Sheriff Jerry L. Demings
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Hardware/Home Improvement Stores

As described in the accompanying letter, ***B**usiness **O**wners **A**gainst **T**errorism* is based on the idea that certain legitimate businesses and industries may be exploited by terrorists who portray themselves as honest customers seeking to purchase, lease, or somehow appropriate certain material, licenses and/or services to covertly further a terrorist plot.

The following examples of activity relating to your specific business, though not fully inclusive, may be of **possible** concern to law enforcement:

- Loss or theft of specific items from your hardware business inventory that could be used in the construction of an Improvised Explosive Device (IED). Such items could fall into the following general "categories"
  - Reactive Ingredients - chemicals (e.g., acids, acetone); gas (e.g., propane, MAPP): steel wool; matches, etc
  - Containers – steel/PVC pipes, couplers, nipples, end caps, plugs, copper piping or electrical conduit that can be crimped to form a rigid container
  - Fragmentation – any material that can be used for fragmentation (nails, screws, nuts, bolts – all sizes/types; any metal such as door hinges, etc.)
  - Detonation Components – electrical items (e.g, wires batteries, switches, timing devices; wireless doorbell systems, thermostats (e.g, Honeywell brand) which can be cannibalized to obtain the mercury switches
- Regarding the above "categories," suspicious requests (e.g., a request by someone who is not a trade professional) to purchase large amounts of a single "category" item or smaller purchases of a combination of multiple "category" items.
- Payment by cash instead of with a commercial credit card
- Unusual inquiries from strangers concerning how your business stores chemicals/gas or handles them on the premises
- Approach from a previously unknown customer whose identity is not clear. Customer's use of evasive responses. Avoids eye contact. Seems jittery, uneasy.
- Unusual customer request concerning the shipment or labeling of goods
- Unusual customer request for excessive confidentiality regarding the final destination or details of the product to be delivered
- Customer cancels sale, but then the exact same product is stolen or "lost" shortly after the customer inquiry
- Observation of your facility/business by unknown persons

Your impressions and assessment, based upon your professional/business experience, are extremely valuable and should help guide you in determining if a customer request, a fact pattern or set of circumstances is unusual.

The conduct of an individual will not necessarily be criminal in nature. Please remember if you suspect something, do not take direct action, confront the individual, or reveal your suspicions. Record as many details as possible about the suspect/vehicle/locations and report them to the Orange County Sheriff's Office Intelligence Unit at 407-504-6764 or email Intel@ocfl.net.