

**MERCER COUNTY, KENTUCKY  
WMD TASK FORCE**

**GUIDANCE ON INITIAL RESPONSE TO A SUSPICIOUS  
LETTER/CONTAINER WITH A POTENTIAL BIOLOGICAL THREAT**

**COMMUNI  
CATIONS  
CENTER**

1. Receive call
2. Determine if anyone not feeling well
3. Dispatch law enforcement, hazmat unit and emergency management
4. Dispatch EMS if anyone not feeling well

**HAZMAT  
UNIT**

1. Respond to scene
2. If the incident involves an unopened container, such as a box, it must be evaluated by a certified bomb technician/explosive ordinance disposal personnel prior to being touched or moved.
3. Otherwise, perform basic field safety screening of the item to rule out radiation, oxidizing agent, flammability, corrosives and/or volatile organic compound.
4. Decon individual(s) as necessary
5. Before packaging, photographs should be taken of the letter/container.
6. Under no circumstances should an unprotected responder attempt to package an unknown substance.
7. Double bag the item in clear sealed bags.
8. Initiate chain of custody form and transfer custody to law enforcement as soon as possible.
9. Notify Health Department if there is a threat to public health or environmental contamination exists.

**LAW EN-  
FORCEMENT**

1. Respond to scene and establish command post if indicated.
2. Contact KSP bomb squad if appropriate or requested by hazmat unit.
3. Treat as a crime scene.
4. Preserve evidence.
5. Identify and list names and contact information of anyone who may have been exposed.
6. Contact FBI and Homeland Security for direction if a credible threat.
7. Do not touch or move any suspicious item without initial basic field safety screening by hazmat unit.
8. Contact United States Postal Inspection Service whenever it appears the threat was delivered by the U.S. Postal Service.
9. Transport suspicious item to appropriate lab for analysis.
10. Complete chain of custody form.
11. Provide camera for hazmat unit to use.
12. Provide perimeter and crowd control.

**EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT**

1. Respond to scene with radiation detector.
2. Assist with other resources as needed or requested.

**EMERGENCY  
MEDICAL  
SERVICES**

1. Respond to scene if requested
2. Utilize appropriate personal protective equipment.
3. Assess patient(s) and treat as appropriate.
4. Contact hospital before transport.
5. Transport patient(s) to appropriate hospital.

**HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT**

1. Respond to scene if requested.
2. Conduct investigation and notify State Health Department.
3. Contact Circuit Court if there is a need for an isolation and/or quarantine.

**HOSPITAL**

1. Conduct second decon as appropriate.
2. Conduct medical screening exam.
3. Treat as appropriate.

**CONTACT  
WITH MEDIA**

1. Incident commander designates Public Information Officer (PIO).
2. Agency representatives coordinate responses through PIO so public hears same story.

1/20/05