

Management Instruction

Biohazard Detection System Alert-Positive Test: Evacuation, personal decontamination, and post-exposure prophylaxis

This management instruction (MI) provides Postal Service policy on the planning and execution of evacuation and personal decontamination and the subsequent administration of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) following a Postal Service™ biohazard detection system (BDS) Alert-Positive Test.

Background

Biohazard Detection System

A *BDS Alert Positive-Test* occurs when a BDS unit's internal test indicates the presence of *B.anthraxis* in the collection mail stream (see *Definitions*). BDS units are being installed in a phased approach in mail processing facilities (plants) from March 2004 through March 2005. Development and deployment of BDS units are part of the Postal Service *Emergency Preparedness Plan* submitted to Congress.

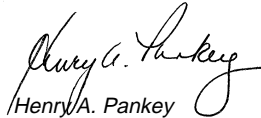
Policy

The Postal Service is committed to being prepared in the event of a BDS Alert Positive-Test. The policies in this document are consistent with the voluntary guidance in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report entitled *Responding to the Detection of Aerosolized B. anthracis by Autonomous Detection Systems in the Workplace* (see <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr>).

The Postal Service will work with federal, state, and local authorities in the event of a BDS Alert-Positive Test. The Postal Service will coordinate with local first responders (LFRs) on evacuation planning and defer to LFRs concerning the manner in which LFRs provide personal decontamination and PEP.

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Patrick R. Donahoe
Chief Operating Officer and
Executive Vice President


Henry A. Pankey
Vice President
Emergency Preparedness

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ACRONYMS

AFCS	Advanced Facer-Canceller System
BDS	Biohazard Detection System
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
COOP	Continuity of Operations Plan
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EMT	USPS Emergency Management Team
HazMat	Hazardous Material
IEMP	Integrated Emergency Management Plan
ICS	Incident Command System
LFRs	Local First Responders
LRN	Laboratory Response Network
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Center
PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction
PEP	Post-Exposure Prophylaxis

The procedures that support these policies are contained in the Postal Service *Standard Operating Procedures for Biohazard Detection System on AFCS Mail Processing Equipment, Phase I Deployment, Organization-Wide Overview*, available at <http://blue.usps.gov/emergency-preparedness> under *IEMP*.

Scope

This MI applies to Headquarters functions noted under Roles and Responsibilities and to all field organizations with existing or planned BDS equipment installations.

Facility Evacuation

The Postal Service will work with LFRs to do the following:

1. Develop procedures to evacuate employees to outdoor locations.
2. Evaluate indoor evacuation alternatives and places of refuge in the event that, on balance, the risks posed by evacuation to outdoor locations (for example, severe weather conditions or other hazards) would outweigh the risks posed by evacuation to an indoor location. Alternative indoor places of refuge must be on a separate heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) system and have an entrance separate from the area experiencing the BDS Alert-Positive Test and any alternative indoor place of refuge for potentially contaminated employees.

Personal Decontamination

The Postal Service will defer to LFRs concerning the manner in which LFRs provide personal decontamination and concerning related public health matters following evacuation of a facility. Postal Service employees may be required by LFRs to stay at the appropriate place of refuge.

The Postal Service will take the following steps (see Roles and Responsibilities for functional organization roles):

1. Conduct pre-event planning with LFRs. This will include tabletop and/or simulated exercises.
2. Procure disposable replacement garment kits for all employees at a BDS facility.
3. Provide disposable replacement garment kits for all employees at an affected BDS facility for whom LFRs determine that personal decontamination is indicated. For this MI, “employees” includes assigned and visiting Postal Service employees and contractors.

4. Plan for accounting of personal property during and following personal decontamination.

Decontamination: What Not to Do

Postal Service field organizations:

1. Do not perform personal decontamination.
2. Do not procure equipment for personal decontamination (for example, tents, shelters, shower facilities).

Post-Exposure Prophylaxis

The Postal Service will defer to the appropriate health authorities in applying CDC guidance on PEP.

Supply of PEP

3-Day Coverage

The Postal Service will pre-position (with the appropriate public health authorities and other medical providers) a 3-day supply of antibiotics to be dispensed following a BDS Alert-Positive Test. The appropriate public health authorities will dispense antibiotics following a Laboratory Response Network (LRN) positive polymerase chain reaction (PCR) result from the LRN laboratory at locations they identify.

Extended Coverage

If there is a need to extend PEP beyond 3 days based on a LRN culture positive from the LRN laboratory, the appropriate health agency will supply additional medication.

Implementation

The Postal Service will work with state and local public health authorities to do the following:

1. Coordinate pre-event planning for administration of medication following a BDS Alert-Positive Test.
2. Pre-position the 3-day supply of antibiotics with state and/or local public health agencies, and other medical providers.

PEP: What Not to Do

Unless otherwise directed by the Postal Service National Medical Director, Postal Service field organizations:

1. Do not procure antibiotics.
2. Do not maintain antibiotics.

3. Do not dispense antibiotics.

Roles and Responsibilities

Vice President, Emergency Preparedness

The vice president, Emergency Preparedness, is responsible for the following:

1. Providing guidance to Postal Service functional and field organizations to ensure pre-event planning and response activities are properly coordinated with appropriate federal, state, and local authorities.
2. Coordinating with other Postal Service functional organizations during implementation of response actions through the Postal Service National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC).
3. Establishing and funding of a national contract for ordering replacement garment kits for decontamination activities.
4. Establishing and funding of a national contract for ordering the Postal Service supply of antibiotics for use during a BDS Alert Positive Test.
5. Ensuring that the BDS Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are maintained and that appropriate training vehicles are provided for use by district and installation Emergency Management Teams (EMTs).

Vice President, Employee Resource Management

The vice president, Employee Resource Management, is responsible for the following:

1. Developing and implementing policies and procedures to account for the personal belongings of employees at a facility experiencing a BDS Alert-Positive Test.
2. Ensuring facilitation by the employee assistance program (EAP).

National Medical Director, Employee Resource Management

The Postal Service national medical director is responsible for the following:

1. Administering the Postal Service contract for antibiotics.
2. Providing overall guidance on the storage, disposition, and management of antibiotics.

3. Ensuring that a 3-day supply of antibiotics is available following a BDS Alert-Positive Test.

Vice President, Public Affairs and Communications

The vice president, Public Affairs and Communications, is responsible for ensuring that a communication plan is properly deployed as provided in the IEMP.

Chief Postal Inspector

The chief postal inspector is responsible for the following:

1. Providing oversight of Inspection Service activities during pre-planning activities with LFRs (for example, security of the facility and staging areas).
2. Acting as liaison with federal, state, and local law enforcement during a BDS Alert-Positive Test.
3. Activating the Inspection Service Command Center operations to coordinate all law enforcement related information with the NEOC.

Area Vice Presidents

Area vice presidents are responsible for ensuring overall area compliance with Postal Service policies on evacuation, decontamination, and prophylaxis, including oversight of district and installation responsibilities.

District Managers

District managers are responsible for working with their district emergency management teams (EMTs) to implement the requirements of this MI and to provide oversight of installation responsibilities.

Installation Heads at BDS Facilities

Installation heads are responsible for working with LFRs through their respective EMTs on the following:

Evacuation

1. Ensuring development of evacuation procedures.
2. Ensuring that any alternative places of refuge are evaluated and implemented in coordination with LFRs.

Personal Decontamination

3. Ensuring pre-event planning is coordinated with LFRs so that LFRs can prepare for personal decontamination.
4. Ordering disposable replacement garment kits and storing them in a secure and accessible location outside the BDS facility.
5. Providing disposable replacement garments for use following personal decontamination.
6. Ensuring that employees at a facility experiencing a BDS Alert-Positive Test follow procedures to account for their personal property.

Post-exposure Prophylaxis

7. Coordinating with LFRs on pre-event planning logistics for administration of antibiotics to employees.

District and Installation Emergency Management Teams

Members of the district and installation emergency management teams are responsible for the following:

1. Developing evacuation procedures.
2. Complying with this MI as it relates to their respective locations and roles as identified in the Integrated Emergency Management Plan (IEMP).
3. Ensuring Incident Command System (ICS) and NEOC coordination.
4. Ensuring use of the most current version of the BDS SOP available on the Emergency Preparedness web site and providing appropriate SOP training.

Definitions

BDS Alert-Positive Test. The Biohazard Detection System unit's signal if its internal test indicates the presence of B.anthraxis.

Laboratory Response Network Polymerase Chain Reaction Result. The LRN laboratory's initial test (positive or negative) concerning the presence of B.anthraxis.

Laboratory Response Network Culture Result. The LRN laboratory's final analysis (positive or negative) concerning the presence of B.anthraxis.

Local First Responders. Federal, state, and local authorities; local public health authorities; Hazmat/Hazardous Substance teams, emergency medical services, and law enforcement.

HazMat/Hazardous Substance. (Defined by Section 202(14) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act.)

National Emergency Operations Center. A flexible Postal Service Headquarters unit that provides support from the national level during an emergency and serves as the notification and command center.