



NEWS RELEASE

Kevin W. Smith, Director of Communications

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 21, 2003

CONTACT:

Kevin Smith, 651-775-9688

Alcohol
and Gambling
Enforcement

Bureau of Criminal
Apprehension

Capitol Security

Office of
Communications

Driver
and Vehicle
Services

Division of
Homeland
Security and
Emergency
Management

Office of
Justice Programs

State Fire Marshal
and
Office of
Pipeline Safety

Minnesota
State Patrol

Office of
Traffic Safety

NATION AT HIGH TERROR THREAT LEVEL, STANEK URGES MINNESOTANS TO BE WATCHFUL, REPORT UNUSUAL ACTIVITY

ST. PAUL — Following a conference call with Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, Minnesota Homeland Security Director Rich Stanek today advised state officials and law enforcement leaders that the nation's terror threat level has been raised from "elevated" to "high."

Although there is no specific threat to sites in Minnesota, Stanek implemented established protocols for the current alert level. "We are asking Minnesota law enforcement agencies to take prudent, reasonable measures to protect their communities. The most critical of these is to provide a visible law enforcement presence."

Upon receiving news of the elevated threat level, the Minnesota Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management notified Gov. Tim Pawlenty, House and Senate leadership and members of the Homeland Security Sub-cabinet, which includes the departments of Public Safety, Health, Transportation, Agriculture, Commerce, Military Affairs and the Pollution Control Agency.

Sheriffs, police chiefs and security personnel at critical infrastructures were also immediately informed of the new threat condition.

Stanek urged citizens to be on the watch for suspicious or unusual activity. "If you see something that makes you uneasy, err on the side of caution and call the police. Let law enforcement decide if it needs further investigation."

The Minnesota Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management will monitor information from federal, state and local sources. The media and the public will be informed of any credible threat information specific to Minnesota.

###