



Stand-upTalk

Audience – all (Name) P&DC employees

BDS Test Begins Monday, July 14

The Biohazard Detection System (BDS) pre-production test begins (*today/Monday*) in our plant and 14 other Processing and Distribution Centers (P&DCs) across the country. The system is installed on Advanced Facer Canceler (AFCS) No. ____.

While AFCS No. __ is operating, the BDS will collect air samples continuously and conduct a periodic analysis to determine whether anthrax is present. Once an hour, for a period of 45 seconds, the AFCS will pause while the BDS equipment transitions from collection to analysis. The entire process is automated. Northrop Grumman, the system designer, will have employees on site throughout the test period to monitor equipment performance and alert management if a biohazard is detected.

During this first week, the equipment may be run outside the normal AFCS operating time, which will primarily be between the hours of __ and __ PM. However, whenever the machine is operating, sample tests will be checking for the presence of anthrax.

In the unlikely event that a BDS alert occurs, the fire alarm will be activated and you must evacuate the building, report to your designated rally point and await further direction from local emergency and public health officials.

Medical Treatment in the event of a BDS alert evacuation

- After evacuation from the building, all employees will be asked to complete a form providing information to assist local first responders and public health officials. The form will be used to make determinations regarding decontamination requirements and assist in determining appropriate individual medical responses if lab tests of the BDS sample are positive.
- Two laboratory tests will be performed. Results of the first lab test should be available approximately eight hours after evacuation and if positive, local health officials will provide a 5-day supply of antibiotics. With a positive on the second test, an additional 55-day supply of antibiotics will be provided.

Personal decontamination in the event of a BDS alert evacuation:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued non-mandatory guidance for local first responders reporting to a BDS alert. Their guidelines state that risk of cross contamination for worker families is “very, very low.” Nevertheless, CDC recommends that “a universal approach be used and that a basic decontamination be provided employees in the production area at the time of the BDS alarm and an hour and a half prior to the alarm. The first responders must decide how to implement this CDC guidance.

It will be the decision of local first responders how to implement the CDC guidance. To assist in whatever approach is recommended, the Postal Service will supply Tyvek coveralls and shoe covers. This clothing can be used to replace your clothing or provide additional protection until you are able to return home, shower, and wash your clothes.

Employees who may have left the plant in the hour and a half before the BDS alarm, will be alerted at home and advised to shower immediately and wash their work clothes separately from their laundry.

Following the evacuation

The plant will remain closed until all lab tests are complete. New incoming and outgoing mail will be diverted to other processing facilities. You will be given direction on where to report until the P&DC is deemed safe for re-entry.

This pre-production test is scheduled to last four weeks. Results of the tests will be evaluated and bring the Postal Service a step closer to an early detection and warning system for the presence of anthrax in the mail. Plans are to install BDS equipment in 282 plants nationwide in 2004.

Although there has not been evidence of anthrax moving through the mail since the fall of 2001, the BDS equipment provides an added measure of safety and security.