

Suspicious Packages and Letters

Suspicious packages and letters should be considered potentially hazardous. If you are not sure, call 911 and alert nearby personnel.

Here are some possible indicators:

1. Inaccurate addressee name and title.
2. Fictitious return address.
3. No return address.
4. Poorly-typed or written address.
5. Homemade labels or cut-and-paste lettering.
6. Misspelled common words.
7. Markings such as “personal” or “confidential.”
8. Protruding wires, aluminum foil, or oil stains.
9. Excessive weight.
10. Feeling of powdery substance or liquid on the package.
11. Smell emitting from the package.
12. Cancelled postmark is different than the return address.
13. Unprofessionally wrapped package with several combinations of tape. Marked with “Fragile—Handle With Care” or “Rush—Do Not Delay.”
14. Pressure or resistance being felt when removing contents.
15. Powder leaking from letter or package.

What to do if you encounter a suspicious package or letter:

1. Do not open.
2. Isolate and contain letter/package immediately.
3. Do not touch, shake, or tear it open.
4. Leave the room, and close the door.
5. Section off the area to prevent others from entering.
6. Wash your hands with soap and water if contact with the outside of the letter/package is made.
7. Start a list of:
 - A. Names of all persons who have handled the letter/package.
 - B. Telephone numbers of all persons who have handled the letter/package.
 - C. Give the list to law enforcement officials.

What to do if you opened a suspicious package or letter and it is leaking a substance:

1. If powder spills out, do not clean or brush it off clothing.
2. Do not disturb the package any further.
3. Do not pass the package around.
4. Keep others away from the area.
5. Cover with cloth, plastic, paper, or a container without leaving the room.
6. Leave the contaminated area.
7. Keep your hands away from your face to avoid contaminating eyes, nose, or mouth.
8. Wash hands with soap and water and flush eyes with water immediately (Without leaving the area).
9. Shut down the building ventilation system, and turn off fans.
10. Notify law enforcement officials, and other emergency response personnel.
11. Notify local, county, and state health officials.
12. Start a list of:
 - A. Names of all persons who have handled the letter/package.
 - B. Telephone numbers of all persons who have handled the letter/package.
 - C. Give the list to law enforcement officials.