

Protocol for Response to Possible Anthrax Exposures

IU Police Officers with an on-duty shift commander will conduct a risk assessment concerning the potential for exposure to a Bio-Hazard, such as anthrax prior to choosing a course of action. They will consider the credibility of the exposure and if the exposure could result in either inhalational or cutaneous anthrax.

The potential that an exposure really is anthrax is higher when:

1. There is a distinct threatening message accompanying the powder or substance.
2. The substance is brown or sandy-brown rather than stark-white. The positive letter to NBC is reported to have contained brownish sand-like material.
3. If a letter or package is otherwise suspicious as described on the U.S. Postal Service 'Suspicious Mail Alert' poster.

The potential that an exposure really is anthrax is lower when:

1. The exposure includes situations in which a white powder is found without an accompanying note.
2. Where someone might expect a spill of a common substance, e.g. spilled sugar, creamer, talcum powder, etc.
3. The substance comes in a package or letter that can be traced to the sender.