

Mail Rooms - Design, Design Review, and On-Site Assessments

BACKGROUND

What would you do if a suspicious package that leaks powder arrives at your facility's mailroom? Most people remember the post 9/11 scares involving anthrax-laced letters. More recently, ricin-laced letters were sent to President Obama and Senator Wicker and an explosives package was sent to Arizona Sheriff Joe Arpaio. This illustrates that aggressors still perceive the mail system to be an attractive lower risk tactic. Given this reality, it is imperative that facilities properly consider a wide range of mailroom security issues. The Protective Design Center (PDC) has been regularly executing various types of on-site antiterrorism/force protection, physical security, and compliance assessments for nearly 30 years. Assessments vary in scope and are tailored to the specific needs of the customer. An on-site assessment that addresses mailroom issues will focus on preventing incidents, providing adequate protection for building personnel, and gauging compliance with applicable standards and regulations.

CONSIDERATIONS & CONCERNS

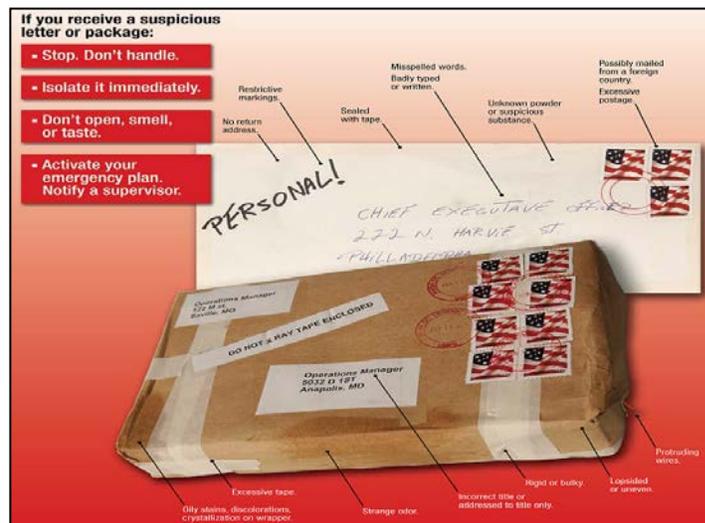
These are items you should consider or have concerns for:

- Is the mailroom located on an exterior wall of the building away from heavily populated spaces?
- Is the mailroom envelope (i.e., perimeter) airspace isolated from the rest of the building to prevent migration?
- Is the mailroom heating, air conditioning, and ventilation (HVAC) system isolated from the building's HVAC system?
- Are mail-handling personnel properly trained to identify suspicious packages?
- Do procedures and equipment for processing mail & packages adequately minimize jeopardy to personnel?
- Are there HVAC emergency shutoff switches on every floor and are they properly placed per regulation?
- Is there a response plan that can be implemented during an incident involving chemicals, biological materials, or explosives that minimizes impacts and protects personnel?

PDC SUPPORT

To deter and prevent mailroom incidents, PDC support ranges from Design to Design Review to on-site assessments. PDC assessments can determine the following:

- Overall compliance with all applicable standards and regulations
- Optimal orientation of the mailroom within the building to best protect personnel
- Adequacy of mailroom envelope construction (i.e. full height walls extend to the roof/ceiling deck above) to mitigate incidents with chemicals, biological agents, or explosives
- Establishment of a negative air pressure within the mailroom to prevent migration of chemical or biological threats throughout the building
- Need for special mailroom equipment, such as an x-ray scanner or down draft table with filtration.



PRESENTATION and REPORT OPTIONS

Intermediate and final products can be tailored to customer needs/requirements:

- In-brief prior to on-site assessment
- Out-brief to present preliminary findings immediately following on-site assessment (verbal, written, or PowerPoint presentation)
- Letter Report focusing on deficiencies, vulnerabilities and mitigating measures
- Draft Report to allow for customer review and comment prior to taking report to final
- Detailed Report documenting existing conditions; risk to personnel; deficiencies; vulnerabilities; analysis of procedures and response plan; preliminary blast analysis; mitigation recommendations and cost estimate; plans; photographs; and mitigating measure information cutsheets
- Mailroom Design Upgrade Plans, Mailroom Relocation Plans, Response Plans, and Mitigation Plans
- For Official Use Only (FOUO), classified, or FOUO with a classified annex

POINTS OF CONTACT

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See the attached sheet or visit the PDC web page to view mailroom-related training materials and videos.



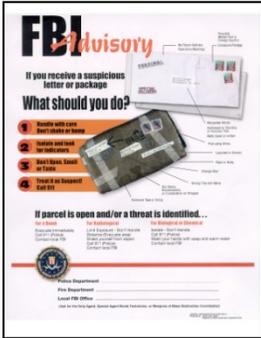
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Mail Rooms - Training Materials and Instructional Videos

[Click on links provided below or visit <http://pdc.usace.army.mil>]

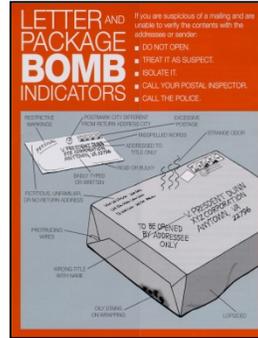
POSTERS THAT ILLUSTRATE ASPECTS THAT MAKE MAIL/PACKAGES SUSPICIOUS



[FBI Advisory Poster](#)



[Postal Service Poster](#)

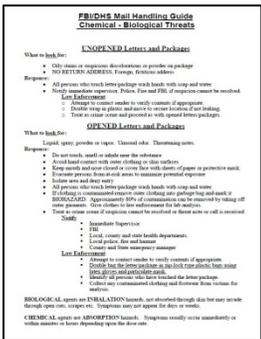


[Mail Bomb Indicators](#)



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DOCUMENTS THAT PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON HANDLING SUSPICIOUS MAIL/PACKAGES



[Mail Handling Guide](#)



[U.S. Postal Inspector](#)



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VIDEOS THAT PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON HANDLING SUSPICIOUS MAIL/PACKAGES



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