

ANTHRAX ATTACKS POSTAL HISTORY

Beginning on 18 September 2001 seven letters containing anthrax spores were mailed to offices of two U.S. Senators and five news media companies---ABC News, CBS News, NBC News and the *New York Post* in New York City and the *National Enquirer* in Boca Raton Florida. Five persons died and twenty-two became ill from exposure. The bioterrorist attack also caused major disruptions to mail processing and delivery by the United States Postal Service.

In November 2001 the USPS hired two companies to irradiate mail using electron beam x-ray machines at facilities in Lima OH and Bridgewater NJ. Irradiated mail initially was delivered in plastic body bags. Studies later showed that irradiation produced irritating chemicals and health problems. It discolored envelopes, melted cellophane, and caused some letters to become yellowed and burned. R. A. Siegel Auction Galleries and other philatelic firms quickly announced that they would send mail by alternative delivery companies rather than USPS.

In January 2002 the USPC announced it would only irradiate mail addressed to area codes 202 (Washington), 203 (Connecticut), 204 (Manitoba), and 205 (Alabama). The USPS purchased its own irradiation machines but never installed them. Alternatives were determined to be too expensive. On 21 September 2002 the USPS discontinued irradiating mail. However, a number of government agencies established their own sanitization and inspection programs.

This exhibit discusses the history of responses to the anthrax attacks by displaying the three types of body bags used when irradiation was first introduced, examples of damaged covers and stamps, articles informing collectors of issues, and examples of U.S. agency handstamps.

Forerunner: Disinfected Mail during Yellow Fever Epidemic

Letter with New Orleans cds dated 28 September 1897 from New Orleans to Lithia Springs Georgia with pin-holes from fumigation for the yellow fever epidemic that initially reached New Orleans in 1897. 298 persons reportedly died of yellow fever in New Orleans that year.



First Body Bag Type with "November 2001"

The three types of body bags known to the exhibitor are identical except for the date or lack of date at the top left of the print. Body bags previously were used to deliver mail that had been damaged. The anthrax body bags informed addressees that enclosed mail had been irradiated. This bag contains a subscription renewal notice for *U.S. News and World Report*.

Dear Postal Customer: This bag has been irradiated at a facility in Bridgeport, New Jersey. The irradiation process used at the Bridgeport facility was found to be effective in destroying anthrax by an interagency team of scientific experts that recommended release of this mail for delivery. If a process is safe, it can affect some products that might be in your mail. The products on this list, if contained in a package or envelope that has been irradiated, should not be used. You should discard them and obtain replacements.

- **Any biological sample**, such as blood, fecal samples, etc., could be rendered useless.
- **Diagnostic kits**, such as those used to monitor blood sugar levels, could be adversely affected.
- **Photographic film** will be fully exposed.
- **Food** will be adversely affected.
- **Drugs and medicines** may not be effective and their safety could be affected.
- **Eyeglasses** and contact lenses could be adversely affected.
- **Electronic devices** would likely be inoperable.

While the irradiation process successfully kills anthrax, if your mail contains any suspicious substances we urge you to set it aside and contact local law enforcement authorities. This can help in the investigation.

The group of experts that tested the irradiation process was organized by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and included the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute, the Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Agriculture and the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

We apologize for the delay in delivery of this mail and for any inconvenience that may have resulted. Our primary interest is to assure that this mail is safe before being delivered to you. More information is available at 1-800-ASK-USPS.

Thank you for your understanding.

Sincerely,



Thomas G. Day
Vice President, Engineering

Second Body Bag Type with "December 2001"

Information on the three types of anthrax bags was not changed. The only revision in the second type of body bag was to substitute December for November. This bag contains a Betty Crocker Cookbook with recipes mailed from Cleveland OH in late October 2001 to Jackson NJ.

December 2001

The mail that is being delivered in this bag has been irradiated at a facility in Jersey. The irradiation process used at the Bridgeport facility is safe and found to be effective in destroying anthrax by an interagency team of scientific experts that recommended release of this mail for delivery.

While the irradiation process is safe, it can affect some products that might be contained in this mail. The products on this list, if contained in a package or envelope that has been irradiated, should not be used. You should discard them and obtain replacements.

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Sincerely,



Thomas G. Day
Vice President, Engineering

475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW
WASHINGTON DC 20260

IN Q&A!
No, it's not a mystery! All you need is a Betty Crocker SuperRich® cake mix and a few secret ingredients! Look inside NOW!

SKILLET CHICKEN PARMIGIANA
is ready to serve in only 25 minutes! Page 13.

Third Body Bag Type with No Month or Year

This third type of anthrax bag with no month date was mailed in January 2002 to Trenton NJ. It contains a post card from Cablevision, a Bethpage NY company, offering a cable TV package.



Dear Postal Customer:

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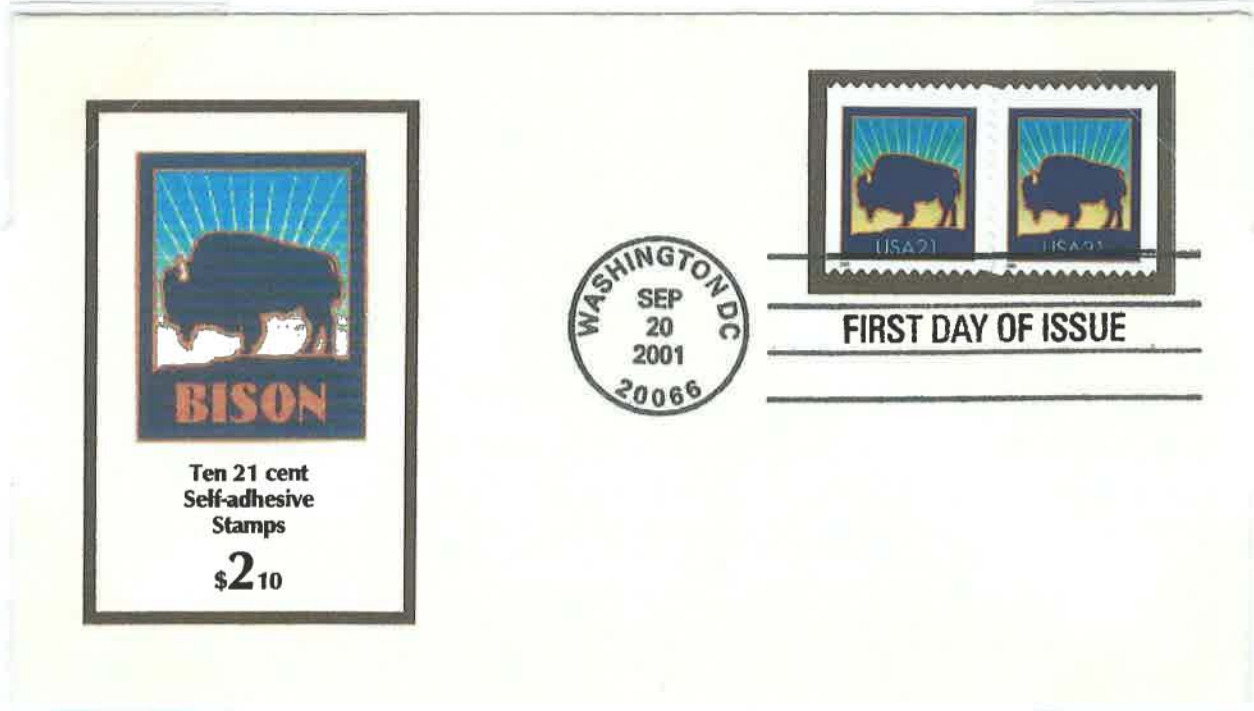
The group of experts that tested the irradiation process was organized by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and included the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute, the Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Agriculture and the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

We apologize for the delay in delivery of this mail and for any inconvenience that may have resulted. Our primary interest is to assure that this mail is safe before being delivered to you. More information is available at 1-800-ASK-USPS.

Thank you for your understanding.

Discolored 20 September 2001 First Day Cover

When Webcraft First Day Covers discovered that the irradiation process caused paper to discolor, it printed a notice on the back of its first day covers for the Bison 21 cent self-adhesive stamp issued 20 September 2001. The notice advised customers that the cover had a brownish color because it was processed and irradiated at the USPS' Brentwood Facility in Washington DC. Anthrax contamination and illnesses had occurred there because the letters addressed to U.S. Senators had been handled by USPS employees working at Brentwood. Webcraft also provided white "comparison envelopes" to collectors who purchased the cover.



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IRRADIATED MAIL

This cover was processed through the Brentwood Facility in Washington, DC, which was contaminated with Anthrax spores during the Anthrax scare in the Fall of 2001. To eliminate the risk of spreading the spores, mail which could be identified as having passed through Brentwood was irradiated. These covers have a tell-tale brownish cast to them, as this one does. Before irradiation, this cover was a pure white color.


comparison envelope

Stamps Mailed by Nutmeg Stamp Sales 20 October 2001

During November and December of 2001 auction houses and dealers shipped covers and stamps without knowing that mail to Washington and other parts of the Northeast was being irradiated and contents seriously damaged by the process. This package contained a pair of 1¢ stamps issued by a New York local post, the Metropolitan Errand & Carrier Service Company.



B7-00540
OG Cat \$25...\$40


P.O. Box 4547
Danbury, CT 06813
PHONE: 203-792-3862
FAX: 203-798-7902
E-MAIL: info@nutmegstamp.com
WEB: www.nutmegstamp.com

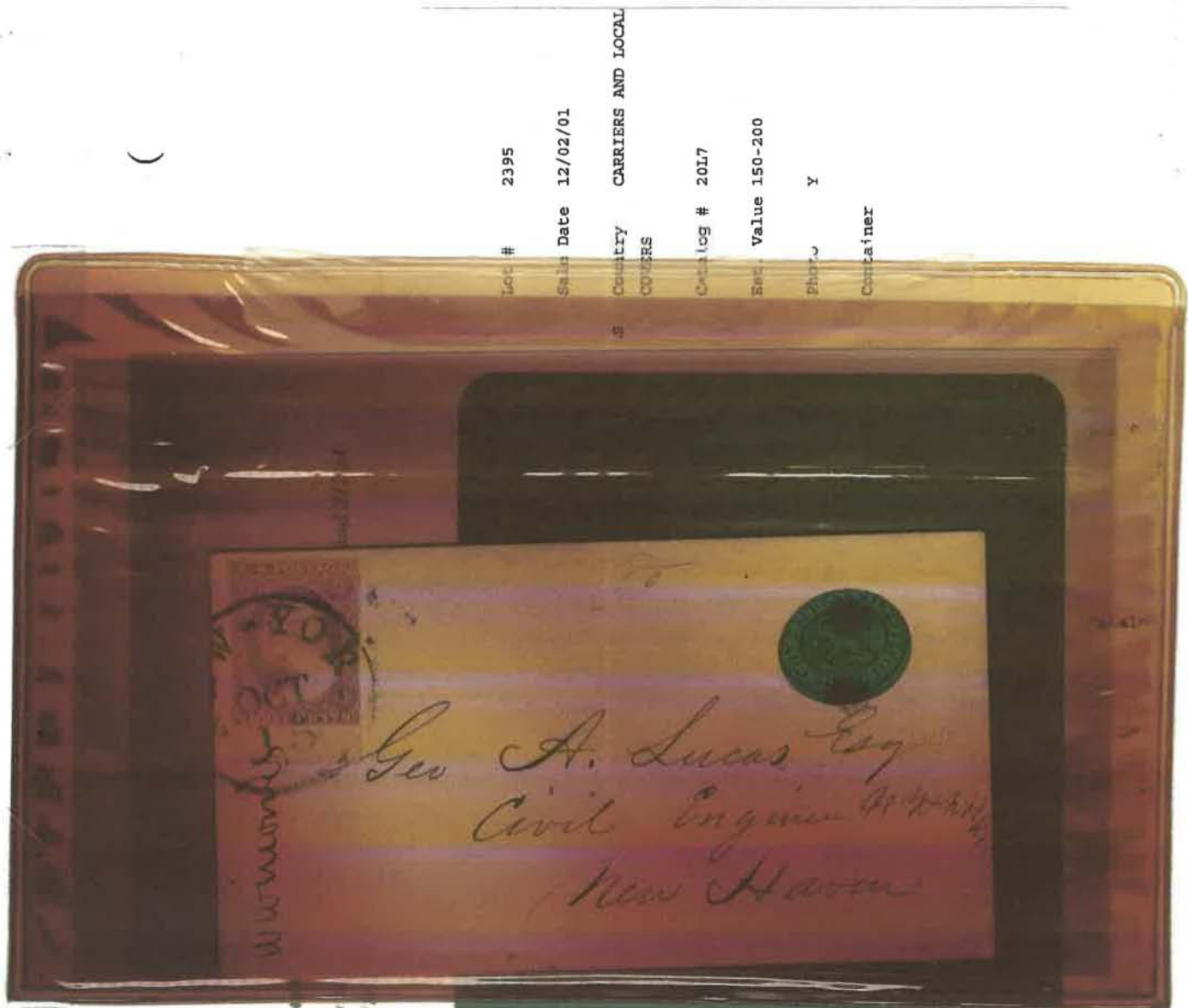
Cover Mailed by Dutch Country Auctions 14 December 2001

Dutch Country Auctions in Wilmington DE mailed this auction lot to Washington DC on 14 December 2001. The package contained an envelope with an invalid commercial label instead of a postage stamp. It is barely visible because the sleeve was baked and discolored.



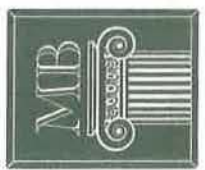
Local Post Cover Mailed by Matthew Bennett Mid-October 2001

This New York City cover with a 2¢ Boyd's local post stamp was purchased in the 2 December 2001 Matthew Bennett sale and sent by certified mail to Washington DC in mid-December.



Loc # 2395
 Ship Date 12/02/01
 Country CARRIERS AND LOCAL
 COVERS
 Catalog # 2017
 Rec. Value 150-200
 Photo Y
 Container

MATTHEW BENNETT
 601 Washington Ave
 (410) 823.3714



14 January 2002 Linn's Stamp News Article First Reporting Irradiation Problems

The first philatelic notice of damage due to irradiation appeared in the 14 January 2002 issue of Linn's Stamp News. A collector from New Jersey submitted an envelope with \$1 bills that he said had turned yellowish due to irradiation. They arrived at his house in an anthrax body bag from the Bridgeport NJ facility hired by the USPS to irradiate mail. The staff of Coin World, an affiliate of Linn's, concluded that the \$1 bills were not an unusual color.

23¢ Washington FDC victim of mail irradiation

By Charles Snee

Irradiating collector mail might not be a good thing for collectible stamps and covers.

One apparent example of the adverse affects of the United States Postal Service's decision to irradiate mail that might have been exposed to anthrax — a U.S. first-day cover — came to Linn's attention in December 2001.

Several weeks later, in late December 2001, Linn's received its first example of irradiated mail that was delivered in a plastic bag.

Pictured here is an FDC of the 23¢ George Washington stamp that was issued Sept. 20, 2001. Richard Kelanic of Pennsylvania sent the cover to Linn's shortly after he received it from the FDC servicing unit at the Stamp Fulfillment Services center in Kansas City, Mo.

"After waiting almost two months," Kelanic wrote, "I received my 23¢ George Washington FDCs from Kansas City. But strange things have happened.

"All my bright white envelopes and cards have been changed to creamy gray. Almost like the envelopes were exposed to direct sunlight or ultraviolet light for a long time."

The color change can be seen by comparing the Washington FDC to one of the envelopes that Kelanic used to prepare his covers before sending them to the fulfillment center for first-day cancellations, also shown here.



The 23¢ George Washington first-day cover shown here, top, likely shows an effect of irradiation by the Postal Service. A Linn's reader submitted the noticeably discolored cover, along with a normal envelope, bottom.

CONTENTS: PAGE 3

VISIT US ON THE INTERNET AT www.linns.com

PRINTED with soy ink on recycled paper MAILED: January 3 2002 CIRCULATION: 52,806 TOTAL DISTRIBUTION: 53,962

16 LINN'S STAMP NEWS JANUARY 14, 2002

www.linns.com

USPS irradiation ruined peelable address labels

(Continued from page 1) FDCs for the 34¢ Santas stamps showed the same discoloration.

Kelanic also told Linn's that the peelable address labels that he affixed to his covers were no longer peelable after

his covers were returned. "The adhesive turned into a sticky, gummy product that required the aid of lighter fluid to remove," Kelanic wrote.

Kelanic stated that all his covers were returned to him in the addressed, stamped envelope that he provided.

However, he did not mention if the Postal Service provided any direct confirmation that his covers had been irradiated or otherwise had received special treatment.

"Are these uncommon incidents?" Kelanic mused, "or is the [fulfillment center] creating these changes by sanitizing its mail? Were my covers 'naked'? Do you know what is going on?"

The item pictured on this page lends credence to the idea that Kelanic's Washington cover was irradiated.

It is a plastic bag containing a plain No. 10-size envelope addressed to Gerald Leviss of New Jersey, who sent the opened bag and the envelope to Linn's for inspection.

The envelope is approximately the same color as Kelanic's FDC.

Leviss stated that the envelope contained U.S. \$1 currency notes.

He also claimed that the \$1 bills had turned yellow because of the irradiation.

However, members of the Coin World staff examined the notes and concluded that they appear normal. Coin World and Linn's are both owned by Amo's Press Inc., and operate out of the same facility in Sidney, Ohio.

In any case, text printed on the bag — a letter from Thomas G. Day, Postal Service vice president for en-

veloped inside (and its contents) had been irradiated: "The mail that is being delivered in this bag has been irradiated at a facility in Bridgeport, New Jersey.

The irradiation process used at the Bridgeport facility was tested and found to be effective in destroying anthrax by an interagency team of scientific experts that recommended release of this mail for delivery.

"While the irradiation process is safe, it can affect some products that might be contained in this mail."

The notice then informs the postal customer that certain products, if exposed to irradiation in the mail, should not be used.

These include biological

samples, diagnostic kits, photographic film, food, drugs and medicines, eyeglasses and electronic devices.

"While the irradiation process successfully kills anthrax," the notice continues, "if your mail contains any suspicious substances, we urge you to set it aside and contact local law enforcement authorities. This can help in the investigation."

According to the notice, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy organized the group that tested the irradiation process,

which includes the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute, the Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Agriculture and the National Institute of Stan-

dards and Technology.

Linn's reported Dec. 17, 2001, that all mail from the Trenton, N.J., postal facility that was irradiated would be delivered to individual addresses in plastic bags bearing a notice identifying it as having been sanitized.

Mail from the Postal Service's Brentwood facility in Washington, D.C., was sent to Lima, Ohio, for irradiation, while mail from Trenton was irradiated at the Bridgeport, N.J., facility.

Linn's is interested in seeing other examples of irradiated mail. Please send them to me, Charles Snee, Box 29, Sidney, OH 45365-0029.

All submissions will be returned after being examined and electronically scanned. ■



The Postal Service notice on this plastic bag confirms that its contents, a No. 10-size envelope, was irradiated by the

Irradiated \$1 Bills and Bridgeport Body Bag Discussed in Linn's Article

The irradiated \$1 bills examined by *Coin World* staff are on top and normal \$1 bills below.



November 2001

Dear Postal Customer:

The mail that is being delivered in this bag has been irradiated at a facility in Bridgeport, New Jersey. The irradiation process used at the Bridgeport facility was tested and found to be effective in destroying anthrax by an interagency team of scientific experts that recommended release of this mail for delivery. While the irradiation process is safe, it can affect some products that might be contained in this mail. The products on this list, if contained in a package or envelope that has been irradiated, should not be used. You should discard them and obtain replacements.

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Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries Announces It Will Use Alternatives

"I thought what if a package containing an Inverted Jenny mounted in one of our acetate sleeves (polymers) was subjected to radiation at the post office?" Scott Trepel, Spring 2002.

Smithsonian Reports Effects of Irradiation

The Smithsonian Center for Materials Research and Education (SCMRE) released a detailed report on November 5, 2001, entitled *The effects on research specimens and museum collection items from electron beam irradiation of mail by the US Postal Service*. The full document is available on the Smithsonian's website: http://www.si.edu/scmre/mail_irradiation.html

Key points of the report are as follows:

- "Material of cellulosic composition...paper...will lose significant tensile strength and will become more brittle, while the induced chemical changes...will accelerate their aging processes. Discoloration is also to be expected."
- "Dyestuffs will fade, resulting in fading and color shifts in textiles, stained specimens, and color photographs."
- "Mineral specimens may develop colors and/or change colors..."
- "The effects of these various reactions are depolymerization, loss of strength, embrittlement, acidification and discolorations, and a greatly enhanced rate of subsequent aging deterioration."

The report concludes "that mailing through USPS of vulnerable specimens and collection items...be avoided unless...exempted from irradiation."



Linn's article reporting destruction caused by mail irradiation



Mail Irradiation and Philately

Editorial by Scott R. Trepel
President, Siegel Auction Galleries

When I heard that the U.S. Postal Service would begin irradiating mail to protect citizens from anthrax, my first reaction was a sense of relief. I had the same feeling when I saw fighter jets flying over Manhattan in the aftermath of September 11. There is something very comforting about national defense when you feel threatened by hostile forces.

Sometime after the irradiation process started, I gave more thought to its effects. Even with my rudimentary knowledge of science, I knew that radiation was not only the enemy of anthrax, it was the enemy of philately. Paper (cellulose), ink (minerals and dyes) and protective sleeves (polymers) are degraded by electron beam irradiation.

Now, I thought, what if a package containing an Inverted Jenny mounted in one of our acetate sleeves was subjected to radiation at the post office?

No doubt, there would be one less Inverted Jenny.

With our December sales about to be shipped, I suspended mailing via the U.S. Postal Service until I could learn more about the scale of mail irradiation and its effects on stamps. As a member of the Philatelic Foundation board, I also recommended an immediate suspension of P.F. mailing via the USPS.

Now that I have read the Smithsonian report on the effects of mail irradiation on museum materials, and the stamp newspapers have reported cases of irreparable damage (see column at left), I feel very good about taking action that might have saved one-of-a-kind philatelic items from destruction.

In time, the process of mail irradiation will probably be viewed as an inappropriate and largely ineffective means of security. Collectors of fumigated mail can appreciate that historical perspective. Until irradiation is stopped or restricted, the U.S. mails will not be safe for transporting precious and vulnerable material.

There is a sad irony in the fact that philatelists cannot use the post office to mail stamps. We can only hope that the anthrax murderer is brought to justice, and the fear he or she created dissipates over time.

AUCTIONS AND EVENTS CALENDAR

- April SALE 845—United States Stamps & Covers, featuring covers from a Southern Institution's archives, the Wawrukiewicz Forwarded Mails, the T. R. Erickson U.S. Covers and a wide range of 19th & 20th Century Stamps.
- May SALE 846—2002 Rarities of the World
CONSIGNMENT DEADLINE: MARCH 15
- June SALE 847—United States and Foreign
CONSIGNMENT DEADLINE: APRIL 15

3 November 2001 Early Energy Department Marking "MAIL SANITIZED"



MAIL
SANITIZED

Honorable Spencer Abraham
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20585



Diana Fusciardi, Adv. Chair.
BSA Troop 242
52480 Shelby Rd
Shelby Twp, MI 48316-3163

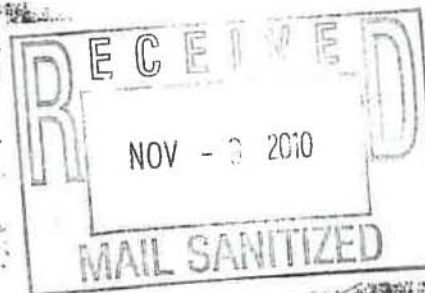
Kim Vu
8301 Northport Dr.
Huntington Beach, CA 92646

SANTA ANA CA 927

PM 2 L



Secretary Of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20585



GRAND RAPIDS MI 493

18 AUG 2008 PM 3 L

LET US DARE
THINK, SPEAK
John Adams
poweroff



Secretary Samuel W. Bodman
Department of Energy
100 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20585

20585+0000

Intelligent Mail Barcode

Later Type Energy Department "MAIL SANITIZED" Marking in Two Colors

National Institutes of Health "OPENED FOR INSPECTION" Label 21 May 2002



Suspicious mail was opened by NIH for security inspection. In this case the label on the back of the envelope stated that it was deemed suspicious because it did not have a return address. The label on the front requested that staff "ask your correspondents to use a return address."

THIS MAIL PIECE WAS OPENED FOR INSPECTION BY THE NIH ORS/DOS/OMS AND WAS DETERMINED SAFE FOR DELIVERY. PLEASE ASK YOUR CORRESPONDENTS TO USE A RETURN ADDRESS.

MCSB Customer Service 496-3586

*Ms. Dominica Rath
NIH Clinical Center / Social Work Dept.
Building 10, Room 1N252
Bethesda, MD 20892*



Your mail was opened for security reasons by Occupational Safety and Health.

- No return address
- Return address, postmark differ
- Incomplete return address
- Unable to read postmark
- Other

Questions: Please call (301) 496-2346



U.S. Secret Service "INSPECTED/APR 20 2004" Marking



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INSPECTED

APR 20 2004

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THE U.S. SECRET SERVICE

*****ALC*****
WILLIAM E CARRITTE
UK FLEET PROGRAM ENGINEER
DON-SSP
SP2324
287 SOMERS CT MW STE 10041
WASHINGTON DC 20393-5446



PRESORTED STD.
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT # 48
MERRIFIELD VA 220

Apr 19 12:43

TestOut

The lessons only experience can teach

50 South Main Street
Pleasant Grove, UT 84062

6995



William Carritte
Don-Ssp
Sp2324
287 Somers Ct NW Ste 10041
Washington DC 20393-5446



Jun 14 12:58

TestOut

The lessons only experience can teach

50 South Main Street
Pleasant Grove, UT 84062

SALT LAKE CITY

UT 841 1 L

POST OFFICE BOX 1000



4358

William Carritte
Don-Ssp
Sp2324
287 Somers Ct NW Ste 10041
Washington DC 20393-5446

SCREENED BY POSTOPNSBRANCH

Feb 13 11:04

20393+0011



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