

KLINK & CO., INC.

A Global Leader in Risk Consulting

Communiqué

BIO-TERRORISM: PRECAUTIONS FOR MAILROOMS AND AIR- HANDLING SYSTEMS

The following is the third in a series of Klink & Co., Inc. Communiqués concerning recent developments in security.

This Communiqué discusses the issues facing corporations in light of the recent terrorist attacks in the United States.

The targets of terrorist attacks become more obvious as every new episode arises – they are U.S. governmental and corporate interests. The attacks since 9/11 have not been random attacks on individuals but have been focused on U.S. government and business interests. From the World Trade Center to U.S. airlines to Microsoft to U.S. media outlets to the congress of the United States, the pattern is clear.

Concerns about potential bio-terrorism attacks are now becoming a real concern for corporations worldwide. Such concerns are even greater with corporations that have branches or offices outside the United States.

Most firms will not be targets of bio-terrorism, but after the recent anthrax outbreaks in Washington, DC, Florida, Nevada, and New York, bio-terrorist attacks must be taken as a real threat.

Recently, the FBI advised 27,000 corporate security managers to be on high alert for terrorism attacks.

While no workplace can ever be 100% safe, there are precautionary measures that corporations can take to ensure safety.

MAIL ROOMS

Many companies have mailroom procedures and protocols in place to protect personnel and property.

In light of recent events, existing protocols should be updated, revised, and reviewed on a regular basis. Development of reporting procedures and understandable chains of command for reporting of incidents or suspicious activity are vital.

If security protocols are not in place, they should be implemented immediately. Such protocols ensure a well-reasoned and rational approach to an emergency or crisis.

The protocols should set forth in clear terms what steps should be taken by personnel.

Steps should include:

- Training employees, especially mailroom personnel on procedures and protocol;
- Creating a special recovery room for isolation of suspicious packages;
- Creating a chain of command with primary and secondary contacts for reporting of incidents or suspicious packages;
- Procedures for reacting to exposure to suspicious materials or substances;
- Procedures for reporting suspicious packages and activities to the proper authorities, including the local health officials, USPS Postal Authorities, FBI, and local police.

In the upcoming weeks, one can expect a rash of copycat actions by disgruntled workers, former workers, or outsiders.

If treated like bomb threats, the proper protocols and procedures will lead to a logical response and the apprehension of the perpetrators.

AIR-HANDLING SYSTEMS

The air supply and air-intake systems are areas in each facility that must be addressed.

Steps that should be implemented immediately to protect the air quality are:

- Isolate and secure air-intake areas.
- Limit access to air-intakes and air-handling systems.
- Develop procedures for reporting suspicious activity.
- Close off air-intakes that are at ground level.

Other protocols to protect the air supply include:

- Training of employees on protocol and procedures;
- Creating a chain of command with primary and secondary contacts for reporting of an occurrence;
- Creating a protocol that will limit exposure to the pollutant; and
- Creating a protocol and plan for evacuation of the facility in case of introduction of a toxic substance.

There are sophisticated technologies available that enable users to test air, skin, and inanimate objects for contaminations. We would be able to assist clients in the purchase of such products.

With the increased concerns about bio-terrorism attacks, it is prudent for companies to set up security, review, and revise outdated protocols.

Become proactive to ensure the safety of your employees and property.

This Klink & Co., Inc. Communiqué is prepared in summary form and is not to be construed as legal advice or opinion on any specific fact or circumstance.

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