Safety In Your Mail Center

(NAPSA)—Office safety is no accident these days—especially in your company's mail center. A growing number of safety-minded managers are protecting their employees by seeking safer ways to process outbound and incoming mail.

Here are some hints to help you have a safer mail room, from the experts at Pitney Bowes, a firm that invests more in the research and development of secure mailing technologies than any other company in the industry.

In The Mail Center:

• Train mail center personnel to recognize potentially suspect material: mail marked "confidential," "personal" or "fragile"; excessive postage, using stamps; wrong title of employee, or titles without names; addresses that are poorly typed, handwritten or contain misspellings; oily stains, strange odors or powdery substances; return address that is not consistent with the state from which it was postmarked, or no return address; exceptionally large or lopsided parcels; envelopes or parcels with excessive wrapping material such as masking tape or string.

• Conduct a background check prior to hiring employees. Keep doors locked as much as possible. Maintain a sign-in sheet. Escort visitors to and from their destination within the mail center. "Authorized Personnel Only" signs should be posted on outside doors.

Processing Outbound Mail:

• Use a postage meter, not stamps. Meters are licensed to the United States Postal Service and meter imprints are traceable to the point of original mailing.

• Restrict and monitor access to the postage meter. Lock the system when it's not in use and use password protection. Limit or eliminate processing of personal mail.

• Weigh all materials to avoid

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postage overpayments.

• Use address management software to ensure that mail is properly addressed.

• Always print your company name and return address on envelopes.

• Ensure that all your mail is safely sealed.

• Consider using self-mailers or post cards for promotional mailings.

• Use a multi-carrier system for secure processing of outbound parcels. It ensures accurate addressing, provides labels and documents for carrier compliance, reports and tracks deliveries, sends e-mail notification of shipments to recipient and more.

Managing Incoming Material:

• Create an isolated "safe area" for opening material.

• Use automatic mail opening devices.

• Track internal deliveries using a closed-loop, package management system. It creates internal delivery labels; creates a delivery manifest for route, floor, building or inter-company trucks; captures electronic signature for every delivery; updates package status with details and more.

• Verify, by phone, all receipts from a "first time" messenger service before accepting delivery.

• Sign for each incoming package separately.

To learn more about safe mail management, visit www.security.pb.com.