

Washington Township Fire Department Standard Operating Procedure

Division 200: Emergency Operations
Section 205: Hazardous Materials
Subject 205.01: Biological Threat Response Guidelines
Supersedes: Inter-Office Correspondence Dated Oct. 26, 2001
Approved By:



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Page: 1 of 1

PURPOSE:

To establish response guidelines and the handling procedures of unknown substances where there appears to be no immediate threat to the caller or the general public.

RESPONSIBILITY:

It is the responsibility of all personnel to familiarize themselves with and to follow this policy.

PROCEDURES:

In the event the Fire Alarm Operator receives a call where the caller indicates they have received a letter or package from an unknown source or there is just something suspicious to them about the letter or package, contact should be made with Chief 1 or, if unavailable, Chief 41 who will respond and meet with the caller. Chief 1 or Chief 41 will determine any further course of action, if any, to be taken.

Should a call be received where a substance is discovered, such as powder from an envelope, and the caller indicates there is no immediate threat involved, Chief 1 or Chief 41, Battalion 40, one (1) engine and the Haz-Mat unit will be dispatched non-emergency.

Upon arrival a crew of no more than two (2) will collect the substance. This collection crew must don the proper equipment (tyvek suit, nitrile gloves and SCBA). When packaging the substance, the item must be placed in a clear plastic bag (Haz-Mat unit carries gallon size bags for this purpose) and sealed. This bag is then placed into another clear plastic bag and sealed. The outside plastic bag must be marked with the date, time, address of incident, actual location substance obtained from (i.e., desk in den, mailroom floor, etc.) and the initials of the crew collecting the substance. The substance will then be removed from the scene and stored in the secured storage room at Station 45.

Disposable items, the tyvek suit and nitrile gloves, must be placed in a large plastic bag, sealed and placed in the secured storage room at Station 45. Any other non-disposable items, such as flashlights and radios must carefully be cleaned with soap and water.

Chief 1 or Chief 41 or their designee will obtain the substance from the secured room and take the proper steps to insure the substance is analyzed. The Chief or Deputy Chief or their designee will also be responsible for the proper discarding of the disposable items.