



TIMOTHY J. GONZALEZ / Statesman Journal

Salem firefighters in protective hazardous-material suits exit the Capitol Wednesday. The building was evacuated after a letter containing a suspicious powder was found in the mailroom. Preliminary test results were negative for anthrax.

White powder sent for testing

The FBI orders it to be sent to the Centers for Disease Control.

PETER WONG
Statesman Journal
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When three men walked into a deserted Capitol building Wednesday afternoon, dressed in yellow protective suits and equipped with oxygen tanks, they were told to retrieve an envelope containing a white powder.

When they emerged more than an hour later, their initial field test turned up nothing harmful about the substance, a sample of which was enclosed in a plastic bag.

Update: Powder not anthrax; Capitol reopens

The substance was found along with a threatening note in an envelope.

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The state Capitol reopens to the public at noon today, though people may enter only through the main doors. Access will be denied at other entrances.

The building opened to workers at 10 a.m. today. It had been shut down since a 12:40 p.m. evacuation Wednesday after a suspicious white substance was found along with a threatening note in an envelope addressed to the governor.

The item had arrived in the mail, and the powder spilled out when it was opened.

Officials feared anthrax or another dangerous compound and evacuated the building, calling in hazardous materials experts to examine it.

Initial tests showed the substance was not hazardous. The powder was flown to the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, where further tests for anthrax, smallpox and other biological agents were done. All tests were negative for harmful substances, authorities announced today.



TIMOTHY J. GONZALEZ
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Salem firefighters don protective suits Wednesday before entering the Capitol. The firefighters were sent to recover an envelope containing a white powder, and they returned with it about an hour later.