

Suspicious Packages



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About the Manual:

- The objective of this training is to educate and raise awareness to all staff involved in mail and package handling, to minimize the safety and security risk associated with it.

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Identification of Mails & Packages:

SMSA Express receives many types of mails and packages each day.

A suspicious package: is any package causing concern as to its content because of its appearance or labeling.

- If you encounter a suspicious mail or package, your best protection is your knowledge of the types of mail/package you normally handle, and your awareness. Awareness of what may be suspicious. This will help you to identify what is out of the ordinary.

What makes a package looks suspicious?

1. No return address
2. Use of restrictive markings
3. Excessive packaging material
4. Oily stains, discoloration, or crystallization on wrapper
5. Addressed to title only, common words misspelled, poorly typed or written
6. Excessive postage
7. Rigid or bulky
8. Oily stains, discoloration, or crystallization on wrapper
9. Lopsided or uneven
10. Protruding wires
11. Strange odor
12. Wrong title with name



Critical Actions to Take on Suspicious Packages:

- 1- **Identify:** Ability to spot and recognize the characteristics of suspicious package or mail
- 2- **Isolate:** Set aside/ segregate the suspicious mail/ package. Take all precautionary measures.
- 3- **Inform:** Notify all concerned personnel immediately. Dial emergency numbers as necessary.

1- Identify:

1. Package is rigid, bulky, lopsided or uneven
2. Unusual balance or shape
3. Excessive weight for its size
4. Excessive and unusual packaging material
5. Excessive postage, no postage or non-cancelled postage
6. Excessive tape or string
7. Protruding wires, metal or tin foil
8. Ticking / unusual sound
9. Unexpected strong and strange odor from packaging
10. Oily stains, discolorations, or crystallization on wrapper
11. Leaking packages
12. The presence of anything that is not normally associated with the claimed content of the .. package
13. Misspellings of common words
14. Packages that are addressed to a title only, without a name, or incorrect titles
15. Handwritten or poorly typed addresses
16. No return address (when one might be expected)
17. Shows a city or state in the post mark that does not match the return address
18. Restrictive markings like “personal” “private” or “to be opened only by” and “URGENT”

19. Unusual or over specific instructions, such as 'OPEN THIS END FIRST'
20. Package arrived under unusual circumstances
21. Evident signs of tampering

2- Isolate

- **If you determine that the package or letter is suspicious:**

22. Gently set the package down and secure the area by closing doors.
23. Do not open any suspicious letter or package and do not touch any suspicious material.
24. Do not shake or empty the contents of any suspicious material.
25. Do not carry to other areas, show it to other people, or allow others to examine it.
26. Put the package or envelope down on a stable surface.
27. Do not sniff, touch, taste, or look closely at it or any contents which may have spilled.
28. Do not try to clean up material if the letter or package has already spilled.
29. Wash your hands with soap and water and shower with soap and water as soon as possible.
30. Remove any contaminated clothing and place in a plastic bag that can be sealed; give the bag to law enforcement personnel. Clothing that is not contaminated does not pose ... any significant risk, does not need to be discarded, and can be washed in the regular laundry.
31. Do not use bleach or disinfectant on your skin.
32. Do not attempt to further handle the package. This will keep fingerprints to a minimum and will assist the police in identifying potential offenders.
33. Do not attempt to destroy the package on your own.
34. Evacuate the area if ordered to do so by your supervisor or security.

3-Inform:

- **If a suspicious package is found, even though a threat has not been received, there are several things that can be done:**
 1. Do not touch the item
 2. Ask around the office to see if someone is aware of the item or its contents
 3. Ask if anyone is expecting anything that might be contained in the package
 4. Note any writing, names, or addresses that may be on the outside of the package
 5. Contact anyone listed on the package to see if they are aware of what it is
 6. Contact the Emergency Numbers (X-X-X) if the item cannot be identified through the above means, and keep others away from the item until responders arrive

Summary:

1. Never touch , move or open a suspect package
2. If You are holding it put it down on the desk
3. Do not place in a cupboard or bin
4. Leave it where the emergency services can easily view it. (Also be guided by the facility policy where you are working in)
5. Leave the room and evacuate – Close all doors and windows and seal-off the area
6. Immediately shut down the AC system
7. Do not use radios, mobiles, or electronic devices in the area of the suspect package
8. Call the emergency services
9. Information for Emergency Services
10. What the item looks like
11. Who has seen and touched the item
12. Why is it suspicious

13. Where it is located and how it can be identified
14. Provide a site map - Sketch of the room
15. When and how the package arrived
16. Who discovered and identified it
17. Any known reason why somebody would send a bomb
18. What evacuation measures have been implemented
19. Where the people exposed to the package isolated

Information for Emergency Services:

1. What the item looks like
2. Who has seen and touched the item
3. Why is it suspicious
4. Where it is located and how it can be identified
5. Provide a site map - Sketch of the room
6. When and how the package arrived
7. Who discovered and identified it
8. Any known reason why somebody would send a bomb
9. What evacuation measures have been implemented
10. Where the people exposed to the package isolated

Bomb Threat:

A bomb threat: is generally defined as a threat, usually verbal or written, to detonate an explosive or incendiary device to cause property damage, death, or injuries, whether or not such a device actually exists.

Goals of a Bomb Threat

Motivation and goals for making a bomb threat usually comes from one of two goals:

1. **The Hoax Caller:** The most frequent goal is to create an atmosphere of panic and anxiety, which are hoped to disrupt normal activities or operations at the location where the explosive device is alleged to be placed.
2. **The Credible Caller:** The caller has a definite knowledge or believes that an explosive device has been or will be placed, and he or she wants to warn of the threat to minimize .. personal injuries or property damage. The caller may be the person placing the bomb or .. someone who has become aware of information they believe to be credible.

Types of Bomb Threats:

- Bomb threats usually occur by telephone. However, these types of threats may also be communicated by regular mail or e-mail. Bomb threats may also be implied, by the discovery of a suspicious package, envelope or other article that, on its face, may look or sound like a bomb.

Telephone Bomb Threat

- First Actions to Take

1. A person receiving a bomb threat by phone SHOULD NOT disconnect the caller. If possible, try to obtain as much information as possible before the caller hangs up.
2. Get a pen and paper and write everything down, completing the Bomb Threat Checklist.
3. If possible, ask a colleague to listen in to the call or activate the phone recording unit, if available.
4. Stay calm and be courteous.

• What Should be Done if a Threat is Received?

1. If telephone number appears on the caller ID – **Write Down the Number.**
2. Write down the time and date of call.

3. Ask where the bomb will explode and when.
4. Prolong the conversation as long as possible
5. Note any distinguishing background noises – Are there bells? Do you hear other voices?.. Music?
6. Does the caller have a specific accent?
7. Does the caller sound familiar with the Facility/Location? Are they talking about a specific area(s)?
8. Immediately contact your supervisor or manager
9. Try to complete the “Bomb Threat Checklist.”

- **Sample Checklist**

1. Keep Calm! Do not get excited or excite others.
2. DO NOT put caller on hold or transfer to another line.
3. Did you notice the return number on the caller ID? _____
4. Note Time Received _____ and Terminated _____
5. Put down the exact words of the caller _____
6. Delay-Ask caller to repeat. Then ask these questions:
7. When is it set to explode? _____ Where is it located? _____
8. What floor? _____ What area? _____
9. What type of bomb? _____ Description? _____
10. Why are you placing this bomb in the building? _____
11. Description of voice:
12. Male _____ Female _____ Nervous _____ Young _____ Old _____
13. Middle Aged _____ Rough _____ Refined _____ Accent _____
14. Any speech impediment? _____
15. Did the person use any unusual phrases? _____
16. Did you recognize the voice? _____
17. If so, who do you think it is? _____

18. Were there any background noises? _____
19. Music type? _____ Running motor type? _____ Bells? _____ Horns? _____
20. Aircraft? _____ Trains? _____ Machinery? _____ Any other clues? _____
21. Did the caller indicate in any way that he knew our company? _____
22. Note his words. _____

- **Once the Call has Finished...**

1. Notify a manager or supervisor
2. Complete formal bomb warning report
3. Leave the phone off-the-hook. This may help trace the call.

Envelope with Powder:

1. DO NOT CLEAN UP the powder.
2. Cover the spilled contents immediately with anything and do not remove the cover!
3. Then LEAVE the room and CLOSE the door, or section of the area to prevent others from .
entering or being contaminated.
4. WASH your hands with soap and water to prevent spreading any powder to your face.

Suspicious Mail

Biological Agents

1. Can be liquid (aerosol) or dry form (Fine dry particles – powder)
2. The actual appearance can vary depending on the way it was manufactured
3. Traces of powder
4. Sound of liquid
5. Excessive weight for its size (liquid)

6. Unusual wrapping or sealing
7. Unusual stains on the package (droplets / oily)
8. Unusual odor emanating from the package
9. No return address when one might be expected
10. Statement stating the package only to be open by a particular person
11. Other unusual markings

Response Procedure

1. Never touch , move or open a suspect package.
2. If You are holding it put it down on the desk
3. Do not place in a cupboard or bin
4. Leave it where the emergency services can easily view it.
(Also be guided by the facility policy where you are working in)
5. Leave the room and evacuate – Close all doors and Windows and seal off the area
6. Immediately shut down the AC system
7. Do not use radios, mobiles, or electronic devices in the area of the suspect package
8. Call the emergency services

Symptoms of Contamination by Biological Agents :

1. Note any unusual / unexplained outbreak of non-specific illness
2. Flu – like illness, fever, pneumonia
3. Breathing difficulties
4. Bleeding disorder
5. Rashes, skin irritation

6. Diarrhea
7. Muscle weakness, paralysis

If a Chemical Release is suspected in a Facility:

1. Never attempt to identify the source of the agent
2. Evacuate employees from the area
3. Call the Emergency Services
4. Separate those exposed – Keep them separate from everyone else (50 FT)
5. Close all door and windows
6. Close the AC system
7. Follow the facility response plan
8. DO NOT PANIC
9. Follow the instructions given by the emergency services

Safety & Security

Safety & Security is everyone's responsibility

- Be Alert
- Be Vigilant
- Be Aware
- Be Safe





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