EMERGENCY SURVIVAL PROGRAM

ESP FOCUS

Bomb Threats

You may receive a strange call or package!

Terrorists use violence or the threat of violence to advance their political, social, or religious goals. In recent years, bombing has been a popular weapon for terrorists around the world.

Explosive devices can be simple and home made, or technically complex. Bombs can be large or small, and can easily be disguised. They can be thrown into an area, left behind and triggered remotely or when they are disturbed. They also can be carried or driven into a target area by a suicide bomber.

Most of the bombings in this country are attributed to vandalism or mailbox bombings. Professional terrorists, on the other hand, look for targets that symbolize their causes and that will gain them maximum attention: government buildings, corporations, banks, airports, embassies, cultural landmarks, animal laboratories, abortion clinics, and tourist attractions.

The Department of Homeland Security and law enforcement agencies have taken extensive measures to prevent explosive attacks by terrorists. Public places, airports, critical infrastructure, and governmental facilities have implemented far greater security measures than before September 11, 2001.

Use the information on the reverse side of this *Focus Sheet* to help you respond effectively to a Bomb Threat.

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What You Can Do Now

Prepare at Work

- ☐ Review your company's procedure for dealing with bomb threats. If one does not exist, work with the appropriate personnel to establish a policy or procedure.
- ☐ Canvass work areas to become familiar with objects that belong there.
- ☐ Establish a signal that receptionists and others who answer phones can use to indicate that they are receiving a threat.
- ☐ Develop a bomb threat checklist.
- ☐ Identify and practice using evacuation routes.
- ☐ Be familiar with fire escapes.

If You Receive a Bomb Threat

- ☐ Keep your voice calm and professional. Do not interrupt the caller, and keep the caller on the line as long as possible.
- ☐ Signal a co-worker that you have received a bomb threat, and have him or her notify your security officer and local law enforcement immediately.
- ☐ Advise the caller that there are people in the building and innocent persons could be killed or injured.
- ☐ Ask the caller to repeat the message, with as much detail as possible.
- ☐ Immediately after the call, write down every detail that you remember, and give a copy of your notes to your security officer or supervisor.
- ☐ Examine work areas as well as common areas such as lunchrooms, mail rooms, and restrooms to identify suspicious packages. What is here that doesn't belong?

If You Locate a Suspicious Package

Whether at work or in a public place, you should regard unattended or unusual packages or luggage with suspicion.

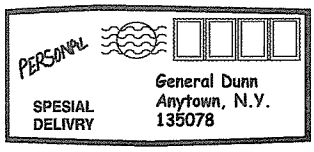
- ☐ Look for possible owners.
- ☐ Get a detailed description of the article (size, color, markings, odors, sounds).
- ☐ Note the exact location and approximately when the item was first noticed.
- ☐ Using a conventional, wired telephone, contact a supervisor, security officer, or the police.
- ☐ Do not use a cordless phone, cellular telephone, walkie-talkie or radio.
- ☐ Do not touch or move the object. Do not turn lights or thermostats on or off. Treat the object as potential evidence.
- ☐ Prepare for possible evacuation.

If you are suspicious of a mailing and you can't verify the contents with the sender or the addressee:

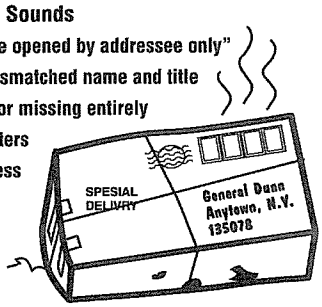
- ☐ Don't open it.
- ☐ Treat it as suspicious.
- ☐ Isolate it.
- ☐ Using a conventional, wired phone, call **9-1-1**.

How to Identify a Possible Mail Bomb

Here's what to look for:



- **Too much postage**
- **Bulges or soft spots**
- **Unbalanced weight**
- **Misspelled words**
- **Sounds**
- **Restrictive markings: "Personal," "To be opened by addressee only"**
- **Addressed to someone's title only, or mismatched name and title**
- **Return address is fictitious, unfamiliar, or missing entirely**
- **Badly typed or written; cut-and-paste letters**
- **Postmark city different from return address**
- **Wrapped with string or retaped**
- **Protruding wire or aluminum foil**
- **Oily stains on wrapping**
- **Strange odor**



If There Is an Explosion

- ☐ Take shelter under a desk or a sturdy table.
- ☐ Exit the building as quickly as possible.
- ☐ Do not use elevators.
- ☐ Check for fire and other hazards.
- ☐ Take your emergency kit if time allows.

If There Is a Fire

- ☐ Crawl below the smoke level and exit the building immediately.
- ☐ Use a wet cloth to cover your mouth and nose, if possible.
- ☐ Feel the top of a closed door with the back of one hand. If the door is hot, look for another exit.
- ☐ If you catch on fire, do not run. **STOP, DROP,** and **ROLL** to smother the flames.
- ☐ Never re-enter a burning building. Gather at a pre-designated meeting point.
- ☐ Call the fire department.

HEALTH TIP: Remain calm and assist people as necessary. Make sure you use your dust mask. Help others who are hurt or need assistance. If you see someone who is seriously injured, seek help. Do not try to manage the situation alone. Listen to your radio or television for news and instructions.

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This Focus Sheet is produced as part of the Emergency Survival Program (ESP). ESP is an awareness campaign designed to increase home, neighborhood, business and school emergency preparedness. ESP was developed by the County of Los Angeles. The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) and representatives from Contra Costa, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Marin, Mono, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and Ventura counties; Southern California Edison; the Southern California Earthquake Center and the American Red Cross assist in the development of campaign materials and coordination of the campaign.