

Suspicious Mail and Unknown Powders or Substances Eight Point Drill for Facilities with less than 50 Employees

The purpose of this small facility drill is to summarize the actions and the precautions that are to be taken upon the discovery of a suspicious mail and unknown powder or substance. Facility and installation heads are to ensure that the following eight check points are reviewed. If your facility has a Biohazard Detection System (BDS), do not use this guideline. You must use the Large Office and Plant Tabletop Exercise Guide.

1) Facility heads must review all of the guidance available from the Suspicious Mail webpage on "Blue". http://blue.usps.gov/emergencypreparedness/ep_suspicious_mail.htm

2) Facility heads are to issue a copy of "*Response Checklist for Suspicious Mail and Unknown Powders or Substances*" to all supervisors. This document is available at: http://blue.usps.gov/emergencypreparedness/ep_suspicious_mail.htm

3) Supervisors are to post a copy of "*Immediate Response Actions — Suspicious Mail and Unknown Powders or Substances*" – rev. August 2005 for all employees. Posters have been mailed to all facilities or is available for download at: http://blue.usps.gov/emergencypreparedness/ep_suspicious_mail.htm

4) Supervisors are to use the poster and the checklist as a standup talk to ensure that employees know what to do when they observe a suspicious mail and unknown powder or substance.

5) Installation heads must review with all supervisors/managers their facility's emergency action plan (EAP) procedures. Update the procedures and plans as necessary.

6) Installation heads are to ensure that all contact information for making emergency notifications to the following are current (land line, cell phones, pager #s):

- a) The supporting Postal Inspection Service Office (also refer to the tri-fold "*Response Checklist for Suspicious Mail and Unknown Powders or Substances* for Inspection Service Divisions)
- b) Local police/HAZMAT contacts
- c) The Postmaster, Station Manager or Installation Head
- d) Safety Office
- e) District Manager of Emergency Preparedness

7) Ensure your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) requirements, identified places of temporary refuge and assigned assembly areas at your facility for evacuation have been established and communicated to all employees.

8) Communicate with your local Inspection Service contact or local first responders and review what actions and precautions are likely if you call them to respond to an incident regarding suspicious mail and unknown powder or substance.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION - Any powder or granulated substance coming from a mail piece requires a response, *unless* the contents are readily identified as harmless (for example a torn package of dried soup or commercial food and commercially packaged powders). **A parcel or letter is considered suspicious when it has more than one of the following characteristics. Start by paying close attention to the Shape, Look, Addressing and Packaging (remember SLAP) of parcels and letters, also:**

- no return address (or fictitious or unverifiable return address),
- restrictive markings (such as “Personal”, “Confidential”, or “Do Not X-Ray”),
- addressed to titles or titles with no name,
- excessive postage,
- handwritten or badly typed address,
- misspelled words,
- oily stains, discoloration, or crystallization (including powders),
- strange odors,
- sealed with tape (or with excessive tape),
- unusual weight given size, lopsided or oddly shaped, protruding wires.

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REMEMBER

PACKAGE - Don't handle. Isolate it.

PEOPLE - Clear the area of people and notify your supervisor.

PLAN - Contact the Inspection Service and follow your facility emergency plan.

EMPLOYEES – take the following initial protective actions:

- I. Leave the mail piece or substance where it was found. Do not disturb.
- II. Clear the immediate area of employees where the mail piece or substance is located and prevent others from entering the area.
- III. Immediately notify a supervisor or manager of the situation. If a supervisor is unavailable, contact the Postal Inspection Service.
- IV. Wash hands and any other exposed skin with soap and water.

SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS – take the following actions:

- I. Cordon off the area and keep others away from the mail piece or substance.
- II. Refer to the steps outlined in the “Response Checklist for Suspicious Mail and Unknown Powders or Substances.”
- III. Call the Postal Inspection Service with all available information on the mail piece or substance to conduct a threat assessment.
- IV. Take appropriate protective actions based on:
 - a. The Inspection Service's threat assessment and instructions.
 - b. Your local emergency plan.

(Should an emergency situation exist such as smoke, fumes, vapors, or employees exhibiting medical symptoms — evacuate the area and call local emergency responders). Follow the instructions of local emergency responders and make the appropriate notifications as indicated in your local emergency action plan.

VI. Expediently communicate with employees, the local unions and management associations. Limit the information to the known facts and avoid any speculation that may lead to unintended misinformation. To the extent possible, use local first responders to assist in providing information.

Suspicious Mail and Unknown Powders or Substances

Certification

Facilities with less than 50 employees

I certify that I have completed the Suspicious Mail and Unknown Powders or Substances Drill and reviewed all documentation, posters and checklist and that all necessary improvements have been made.

_____ Date(s) drill/checklist review completed

_____ Location

The Facility Manager/Installation Head must maintain a copy of this certification and readily present it if requested during an audit or security review.

_____ Facility Manager/Installation Head