

## LETTER BOMB RECOGNITION

*Mail bombs have been used against individuals and organizations for purposes of revenge, extortion, and terrorism.*

### **Could you or your organization be a victim?**

If yes, consider the following helpful hints when opening mail at home or at work. Remember, the physical appearance of a mail bomb is limited only by the imagination of the bomber. However, mail bombs have exhibited unique characteristics which should be helpful in identifying a suspect item.

### **To apply these helpful hints, it is important to know the type of mail you normally receive:**

- Mail bombs can be contained in letters, books, and parcels of varying sizes, shapes and colours.
- Letters feel rigid, appear lopsided, and are bulky/heavy for their size.
- Oil stains may be present on the envelope/wrapping due to explosives 'sweating'.
- An excessive amount of postage stamps.
- The sender is unknown and there is no return address, or the return address and post mark do not correspond.
- Unusual restricted endorsements such as 'Personal', 'Private' or 'Beware, Bomb Inside'.
- The addressee normally does not receive personal mail at the office.
- Name and title of the addressee is not accurate or the addressee no longer works here.
- The package is addressed to a title/position or to no one in particular.
- Address is prepared to ensure anonymity of the sender (i.e., home-made labels, cut and paste lettering).
- Mailing emits a peculiar odour (e.g., ground almonds, diesel oil, chemical cleanser or has a strong smell of aftershave/perfume to mask the smell of explosives).
- Mailing appears to be disassembled or reglued.
- Handwriting appears distorted.

- Protruding wires, tinfoil, or string are present.
- Pressure or resistance is noted when removing the contents.
- Outer container has an irregular or asymmetric shape or has soft spots or bulges.
- Wrapping exhibits previous use such as traces of glue, mailing labels, return addresses or tape.
- Several combinations of tape or excessive amounts of tape are used to secure the parcel.
- Unprofessionally-wrapped parcel is endorsed 'Fragile – Handle with Care' or 'Rush – Do Not Delay'.
- Package makes a buzzing or ticking noise or the contents make a 'sloshing' sound.
- You feel the onset of a pounding headache while handling the package.
- Excessive wrapping and visual distractions.
- Foreign Mail, Air Mail or Special Delivery labels.
- Contact your supervisor. Your supervisor should then contact the recipient of the letter/package for clarification.
- Isolate the item, evacuate the area and persons within 200 feet. Leave doors in the immediate area open and secure more distant doors.
- If possible, open windows in the immediate area to assist in venting potential explosive gases.
- Immediately contact your local Police Department for professional assistance. The Police would much rather check out the letter/package/device and have it be nothing, than you not call and the letter/package/device be something!
- Remember play it safe, trust your intuition and the intuition of your co-workers.

***This Letter Bomb Recognition Bulletin should be posted in the mail room, or where mail is normally processed.***

**If you suspect a piece of mail and are unable to verify the contents:**

- Do not open the article, gently put it down while keeping it level.
- Do not put the item in water or a confined space such as in a desk drawer or cabinet.
- Do not cover it.

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