

Suspicious Packages

Suspicious packages come in all shapes and sizes. They could be boxes, envelopes, backpacks, bags or other items, but are usually left unattended and seem out of place. Items could also be in your mail, giving you a cause for concern if you are not expecting a delivery. Suspicious packages may contain harmful and dangerous materials so it is important to understand how to handle them with care.

Ways to Identify a Suspicious Package

- Packages misaddressed or sent to a generic title instead of to someone in your household or office.
- Excessive stamp postage as opposed to metered postage.
- Odd markings such as “Personal”, “Confidential” or “Do not x-ray”.
- A strange odor escaping the package.
- Unnecessary amounts of tape or string.
- The package is rigid, bulky or beat up looking.

If You Find a Suspicious Package

- Call 911 right away and alert the people around you to leave the premise. If you are in a building, tell a security officer or building management.
- Do not use a cell phone or two-way radio to call authorities because they can act as a bomb detonator. Call from a landline phone only.
- Do not move the package, bump or shake it. It is best to just leave it where you found it.

- If the package is small, try to cover it with a trash can but make sure the trash can is not touching the package. This will prevent whatever is in the package from spreading.
- If the package is ticking, vibrating or has an odor, evacuate the area immediately.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water if you handled the package in any way. Stay in a separate area from others as the package may contain chemical, biological or radiological materials that could be spread.
- When emergency personnel arrive, be prepared to answer questions about who was around you when you noticed the package. This is important because the suspect could still be in the area.



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