

CAROLINE CALDERONE BAISLEY
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH



MICHAEL LONG, Director
DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
DOUGLAS SERAFIN, Laboratory
DEBORAH TRAVERS, Director
DIVISION OF FAMILY HEALTH
ROBIN CLARK-SMITH, Director
SPECIAL CLINICAL SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

ANTHRAX CONCERNS: WHAT TO DO IF YOU RECEIVE A SUSPICIOUS LETTER OR PACKAGE

DO NOT PANIC

1. Anthrax Organisms can cause infection in the skin, gastrointestinal system, or the lungs. To do so, the organism must be rubbed into abraded skin, swallowed, or inhaled as a fine, aerosolized mist. Disease can be prevented after exposure to the anthrax spores by early treatment with the appropriate antibiotics. **Anthrax is not spread from one person to another person.**
2. For Anthrax to be effectively transmitted cutaneously (through the skin) one must come into direct contact with the powder through a cut or abrasion in the skin.
3. For anthrax to be effectively transmitted to a large number of people it must be aerosolized into very small particles. This is difficult to do, and requires a great deal of technical skill and special equipment. If these small particles are inhaled, life-threatening lung infection can occur, but prompt recognition and treatment are effective.

STEPS TO FOLLOW IF YOU RECEIVE A SUSPICIOUS UNOPENED LETTER OR PACKAGE WITH A THREATENING MESSAGE WRITTEN ON IT:

1. **Do not open it!**
2. Place the envelope or package in a plastic bag or some other type of container to prevent leakage of contents.
3. If you do not have any container, then cover the envelope or package with anything (i.e., clothing, paper, trash can, etc.) and do not remove the cover.
4. Leave the room, and close the door, or section off the area to prevent others from entering.
5. Wash your hands with soap and water to prevent spreading any powder or material.
6. If this event happens at home or at the work place, contact the Greenwich Police Dept.
7. If this event occurs at the work place, contact your direct supervisor.
8. List all of the people who were in the room or area when this suspicious letter or package was recognized. Give this list to a Greenwich Police Department responder for follow-up investigations.

STEPS TO FOLLOW IF POWDER OR MATERIAL SPILLS OUT OF AN OPENED LETTER OR PACKAGE:

1. Do not try to clean up the powder or material. Cover the spilled contents **immediately** with anything (i.e., clothing, paper, trash can, etc.) and do not remove the cover.
2. Leave the room, and close the door, or section off the area to prevent others from entering.
3. Wash your hands with soap and water to prevent spreading any powder or material.
4. If this event happens at home or at the work place, contact the Greenwich Police Department.
5. If this event occurs at the work place, contact your direct supervisor.
6. Remove heavily contaminated clothing as soon as possible and place in a plastic bag, or some other type of container that can be sealed. This clothing bag should be given to an emergency responder for proper handling.

7. Shower with soap and water as soon as possible. *Do not use bleach or other disinfectant on your skin!*
8. If possible, list all of the people who were in the room or area, especially those who had actual contact with the powder or material. Give this list to a Greenwich Police Department responder so that proper instructions can be given for medical follow-up, and for further investigation purposes.

STEPS TO FOLLOW IF THERE IS A QUESTION OF ROOM CONTAMINATION BY DISPERSAL INTO THE AIR (AEROSOLIZATION):

1. Turn off local fans or ventilation units in the area.
2. Leave the area immediately.
3. Close the door, or section off the area, to prevent others from entering.
4. Wash your hands with soap and water to prevent spreading of any materials.
5. If this event occurs at home or at the work place, contact the Greenwich Police Department.
6. If this event occurs at the work place, contact your direct supervisor.
7. Shut down the air handling system in the building if possible.
8. As soon as possible, remove heavily contaminated clothing and place in a plastic bag or some other type of container that can be sealed. Shower with soap and water. *Do not use bleach or other disinfectant on your skin.*
9. List all of the people who were in the room or area. Give this list to the Greenwich Police Department responder so that proper instructions can be given for medical follow-up and for further investigation purposes.

HOW TO IDENTIFY SUSPICIOUS LETTERS AND PACKAGES:

- Excessive Postage
- Handwritten or poorly typed addresses
- Incorrect titles
- Title, but no name
- Misspellings of common words
- Oily stains, discolorations, or odor
- No return address
- Excessive weight
- Lopsided or uneven envelope
- Ticking sound
- Protruding wires or aluminum foil
- Excessive security material such as masking tape, string, etc.
- Visual distractions
- Marked with restrictive endorsements, such as “Personal” or “Confidential”
- Shows a city or state in the postmark that does not match the return address