

Optimize Your Mail Security Strategy



Information Brief

Did you know that Government and Commercial entities continue to receive thousands of mail threats each year?

Mail threats first made it into the news back in October of 2001, when four letters with anthrax were sent to various news media offices and to two Senators on Capitol Hill – ultimately this act **killed five and infected 17 others**. This act of terrorism resulted in the disruption of day-to-day business operations, forcing thousands of employees to relocate. The threats to the Senators on Capitol Hill resulted in more than \$50 million in clean-up fees and renovations.

According to a recent industry survey, almost half of respondents stated that they had received a harmful or threatening piece of mail at their place of business within the last year, with a significant number of those receiving six or more threats. Despite the fact that threats are still being sent in the mail, many organizations remain underprepared and unprotected.

RESPONSE TO MAIL THREATS AND TERRORISM

Following the Anthrax attacks of 2001, formal mail screening and anti-terrorism tactics were initiated, including:

- Adaptation of existing solutions and the use of EtO sterilization techniques for mail sanitization
- Creation of specialized Biohazard Detection Systems by a wide range of biomedical and Defense Industry companies
- Development, by the Department of Homeland Security, of the “Safety Act” – which encourages the development and deployment of effective anti-terrorism products and services by providing liability protections.

MAIL SCREENING OPTIONS

Organizations can employ a variation of screening methods to examine their mail, and can choose to conduct screenings onsite or off. However, many companies still skip mail screenings all together, leaving their facilities and employees at risk.

It has been our experience that the majority of government and major commercial firms include visual inspection as part of their current mail processing operations, and many have added x-ray inspection as an added precaution. Unfortunately, neither of these methods can guarantee that the full range of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or Explosive (CBRNE) threats are identified, leaving employees and facilities at risk.

Novitex has been at the forefront of secure mail screening since the initial anthrax attacks. Since then, we have provided CBRNE screenings on more than 8 million mail items, annually. Our team of experts have the ability to perform a complete analysis of an organization’s existing mail stream, after which, in accordance with Homeland Security Best Practices, Novitex can design a custom solution, unique to your needs. As a result of our review and analysis, and the evaluation of your specific threat profile, our mail screening solutions may include a combination of the following :

- **Visual Mail Screening:** Mail undergoes a rigorous external visual screening for signs of suspicious substances. Mail pieces can also be opened for a visual check of interior content for powders, hoaxes, etc.
- **Chemical Screening:** Using a variety of OTS chemical detectors, our staff can determine if mail items contain any evidence of harmful chemicals.
- **Biological Testing:** Through the use of state-of-the-art equipment, our screening staff can identify the presence of a wide range of biological agents.
- **Radiation Detection:** Our service screens incoming mail and packages as well as vehicles and delivery service personnel for radiation emissions that would indicate the presence of radiological materials.
- **X-Ray Testing:** Novitex can provide x-ray screening for mail and packages to detect weapons, explosives, or other forms of dangerous materials or contraband.
- **Explosives:** Multiple techniques are available for explosive screening, including: X-ray, chemical swabs and/or K-9 detection.
- **Hoax Detection:** As an integral part of our mail screening solutions, hoaxes can also be identified and classified. (Hoax detection has become a significant aspect of secure mail screening as it provides operational and fiscal risk avoidance).

Novitex has been a leader in the design and implementation of specialized containment facilities which, in conjunction with tailored screening processes, can ensure that threats are detected and isolated until proper clean-up and removal can be completed. Based on our analysis, we can recommend on-site, near-site or off-site solutions.



Novitex Ensures Security with Mail Protection Process



Case Study

Client: A major entity within the United States Government with thousands of employees

Challenge: After a biological attack that cost millions of dollars in clean-up and restoration, this organization wanted to develop and implement a more secure, continuous process for screening its mail. They needed to ensure the security of millions of individuals and prevent a similar attack from happening again.

Solution: Novitex developed and implemented a detailed mail protection process using Safety Act approved technologies.

This process included the screening and scanning of incoming mail and packages for full CBRNE, providing complete visibility into the piece of mail. The process took place at an off-site facility's specially designed negative air pressure rooms, which were customized to screen potential biohazards. This reduced the risk of contamination and the loss of life, enabling business continuity.

Novitex provided **125 personnel to process over 12.4 million pieces of mail, annually**. Additionally, the mail screening personnel consistently made recommendations for more efficient processes, new technology and labor improvements.

As part of our solution, Novitex also **digitized 68,000 letters and 10,400 flats annually** as an integrated part of this screening solution to provide even more security against CBRNE threats. This digitization of mail completely eliminated the risk of any potential threats reaching the client facility and thus its personnel.

Results: As a result of our strategy implementation, Novitex ensured the health and safety of over 6,000 individuals within the organization. Our team's quick action and security expertise were able to rapidly implement a process that has identified hundreds of potential threats that could have cost millions of dollars in operational disruptions.

Overall, Novitex's mail security program helped to:

- Ensure continuous mail service
- Provide safety and peace-of-mind
- Reduce security vulnerabilities within the organization's facilities

