

# **Jewish Community Center In St. Paul Reopens After Threat**

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MINNEAPOLIS (WCCO) -- A Jewish Community Center in St. Paul has been reopened after being evacuated due to a bomb threat Monday morning, according to police.

St. Paul police say the threat was called into the Highland Park center around 10 a.m. Monday morning, prompting the center to initiate its evacuation plan. A bomb squad responded.

Students at the center were moved to a nearby fire station while the bomb squad cleared the building.

Shortly before 12:30 p.m., St. Paul police tweeted an update saying no bombs or dangerous devices were found and the scene was being cleared.

The threat was one of several made across the nation Monday, and follows a string of similar incidents accounting for dozens of bomb threats to JCCs so far this year, including the Sabes JCC in St. Louis Park last month.

It's an uptick in anti-Semitism that has the attention of FBI and the Justice Department.

Steve Hunegs is the executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas (JCRC).

"To see the JCC having to evacuate is very sad, and unfortunately a reflection of the times in which we now live," he said. "The leadership at the St. Paul JCC did a terrific job of executing the plan and we are not going to succumb to fear."

Last Friday fliers were posted across the campus of the University of Minnesota inviting white students who are sick and tired of Jews to join a white supremacist group.

"We educate ourselves about it, we take steps to protect ourselves and we make ties with the greater community to make sure the problem doesn't grow," Hunegs said.

Those other JCC bomb threats were in Texas, New York, New Mexico, Alabama, Ohio, Tennessee, Florida, Illinois and Wisconsin. The JCRC says they feel they have a lot of support in Minnesota, and today they heard from the Minnesota Catholic Conference as well as the Mayor of St. Paul.

Meanwhile they remain on high alert and have increased security at the JCC buildings.