

Kent Police Advice on suspect packages and substances - 3 May 2018

You should be aware of the practical steps to take immediately if you receive a suspect package containing a suspicious substance.

Terrorist or criminal incidents of this nature are extremely rare. However, if there is a concern that a suspect biological/chemical package has been received, sensible steps can be taken to minimise the risk of exposure and the possibility of harm. It is important to remain calm.

General mail handling - what to look for

- Look out for suspicious envelopes or packages (see below for some things that should trigger suspicion).
- Open all mail with a letter opener or other method that is least likely to disturb contents.
- Open packages/envelopes with a minimum amount of movement.
- Do not blow into envelopes.
- Do not shake or pour out contents.
- Keep hands away from nose and mouth while opening mail.
- Wash hands after handling mail.

If you are in any doubt about a package, do not touch it, move it or open it and call the police on 999.

Some items that can trigger suspicion

- Discolouration, crystals or surface, strange odours or oily stains
- Envelope with powder or powder-like residue
- Excessive tape or string
- Unusual size or weight given size
- Lopsided or oddly-shaped envelope
- Postmark that does not match return address
- Restrictive endorsements such as "Personal" or "Confidential"
- Excessive postage
- Handwritten, block-printed or poorly-typed addresses
- Incorrect titles
- Title but no name
- Misspellings of common words
- No return address
- Addressed to individual no longer with organisation

General mail handling - what to do

If you believe **you** have received a contaminated package

- Do not touch the package further or move it to another location
- Shut windows and doors in the room and leave the room, but keep yourself separate from others and available for medical examination
- Switch off any room air conditioning system
- Notify police immediately using the 999 system

- If there has been a suspicion substance contamination, ensure that personnel outside the room are evacuated as soon as possible and ensure individuals in the contaminated room are evacuated to an adjacent unoccupied room away from the hazard.
- If there has been a suspected chemical incident ensure personnel leave the room as quickly as possible. Possible signs that people have been exposed will be streaming eyes, coughs and irritated skin. Follow the Remove, Remove, Remove guidance.

If **you** find a suspect package outside a building

- do not touch it or move it
- notify police immediately using the 999 system
- move people away from the suspicious substance and await instructions from the emergency services

If **anyone** believes they have been exposed to an unknown material



Kent Police

If you think someone has been exposed to a **HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE**

Use caution and keep a safe distance to avoid exposure yourself.

TELL THOSE AFFECTED TO:



**REMOVE
THEMSELVES...**

...from the immediate area to avoid further exposure to the substance. Fresh air is important.

If skin is itching or in pain, find a water source.

REPORT.. use M/ETHANE



**REMOVE
OUTER CLOTHING**

Try to avoid pulling clothing over the head if possible.

Do not smoke, eat or drink.

Do not pull off clothing stuck to skin.



**REMOVE
THE SUBSTANCE...**

...from skin using a dry absorbent material to either soak it up or brush it off.

RINSE continually with water if skin is itching or in pain.

REMEMBER: Exposure is not always obvious. **SIGNS CAN INCLUDE:**



The presence of hazardous or unusual materials.



Unexplained signs of skin, eye or airway irritation, nausea, vomiting, twitching, sweating, disorientation, breathing difficulties.



A change in environment, such as unexplained vapour, odd smells or tastes.

ACT QUICKLY. These actions can SAVE LIVES.