



Subject: Safety Programs and Requirements:  
**Emergency Response/Action Plan: Emergency Procedures  
Suspicious or Threatening Parcels and Letters**

Section: V

Date: 06/18/2008

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## Suspicious or Threatening Parcels & Letters

### Letter and Parcel Bomb Recognition Clues

It is possible, although highly unlikely, a staff member may someday receive a suspicious parcel or letter. Biological or chemical threats targeting individuals or departments can frequently be controlled by screening of materials. University Police and responding Public Safety agencies have plans in place to deal with these types of threats. Following the procedures below will activate those plans and promote the highest level of safety while minimizing the disruption associated with these incidents.

Mail and package delivery to each department should be screened for suspicious letters and/or packages. Common features of threat letters/packages/bomb recognitions are:

- Excessive or foreign postage
- Excessive securing material (i.e., tape, string)
- Excessive weight, rigid envelope, and/or feel of a powdery or foreign substance
- Foreign mail, air mail and special delivery
- Hand written or poorly typed address
- Incorrect titles or titles with no name, misspelled words
- Lopsided or uneven envelope
- Misspelling of common words
- Mysterious delivery; Shows a city or state in the postmark that does not match the return address
- No return address
- Oily stains, residues, discoloration or odor
- Protruding wires or aluminum foil
- Restrictive markings such as "Confidential", "Personal", etc.
- Shows a city or state in the postmark that does not match the return address

Suspicious letters and packages should **not** be opened and should **not** be handled any more than absolutely necessary. If there is nothing leaking from the suspicious item, leave it alone and call University Police at **9-1-1**.

If you open a letter/package that claims to have contaminated you, but there is no substance seen or felt in the envelope or on the letter, chances are you have not been contaminated.

Call University police at **9-1-1** and tell them exactly what you have done and what information you have in regard to the threatening letter. They will dispatch the appropriate personnel to your location to follow-up on your possible exposure and to document what has taken place. **DO NOT** handle the suspicious item anymore and **DO NOT** let anyone else handle the item.

If an evacuation is warranted, University Police will activate the building fire alarm. Evacuate the building by walking to the nearest exit and calmly direct others to do the same. Once outside, move to a clear area at least 150 feet from the affected building. Keep walkways and roads clear for emergency responders.



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If you open a letter/package that claims to have contaminated, you and there is some sort of foreign substance in the envelope or package:

- Place the letter back into the envelope/package, close it back up, or cover the letter and substance with anything (cloth, paper, etc.). **Do not** remove this cover.
- Alert others in the area to leave
- Wash all exposed skin with soap and water
- If your clothes are covered with a significant amount of the substance, carefully remove the contaminated clothing and if possible, place them into a plastic bag
- Call University Police at **9-1-1** to report the situation and tell the dispatcher you have opened the envelope/package. Tell the dispatcher there was a substance inside and what you have done up to that point.

**Do not handle!** Keep anyone from going near it. Leave the area, notify your supervisor, and call University Police at **9-1-1**.

Police and U of A Risk Management Services responders can evaluate the risk to those in the room at the time of potential exposure as well as any impact on the remainder of the building. Based upon that risk assessment, further emergency measures may be implemented as necessary. If the risk is found to be minimal, other areas of the facility will not be disrupted and any necessary actions to return the area involved to normal activity will begin as soon as possible.

