



Customer Focus

on Loss Control

Innovative Safety and Health SolutionsSM

Responding to Letter and Mail Bombs

How to Recognize a Letter or Mail Bomb

Letter bombs, also called *mail bombs* or *package bombs*, might display one or more of these characteristics:

- mailed from a foreign country
- excessive postage; stamps vs. metered mail
- no return address, or false return address
- postmark differs from return address
- restrictive or special handling instructions (“special delivery” “air mail” “foreign mail”)
- misspelled words; poorly written or typed; poor handwriting; cut-and-paste letters
- addressed to a specific individual
- wrong title with name of addressee, or sent to a title without a specific name
- restrictive instructions (“to be opened by addressee only” “personal” “confidential”)
- addressee is not familiar with name and address of sender
- visual distractions (drawings, unusual statements, hand-drawn postage)
- letter-sized or larger package
- rigid, lumpy, or bulky envelope; stiffer or heavier than normal
- irregularly shaped
- lopsided or unevenly weighted package
- soft spots or bulges
- messily wrapped package; different types of tape; excessive wrapping or taping; string
- marked “fragile” “rush” “handle with care” or “do not delay”
- protruding wires, aluminum foil
- odd smells
- oily stains or discolorations

What to Do When You Receive a Suspect Package or Letter

- Do not open any suspect letter or package.* Letter bombs may be triggered by a pressure release activated when the package is opened or when a string is cut.
- Isolate the suspect package, but do not put it into an enclosed space (such as a drawer, cabinet, or in water).
- Open windows in the immediate area.
- Contact police and other security officials immediately (bomb disposal, fire department, hospital, municipal officials, etc.).
- Activate the response team of the Emergency Preparedness Plan.
- Make decisions about evacuation.

Security Against Letter Bombs

- Centralize mail facilities, and locate them away from other work areas.
- Train mailroom personnel to recognize and respond to suspicious packages
- Provide training to non-mailroom staff in other departments who screen, sort, or distribute mail.
- Get a portable x-ray machine to screen suspicious packages.
- Instruct employees to report suspicious mail or packages, including special deliveries.

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