

Joint Press Release

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General News Release

◆◆◆For Immediate Release◆◆◆

B.F.D. Hazmat Response

January 29, 2014

Bloomington— The Bloomington Fire Department responded to the McLean County Health Department's parking lot for a Hazardous Materials call located inside of a passenger vehicle this morning at 10:26 and arrived on scene at 10:28.

A Bloomington resident arrived at home yesterday evening and began opening letters that had arrived in the mail that day. One letter/package that she opened contained a small amount of white powder. The woman then placed the letter/package into a small recycle container and then placed it inside of a trash bag and sealed it. After which she showered and changed clothes and later went to bed.

This morning, she decided to bring it to the McLean County Health Department to help determine the contents of the white powder. She left the sealed bag containing the material in question inside of her car. She did not bring it inside of the Health Department building.

After personnel at the Health Department spoke with the woman and conferred with county EMA officials, they called for assistance from the Bloomington Fire Department. The Bloomington Fire Department dispatched several units to the location, including its Hazardous Materials Response Team.

HAZMAT personnel sampled the white powder and determined that it was not a biological hazard and presented no credible threat. As a precaution, the Bloomington Police Department sent a patrol officer to the woman's home as well. Fire department personnel remained on the scene until 12:30.

"Public and staff safety was our number one concern this morning. The parking lot and a part of the health department building were closed temporarily to allow emergency personnel to respond," McLean County Health Department Director Walt Howe said. "We are thankful for the timely response by our county EMA and Bloomington Fire Department. The health department parking lot and building are safe to enter."

Captain Brad McCollum, Public Education Officer for the Bloomington Fire Department would like to remind citizens to call 9-1-1 immediately if they open a letter or package that contains an unexpected item, such as a white powder, and then follow the instructions from the 9-1-1 dispatcher on what to do next. ###

Captain Brad McCollum

Public Education / Information Officer

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SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES

CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS SAVE LIVES