

*"The health risk is pretty minimal at this point."*

Dr. Gerald Fleischli, director of the University Health Center

# HazMat, FBI respond to mail threat

## ■ SUSPICIOUS SUBSTANCE:

University professor receives a threatening letter containing a 'granular' substance

By Leon Tovey and Marty Toohey  
Oregon Daily Emerald

The specter of bioterrorism showed itself at the University on Thursday when an emeritus physics professor received a suspicious package at his office in Willamette Hall.

At about 9 a.m., Emeritus Professor Bernd Crasemann and his assistant opened a brown envelope in Crasemann's office, which is located in Room 251 of Willamette Hall. Crasemann said the envelope — which was

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** about Thursday's incident, call the University's hotline (346-5692).

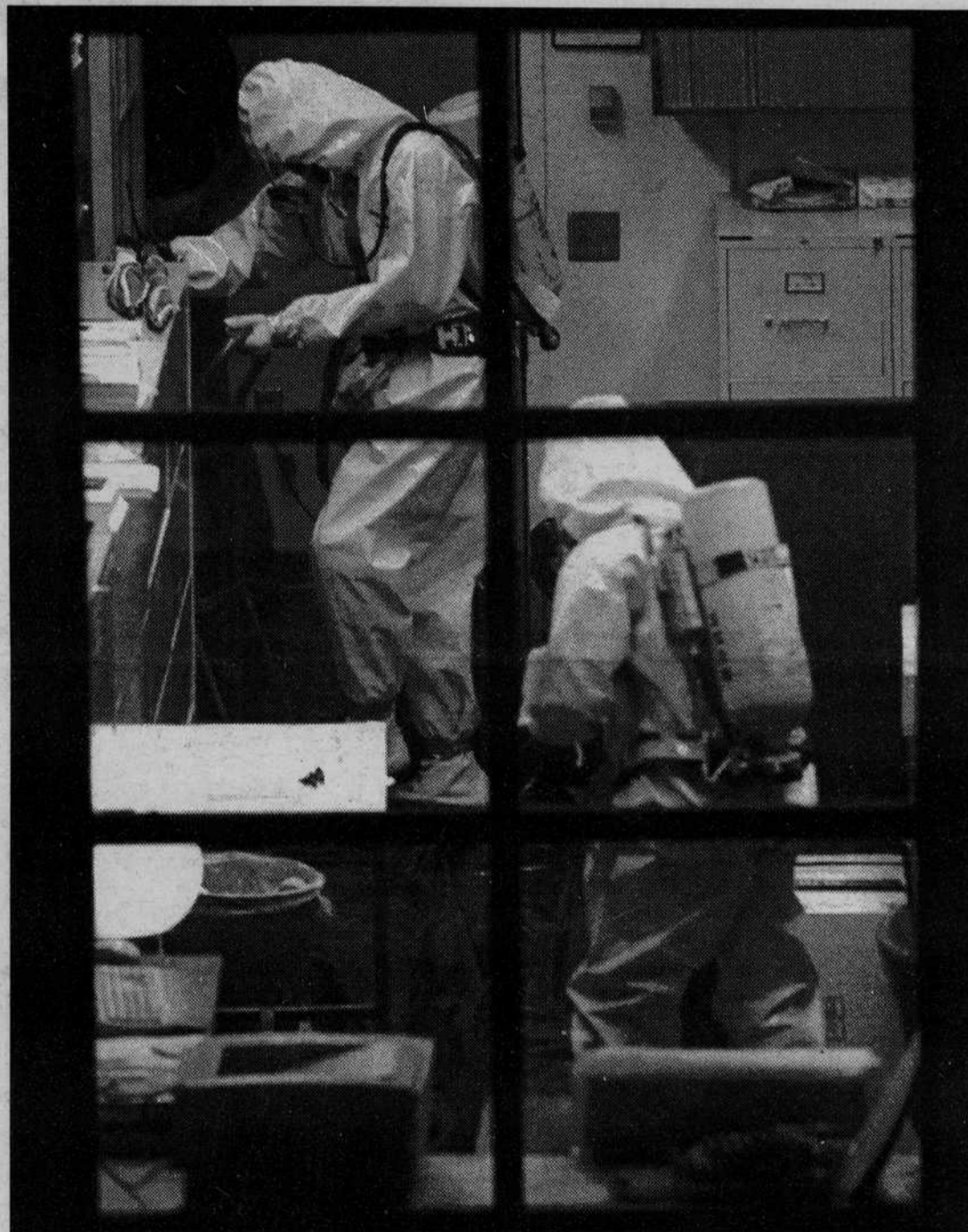
If you think you've been exposed to suspicious mail...

- Limit exposure to the package and its contents.
- Call the Department of Public Safety (346-6666).
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water.

said of the English portion of the letter in a phone interview with the Emerald.

At 9:23 a.m., Crasemann called the Department of Public Safety to report the letter. DPS called the Eugene Police Department, who sent three officers to investigate. After assessing the situation, the EPD officers shut down the air circulation system in Willamette Hall and called in the FBI and a HazMat response team.

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Jonathan House Emerald

Hazardous materials workers clean 251 Willamette, the office of physics Professor Emeritus Bernd Crasemann, on Thursday afternoon in response to a suspicious letter. The letter and its contents were sent to a Portland lab for testing.

## ■ CREDIBLE THREAT: University employee is tested for possible anthrax exposure and released

By Eric Martin  
Oregon Daily Emerald

A University of Oregon employee admitted himself to McKenzie-Willamette Hospital in Springfield at 4:15 p.m. Thursday because he feared he had come in contact with a biological agent while handling a suspicious letter addressed to University physics Professor Emeritus Bernd Crasemann, hospital officials said.

Hospital officials said the Lane County Public Health Department called the letter a "credible threat."

Officials would not name the University employee, but they said he was not an assistant to Crasemann or the professor emeritus himself. The employee had apparently handled the letter, which Crasemann said contained a granular substance.

A hospital spokeswoman said the emergency room had been temporarily cleared.

Shortly after 4:15 p.m., hospital officials interviewed the employee to determine where he had come in contact with the letter, and when. The officials would not elaborate on the patient's answers.

"He was not panicked," said Tom Hambly, manager of emergency services for McKenzie-Willamette Hospital. "He was very lucid, and said he came in close contact with the letter and was concerned he had been exposed."

Though anthrax is not contagious, hospital officials took the patient outside so he could remove his clothes and be cleansed with a decontaminating solution. Hambly said the precaution was taken to eliminate the possibility that spores had attached themselves to the patient's clothing.

The officials then cleared the area and used a solution to "wipe down" the emergency room and the chair in which the patient originally sat.

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# Campus remains calm in face of possible danger

■ **STUDENT REACTION:** In spite of Thursday's concern about exposure to anthrax, some students consider it a hoax

By Beata Mostafavi  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Graduate student Adam Halverson was on his way to the restroom in Willamette Hall on Thursday afternoon when several officers from the Department of Public Safety ushered him out of the way.

Halverson, who teaches physics on the second floor, later found out that a professor in the building had received a letter containing an unusual message and an unknown substance.

"I had just gotten out of a tutoring session. I didn't know what was go-

ing on," he said. "I wondered if it was an anthrax threat — it seems to be a prevailing fear for everyone nowadays. It just turned out to be real this time."

But he added that he was pretty sure the threat was a hoax. Emeritus Physics Professor Bernd Crasemann, who received the threat, is also the editor for Physical Review A, a physics journal. Halverson said he suspects that the message was sent by a writer who could not get his work published in the journal.

"We think it was just a crackpot who keeps getting rejected," he said.

Senior biochemistry major Ben Wiggins, who was in a lab in the basement of Willamette Hall at the time, said there were no signs anything was wrong until he left and

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Michael J. Kleckner Emerald

Oregon's HazMat Team responded to Willamette Hall on Thursday morning after a physics professor received a threatening letter postmarked from Malaysia.

## Thursday's events

- 9:00 a.m. Crasemann and assistant open mail
- 9:23 a.m. DPS receives call from Crasemann
- 9:32 a.m. EPD receives call from Crasemann
- 10:30 a.m. Crasemann and assistant told they could go home
- 1:52 p.m. HazMat team dispatched
- 4:09 p.m. EPD officers clear scene at Willamette Hall
- 4:15 p.m. University employee is tested for anthrax at McKenzie-Willamette Hospital
- 6:15 p.m. Man discharged from hospital