

# Civil Unrest Response Guidance

As a result of recent national events, civil unrest is significantly impacting communities across the nation. Commercial occupancies have been the targets of property damage, theft, and in some cases, the total destruction of the property. As a result, many organizations are being forced to close their facilities temporarily in an effort to keep employees, visitors, and customers safe.

Below are some considerations and tips to help keep your facilities safe and secure during this period of unrest. Note that this is an inclusive, but not exhaustive, list of recommendations. Each organization must assess factors and considerations, many of which are constantly changing, that are specific to their businesses.

## General Property Conservation

- Stay up-to-date with all local and state government orders and directions with regard to imposed curfews and closures. Monitor local law enforcement alerts, social media, and news channels for information about protests, rallies, or other large gatherings that may be developing near your location. If events are in your area, you cannot predict the intent or actions of these groups. In order to ensure the protection of your employees, visitors, customers, and properties, you should consider securing your facility and ceasing operations until it is safe to resume normal business.
- Prepare for a potential delay from all emergency response agencies, including police, fire, and emergency medical services. Due to the current situation, emergency response agencies will have to prioritize their responses, which could mean fire alarm activations, property damage/vandalism, and calls regarding non-violent crimes may not be considered a priority and response may be delayed.
- For glass storefront systems and other large glass panes:
  - Consider boarding up below grade and grade level windows and doors with a minimum of ½-inch plywood (preferably ¾-inch) to harden entrances and reduce the likelihood of unauthorized entry into the facility.
  - Plywood should be attached to window framing systems or surrounding construction utilizing course threaded tamper-proof screws or other highly secure connection means at intervals that resist prying with tools. No gaps should be left between the plywood perimeter edges and the window frame system.
  - Board up measures should not impact-free egress through doors and should only cover glass panes within doors. Additional shields and guards should be provided to protect vulnerable door hinges and latches.
  - For additional security, chain link fence mesh can be run continuously over and attached to the plywood from grade level up to 6'-0" above grade, interconnecting the plywood panels, providing reinforcement to the plywood.
  - Recommended board up procedures can be found from the United States Fire Administration ([https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/arson/board\\_up\\_procedures.pdf](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/arson/board_up_procedures.pdf)) and the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes.
- Post "No Trespassing" signage around the entire facility.
- Ensure emergency response plans are up-to-date.
  - Review and update contact information/phone trees.
  - Make certain emergency contact information at each location is visibly posted for emergency response agencies.

- Ensure fire department access boxes (Knox Boxes) have the most up-to-date facility information, keys, and access control credentials.
  - Civil unrest situations are fluid and rapidly evolving. Make plans that include securing and evacuating the premises as well as securing and sheltering in place if safe evacuation is not an option.
  - Have contact information and optimally, have a contract with local reputable salvage and board up companies to provide emergency response to your location if the building envelope is penetrated.
- Consider videotaping and/or photographing (with time and date stamp) the exterior and interior of the facility to document preventative security measures taken and the overall pre-existing condition of the facility and contents.
- If possible, consider emptying facilities of high-value assets and relocating items outside of the threatened area. If another location is not available, consider an offsite, secure storage facility located well outside the confines of areas of civil unrest. This includes removing fine art, high-value merchandise, currency, vital hard copy records as well as anything else considered irreplaceable or that contains sensitive/confidential/personally identifiable information.
  - Empty cash drawers and leave empty drawers unlocked/open.
  - Empty safes and leave unlocked/open.
  - If removing valuables from the site is not possible, consider placing the assets behind layers of protection (several locked doors/cages) and securing the valuables in approved fire resistant safes/cabinets.
- Remove all combustible material (chain and lock dumpsters closed, pallets, trash/recycling cans, gas cylinders, etc.) and potential projectiles/debris (loose cinder blocks, bricks, large stones, bottles, etc.) from around the outside of the building.
- Ensure fixed fire suppression, security, and fire alarm systems are fully functional and connected to two independent communications mediums (radio, cellular, digital communicator, etc.) that can alert your third-party monitoring agency.
- Make sure all building exits are operating normally. Note that according to model building codes, you may not modify building exits even if the building is evacuated. For example, exterior doors may not be chained.
- Test your emergency communications systems (SMS text, RSS feeds, auto-dialing, email, etc.). This may include asking employees to confirm receipt of test messages.
- Consider suspending all shipping and receiving operations or making alternative arrangements for delivery services.
- Ensure all facility fuel tanks are topped off, including, but not limited to, diesel backup generators and diesel fire pumps.

## Site Security

- Consider using barriers, surveillance, and lighting to deter, detect, and delay illegal access into a facility.
  - Site intrusion detection and video surveillance systems should be fully operational and able to transmit to your third-party monitoring agency.
  - All electronic access control system door and gate auto unlocking/opening programs should be disabled.
  - Perimeter fences should be in good condition. This includes fence mesh, barbed wire topper, and no gaps at ground level. Consider installing temporary construction style perimeter fencing a minimum of 6'-0" in height to secure loading docks and other vulnerable exterior locations.
  - All perimeter doors and windows should be closed, locked, and boarded up as outlined above.
  - Pedestrian and vehicle access gates should be closed and locked.
  - Contact information for the Security Operations Center (SOC) or on-call staff should be posted on all gates and entrance doors in case first responders need emergency access.
  - All perimeter cameras should be fully functional and remotely viewable via laptop or cellular device. If fixed surveillance equipment is not installed, install an off-the-shelf, battery-powered, Wi-Fi capable system temporarily. Also, make sure any intrusion detection alerts available with your video surveillance system are turned on.

- All surveillance footage should have remote or cloud backup. If this is not possible, consider having the network or digital video recorders backed up at an offsite location to preserve surveillance footage for use in prosecution and insurance claims.
- All interior and exterior night lighting should continue to be used and maintained.
- Consider suspending security guard services. Leaving security guards on-site may make them a target because they represent a perceived arm of the law enforcement community. If you conclude that guards are required for monitoring and additional access control, consider using undercover/plain clothes guards in an observe and report capacity only (in such case, site perimeter cameras should be actively monitored in lieu of foot or vehicular patrols).

If you have any questions or need additional guidance, please reach out to your Marsh Risk Consulting property risk security consultant.

#### LIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS:

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MA20-15960