



*behavior research center's*

# *Rocky Mountain Poll*

NEWS RELEASE  
RMP 2001-IV-04

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MORE TERRORIST ATTACKS EXPECTED:  
PRINCIPAL TARGETS SEEN AS WATER SUPPLIES,  
GOVERNMENT FACILITIES AND NUCLEAR PLANTS

Phoenix, Arizona. November 6, 2001. Eight months prior to the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> and the subsequent anthrax attacks through the mail, three of ten Arizonans were already of the opinion that the United States would, within a few years, be the victim of biological or chemical attacks. At that time, another 15 percent also thought the U.S. might fall victim to a nuclear attack.

Today, the harsh reality of potential attacks is far more widespread, with seven in ten now expecting that the U.S. will experience biological and chemical attacks within the next few years.

The proportion anticipating a nuclear attack has doubled to 29 percent.

The findings outlined in this report are based on a survey of 703 adults across Arizona conducted between October 12<sup>th</sup> and October 21<sup>st</sup> by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and a survey (RMP 2001-I-11) conducted between February 9<sup>th</sup> and February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2001 as part of the Center's independent and non-partisan Rocky Mountain Poll series. The public is welcome to visit [www.brcpolls.com](http://www.brcpolls.com) to read these and other recent poll results.

These more sober views of the ability and willingness of U.S. enemies to bring terrorist attacks to America have grown across all segments of the society. Prior to the attacks, men, Republicans and younger adults were among the least likely to believe such attacks would materialize in the United States, but today, views of these threats show none of the earlier

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variations. There is also little evidence in the responses that those anticipating such attacks are panicked but, rather, that they have simply come to grips with one of the more bitter realities of modern warfare.

The study also finds that Arizonans no longer see the most likely attacks as coming in the form of hijacked airliners being flown into buildings, although 38 percent think this still a possibility. This may trace to hopes that tightened airport security has significantly reduced the opportunities for terrorists to succeed in such operations.

Far greater numbers believe the attacks will come in the form of terrorist actions against water supplies or nuclear power plants (70%), attacks on sports facilities during major events (67%) and attacks against government buildings (86%). Additionally, half are of the opinion that there will be terrorist attacks against busy shopping centers which generally have limited security.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona (2001-IV-04) is based on 703 interviews with adults across Arizona conducted from October 12<sup>th</sup> through October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2001. Where necessary, figures for age, sex, and race were weighted to bring them into line with their actual proportion in the population. In a sample of this size, one may say with a 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 3.77 percent of what they would have been had the entire adult population been surveyed. The Rocky Mountain Poll is conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is an independent and non-partisan research program sponsored by the Center.

This statement conforms to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

**ENCLOSED:** Statistical data for reference.

For this and other polls, see [www.brcpolls.com/results](http://www.brcpolls.com/results).

**STATISTICAL DATA**

Behavior Research Center  
Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona  
RMP 2001-IV-04

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*“Within the next few years, do you think it is very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely or very unlikely that the United States will be attacked in the following ways?”*

	% ANSWERING “VERY” OR “SOMEWHAT” LIKELY	
	OCTOBER 2001	FEBRUARY 2001
With a biological attack	73%	29%
With a chemical attack	71	30
With nuclear weapons	29	15

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*“Do you think it is very likely, somewhat likely, or unlikely that each of the following will be a target for the next terrorist attack or attacks on the United States?”(SEQUENCE ROTATED)*

|                                                  | OCTOBER 2001   |                    |         |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------|
|                                                  | VERY<br>LIKELY | SOMEWHAT<br>LIKELY | (TOTAL) |
| Attacks on government buildings                  | 46%            | 40%                | (86%)   |
| Attacks on water supplies                        | 30             | 40                 | (70%)   |
| Attacks on nuclear power plants                  | 32             | 38                 | (70%)   |
| Attacks on sporting events                       | 23             | 44                 | (67%)   |
| Attacks on shopping centers                      | 16             | 33                 | (49%)   |
| Hijacked airliners being flown into<br>buildings | 15             | 23                 | (38%)   |

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