

# Preparing Your Property for Rent Strike Protests & Civil Disobedience

January 2021



Organizations should constantly evaluate their exposures to issues related to public protests, riots and civil unrest. This includes preparing your team and property for potential acts of civil disobedience. Lockton recommends you revisit your crisis management and emergency preparedness plans to ensure that they contemplate this issue and that your team is familiar with its roles and responsibilities.

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## *Command & control*

As with all crisis management, leadership and prescribed roles and responsibilities will provide for, and guide, timely decision-making. These decisions will include:

- Identifying corporate resources and response leaders.
  - Operations and asset management.
  - Risk management.
  - Security.
  - Construction.
  - Owner’s representative.
  - Media relations.
- Selecting local response leader.
  - Including resources to monitor local news and social media for protest activity and threat-level assessments.
- Establishing escalation triggers and protocols.
- Communications.
- Discussing and creating framework responses to likely scenarios.
  - Resident communication.
  - Resident and staff security.
  - Possible reduction in services and amenities.
  - Restricted resident access points.
  - Board-up and site prep.
  - Liaison with local authorities.
  - Vendor and visitor controls.
  - Repairs and resuming normal operations.



## *Educating your team*

Prior to experiencing a direct threat or protests planned for your city or neighborhood, meet with your local team to review:

- The corporate response plan.
- Local escalation protocols.
- Local roles and responsibilities.
- Security measures to safely enter or exit the building.
- Employee parking.
- Altering unit showing procedures during protest days.
- How to respond to aggressive residents or protesters.
- What to do if there is violence at the property and how employees are to protect themselves and seek shelter.
- Daily team meetings to review news of any planned protests, changes in operations, additional security measures, etc.
- Local/jurisdictional plans and available services.

## *Assessing & preparing your property*

Prior to any unrest, walk your properties to identify and prepare controls for any vulnerable areas, including:

- Poorly protected openings, doorways, access points, etc.
- Parking garages.
- Ground-level glass windows that might need protecting with plywood.
- HVAC fresh air intakes that may need to be closed if tear gas is deployed.
- Holes in fences and malfunctioning gates.
- Vacant ground-level units or retail spaces.
- Unsecured dumpsters that could be set on fire.
- Vulnerable amenities that might be vandalized, such as outdoor furniture, media centers, roof terraces, etc.
- Unsecured maintenance shops, mechanical areas in parking garages, pool pump houses, etc.

## *Security*

Adequate security can be a powerful deterrent in preventing protest-related vandalism and malicious mischief at your property.

- Confirm all cameras and video recording equipment are operating properly.
- Is there a need for additional security lighting?
- If formal security is already being provided, is additional staff or additional shifts necessary?
- If there is no formal security, do temporary services need to be provided?
- If property is ungated, consider instituting a temporary parking pass program for residents and guests.
- Discuss police response so they can be present if protesters impede traffic, block sidewalks and building access, or engage in vandalism.
- Put into place an “all hands on deck” callout. If necessary, be ready to lock down and secure the exterior, elevators and parking garage.
- Consult with local counsel given the following considerations:
  - Local laws regarding picketing, speeches and leafleting. Some municipalities allow expression of free speech on public sidewalks without need for a permit, providing it does not interfere with others using the sidewalk or those entering and exiting your premises.
  - Banning picketers, protesters or any nonresidents on private property.
  - Local noise ordinances that may limit the time of day and decibel level of any noise-making the protesters may engage in (e.g., whistles, amplification equipment, drumming, etc.).

## *Construction sites*

Active construction sites can be vulnerable as well, given recent arsons of urban development sites. While many of the issues and controls are similar to those discussed above, pay particular attention to:

- Perimeter fencing and access controls.
- Site security and lighting.
- Partnering with local law enforcement to share video surveillance coverage.
- Securing lumber, flammables and other materials that can easily be the target of arson.
- Securing items outside the fence line, such as guard shacks, mock-ups and laydown yards.
- Traffic control and pedestrian safety (e.g., temporary safety systems, sidewalk canopies, etc.).
- Adequately securing tower crane bases, even when placed well inside the site’s perimeter.
- Consider using law enforcement for delivery and worker entrance and exit traffic controls.
- Altering material delivery to “just in time” to reduce on-site storage.

If there are issues this document doesn’t address regarding the current situation, we encourage you to contact your local Lockton Risk Control team member for assistance.



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