

Handling Suspicious Packages

Things You May Encounter in the Mail

- Legitimate packages
- Harmless pranks
- Pointed or edged items
- Biohazards
- Chemicals
- Explosives

What Makes a Package Suspicious?

- *Type of mail:* Foreign, Priority, Special Delivery **(and not expected)**.
- *Restrictive endorsements:* Confidential, Personal, To Be Opened by Addressee Only.
- *Visual distractions:* Fragile, Rush, Handle with care.
- *Excessive postage:* (usually stamps).
- *Fictitious or no return address.*
- *Shows a city or state postmark that doesn't match the return address.*
- *Poorly typed or handwritten addresses.*
- *Incorrect titles or titles with no names.*
- *Misspellings of common words.*
- *Oily stains or discolorations.*
- *Sticky or adhesive substances.*
- *Excessive or uneven weight distribution.*
- *Excessive binding material:* Masking, electrical or strapping tape, string, or twine.
- *Rigid, lopsided, or uneven envelope.*
- *Makes a sandy noise or any other noise when moved.*
- *Strange odor or chemical smell.*
- *Crystallization on wrapper.*
- *Powdery substance on or leaking from the package.*
- *Non-English writing.*
- *Leaking any type of fluid.*
- *Protruding wires, screws, or other metal parts.*
- *Anything "out of the ordinary" about the item.*

Notify the police immediately of suspicious packages, persons, or incidents.

Division of Capitol Police

Emergency Number

786-HELP (4357)

www.dcp.virginia.gov

If You Receive a Suspicious Package

- Don't shake or bump it (handle with care).
- Don't open, smell, touch, or taste it.
- Treat it as suspect – notify your supervisor and call the police immediately.
- Attempt to check the validity of the package through the return address.
- Isolate the package immediately by placing it in a sealable container (i.e., garbage bag).
- Carefully remove rubber gloves (if worn) and place them in the same container before sealing it.
- Evacuate the immediate area, including your self.
- Ensure that all persons who have handled the package immediately wash their hands with soap and water.

What Should I do if I Receive Mail That Appears to be Contaminated?

- Do not handle the mail or package suspected of contamination.
- Do not attempt to clean up any spilled contents.
- Make sure the envelope or package is isolated and the immediate area evacuated.
- Ensure that all persons who have touched the package or envelope wash their hands, face, and arms with soap and water immediately.
- Notify your supervisor and call the police immediately.
- Make a list of all persons who have touched the envelope or package and their contact information for them as soon as possible. Provide this information to the emergency responders upon their arrival.
- As soon as practical, shower with soap and water. If you fear that you have been exposed to a toxic substance, you may go to a local hospital emergency room and advise them that you may have been exposed to a hazardous material. If you think you have been exposed to Anthrax, seek medical attention immediately.
- Contact the Center for Disease Control Emergency Response Center at 770-488-7100 for answers to any questions.