

So, just how terrified are we of Muslims in the kitchen?

By Lee Rozen/Moscow-Pullman Daily News Editorial Board

This may be what terrorism is all about.

On Sunday, there was a fire in the kitchen at the Pullman Islamic Center after someone left potatoes on the stove too long.

No, not that. The response to the fire may be, though.

The alarm went out that there was a fire at the mosque in Pullman. So, both Pullman Fire Department and Fire District 12 responded. Police blocked off Stadium Way.

The Daily News and local radio news reported it. Our Facebook entry at 4:37 p.m. said:

"BREAKING NEWS:

"Fire at Pullman mosque shuts down Stadium Way

"Police and fire crews have blocked off Stadium Way in Pullman as they work to get a fire at the Pullman Islamic Center under control.

"More details will be made available as they come in."

In 10 minutes, there were nine comments, most assuming that there was the likelihood someone had set the place afire intentionally, with the first comment mentioning the Planned Parenthood fire. Overall, more than 13,000 saw the post and comments.

Shortly, it was clear that was not the case. Our Facebook entry at 4:52 p.m. said:

"BREAKING NEWS UPDATE:

"Cooking fire under control at Pullman mosque

"A cooking fire in the kitchen of the Pullman Islamic Center got a little out of control this afternoon. Potatoes were reportedly left unattended a little too long.

"There were no injuries."

A couple of commenters shortly after that called us out for sensationalizing the situation. And we've been wondering whether we did.

Certainly, terrorism of some kind was what most commenters immediately thought of and were concerned about. The police and fire departments thought it possible, too, it seemed. Not radical Islamic terrorists, to be sure, but homegrown Islamophobes.

It wasn't terrorism or arson, but burnt spuds.

Everybody who had heard about it, breathed a sigh of relief that that is all it was.

Still, we know politically motivated acts of arson can happen here. It seems we are, in some basic ways, terrified they will.

The terrorists - both foreign and domestic - are a long way from winning, whatever that means, but their tactics are having some success.