding of explosives or other hazardous materials

CYBER SECURITY

- Regularly review facility Web site to ensure that no sensitive information is provided

INCIDENT RESPONSE

- Ensure that an adequate number of emergency response personnel are available at all times
- Check the status of all emergency response equipment and supplies on a regular basis
- Identify entry and exit points to be used in emergencies
- Ensure that employees are familiar with procedures for shutting off utility services (e.g., electricity, natural gas) in emergency situations

UMAA CAN HELP

For any religious centers in the United States who wish to have an enhanced security analysis of their facility performed, UMAA is able to help facilitate interaction with local and federal law enforcement. Additionally, UMAA is in contact with the Protective Security Coordination Division of the Department of Homeland Security.

This office provides strategic coordination and field operations support to reduce risk to houses of worship from a terrorist attack or natural disaster. These programs can help mosques and Islamic centers:

- Assess vulnerabilities, interdependencies, capabilities, and incident consequences
- Develop, implement, and provide national coordination for protective programs
- Facilitate critical infrastructure response to and recovery from all hazards

CONTACT UMAA

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ONLINE RESOURCES IN PREPAREDNESS TRAINING

- (Recorded Webinar) FEMA – An Overview of the Guide for Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans for Houses of Worship - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDbgH2DdTe8>
- FEMA - Community Preparedness: Implementing Simple Activities for Everyone - <http://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-909>
- FEMA – Surveillance Awareness: What You Can Do - <http://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=is-914>
- FEMA Course Listing - <http://www.training.fema.gov/is/crslist.aspx?all=true>
- FEMA Community Emergency Response Team Training - <http://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams>
- DHS Community Outreach and Training - <http://www.dhs.gov/community-outreach-and-training>



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