

American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO


Memorandum

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March 8, 2002

From the Office of GARY KLOEPFER 
National Rep-At-Large
Maintenance Division

TO: **MAINTENANCE NBA's, ALL CRAFT NBA's**

SUBJECT: **HIGH BAY CLEANING AT U.S. POSTAL SERVICE FACILITIES**

On February 28, 2002, the Postal Service issued the attached memorandum which modified the method that high-bay cleaning is performed. The modification to the high-bay cleaning procedures applies to all Facilities, not just Facilities where a positive anthrax result was found. As you will note the second paragraph states:

These procedures apply to both U.S. Postal Service and contract cleaning in all U.S. Postal Service facilities. These procedures also address instances where prior sampling results were positive.

The Memorandum defines the process that must followed in those Facilities where B. anthracis was detected and compressed air was used for cleaning in the facility after September 1, 2001 and all other Facilities. In those Facilities in which B. anthracis was detected, in previous sampling of a U.S. Postal Service facility with high bay areas, and compressed air was used for cleaning in the facility after September 1, 2001, an assessment area will be established. A qualified contractor, using approved protocols, will clean the high bay assessment area in a phased process. The assessment area will be cleaned in sections, starting at the outside perimeter, then working toward the center of the assessment area, to determine the specific area, if any, containing B. anthracis. Samples collected during the cleaning will be cultured to determine whether B. anthracis is detected in the high bay area. If positive test results are found in the samples, the state health department and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will be consulted to determine potential health risks, and the high bay area will be decontaminated. An appropriate government representative(s) will provide quality assurance for the duration of the decontamination action. This work will be coordinated by the Unified Incident Command Center at headquarters. (I have extracted pages 15 and 16 from the Postal Service's Interim Guidelines for Sampling, Analysis, Decontamination, and Disposal of Anthrax for U.S. Postal Service Facilities for your reference in applying the above). As you can see, only for the purpose of cleaning the area described above, a "Zone of Restricted Access will be cleaned."

After the contractors have cleaned the limited areas, all other areas are to be cleaned by Maintenance employees following the procedures established in MM0-129-01 entitled, Interim Modification to Custodial Cleaning Procedures in Postal Facilities. All high bay cleaning shall be performed using HEPA vacuuming or wet methods (e.g. wet wiping) only. In all other facilities, U.S. Postal Service employees will continue high bay cleaning using prescribed methods. All high bay cleaning shall be performed using HEPA vacuuming or wet methods (e.g. wet wiping) only.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions regarding the application of the above procedures.

cc: Corey Thompson
Enclosure

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The zone of restricted access begins at the point where analytical results indicates anthrax was found, but a at a minimum, at least 15 feet away from the closest positive analytical sample test site.

February 28, 2002

VICE PRESIDENTS, AREA OPERATIONS
MANAGER, CAPITAL METRO OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: High Bay Cleaning at U.S. Postal Service Facilities

These procedures provide guidance on methods to clean the high bay areas¹ in postal facilities that were previously sampled for potential B. anthracis contamination. The purpose is to significantly reduce the amount of dust and limit the transmission of dust in our facilities. We are instituting this policy as part of the overall U.S. Postal Service efforts to reduce employee potential exposure to B. anthracis.

These procedures apply to both U.S. Postal Service and contract cleaning in all U.S. Postal Service facilities. These procedures also address instances where prior sampling results were positive.

The decision as to what actions should be taken with respect to high bay cleaning must be based on the use of the attached decision tree. The narrative below identifies some of the key issues set forth in the decision tree.

If B. anthracis was detected in previous sampling of a U.S. Postal Service facility with high bay areas, and compressed air was used for cleaning in the facility after September 1, 2001, an assessment area² will be established. A qualified contractor,³ using approved protocols, will clean the high bay assessment area in a phased process. The assessment area will be cleaned in sections, starting at the outside perimeter, then working toward the center of the assessment area, to determine the specific area, if any, containing B. anthracis.

Samples collected during the cleaning will be cultured to determine whether B. anthracis is detected in the high bay area. If positive test results are found in the samples, the state health department and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will be consulted to determine potential health risks, and the high bay area will be decontaminated. An appropriate government representative(s) will provide quality assurance for the duration of the decontamination action. This work will be coordinated by the Unified Incident Command Center at headquarters.

Once the sample results are negative in the assessment area, then high bay cleaning for the remainder of the facility will be performed by U.S. Postal Service employees, consistent with the National Agreement,

¹ Examples of high bay surface areas are: pipes, ducts, luminaries, joists, beams, top of look-out galleries, overhead conveyors, and any other elevated surfaces.

² The assessment area is defined as an area five times the minimum exclusion area set forth in the interim guidelines dated November 28, 2001.

³ See EL-800, Managing Contract Safety and Health Compliance

using prescribed methods.⁴ All high bay cleaning shall be performed using HEPA vacuuming or wet methods (e.g. wet wiping) only. In all other facilities, U.S. Postal Service employees will continue high bay cleaning using prescribed methods. All high bay cleaning shall be performed using HEPA vacuuming or wet methods (e.g. wet wiping) only.

Cleaning should, whenever possible, be performed during a time period when the number of people in the work area is at a minimum. Additionally, the work area must be cordoned off during the cleaning.

All high bay cleaning activities will follow current maintenance and safety and health policies and procedures. Consult the Safety Toolkit Resource page and the MTSC web site for applicable policies and procedures (e.g., training, fall protection, PPE, cleaning procedures, etc.).⁵



Patrick R. Donahoe
Chief Operating Officer and
Executive Vice President

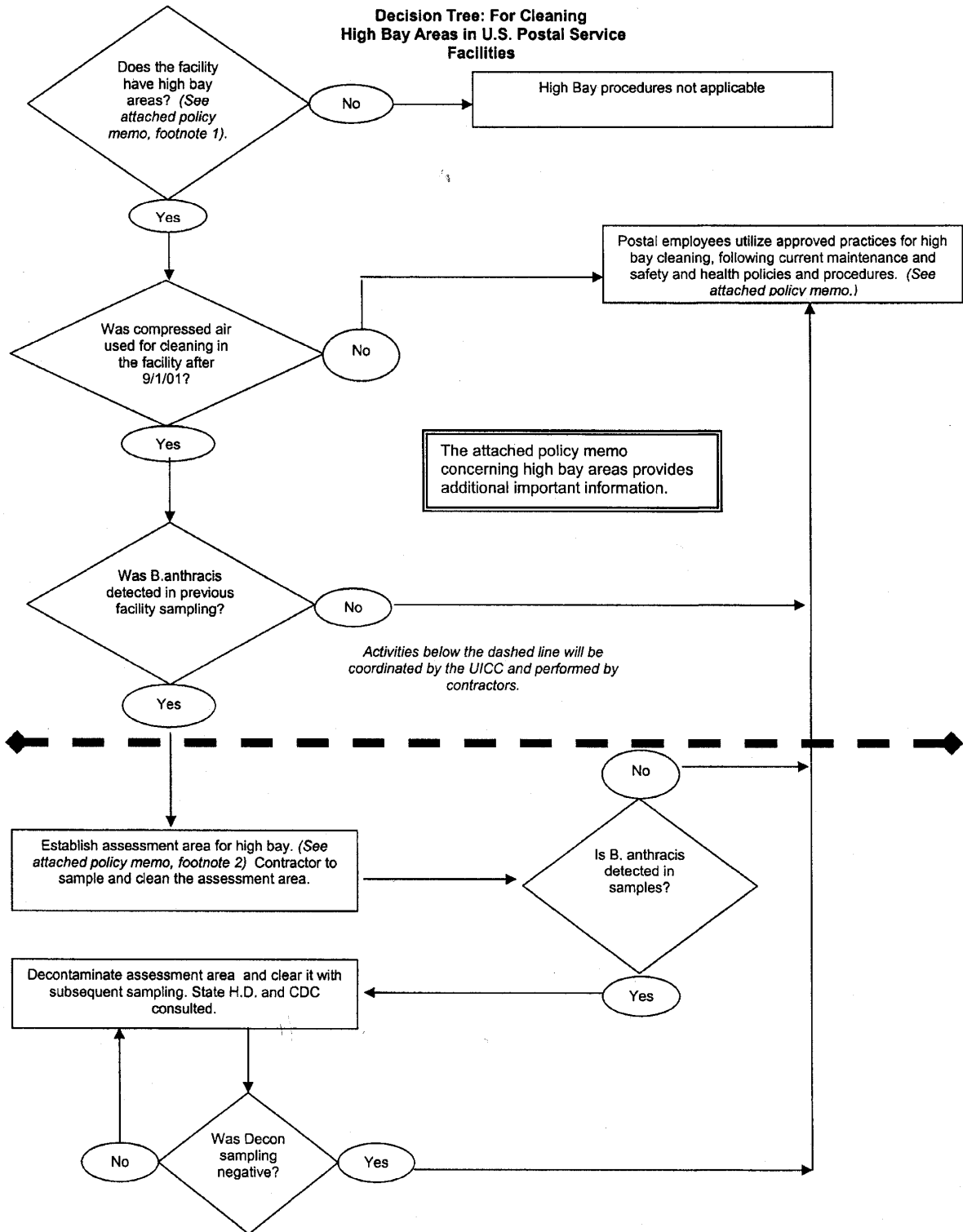


Suzanne Medvidovich
Senior Vice President
Human Resources

⁴ MMO-129-01, October 29, 2001, Interim Modification to Custodial Cleaning Procedures in Postal Facilities.

⁵ http://safetytoolkit.usps.gov/hr_dev/tk1_3/Home_Pg/safety_and_health.htm
www.mtsc.usps.gov/Safety_policy

Decision Tree: For Cleaning High Bay Areas in U.S. Postal Service Facilities





maintenance management order

SUBJECT: Interim Modification to Custodial Cleaning
Procedures in Postal Facilities

DATE: October 29, 2001

NO: MMO-129-01

TO: All Offices

FILE CODE: P2

rwhit:mm01127aa

The purpose of this Maintenance Management Order (MMO) is to provide an interim cleaning procedures that will greatly reduce the amount of dust and limit the transmission of dust in our facilities. These procedures are being instituting as part of the overall Postal Service efforts to reduce employee potential exposure to Anthrax during the current national crisis.

Applicability

These procedures apply to both postal and contract cleaning in all Postal Service facilities, which handle mail or postal equipment. These procedures do not address instances where a known exposure has occurred. **The procedures are for facilities NOT identified as contaminated.** In any area experiencing a hazardous material incident, the Hazmat procedures will prevail until the incident has abated.

Implementation

Implement the following procedures immediately.

1. Do not use compressed air for custodial cleaning.
2. Avoid dry sweeping of floors and dusting other surfaces. Use a vacuum cleaner equipped with a high efficiency particulate (HEPA) filter or wet methods to clean floors and other surfaces.
3. Wet mop using a 10% bleach solution (1.5 cups of household chlorine bleach in 1 gallon of water) to clean areas that cannot be cleaned using the HEPA-filtered vacuum.
4. Employees may wear a filtering face piece respirator (N-95) and nitrile or vinyl gloves for comfort. These tools are to offer comfort and an additional measure of security during the current crisis.
5. Dispose of worn out or damaged gloves and respirators by placing them in the trash.
6. Minimize the generation of dust when changing the bags in the vacuums. Place the full vacuum bag in a plastic bag and seal the plastic bag. Place the plastic bag in the trash. It is a good work practice to wear the filtering face piece respirator and nitrile or vinyl gloves while changing the bags in the vacuums.
7. Wash your hands with soap and water thoroughly when gloves are removed and before eating.

NOTE

This is an interim policy and will be updated as more information becomes available. It is recognized that some of the requirements will take local funds to implement.

Direct any questions or comments concerning this bulletin to the HelpDesk, Maintenance Technical Support Center, P.O. Box 1600, Norman OK 73070-1600; telephone FTS 2000 (405) 573-2123 or toll free (800) 366-4123.

Rex M. Gallaher
Manager
Maintenance Technical Support Center
Maintenance Policies and Programs