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May 6, 2001

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The R Needs U Foundation  
321 Olde Queens Avenue  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Dear Ms. Gilroy:

I would like to express gratitude to the R Needs U Foundation for attending my presentation *Bioterrorism Safety for the Rutgers University's Busch Campus Mailroom*. Enclosed, is a copy of the full technical proposal covering this topic. The technical proposal expresses an explicit plan as well as its cost-effective budget.

In response to recent events an emphasis must be placed in screening mail and protecting mail carriers against mail-transported bioterrorism. Since the 9/11 World Trade Center catastrophe, there have been twenty-two cases of inhalation anthrax among postal worker and mail handlers. There have been numerous bioterrorism threats at Rutgers University; in particular on Busch Campus at the Biomedical Engineering Department and the Waksman Institute of Microbiology.

Currently the U.S. General Services Administration, the U.S. Postal Service and the Center of Disease Control recommend and utilize a combination of tactics that can serve ideally to guard Rutgers' staff and students of bioterrorism.

To upgrade the Busch Campus mailroom system against bioterrorism, I have formulated a strategy that focuses on three areas: employee safety education, safety equipment and safety procedures. This strategy's main interest is to protect and guard Rutgers' staff and students against the use of U.S. mail to transport biological agent.

Thank you for taking the time to examine my proposal. I trust that the R Needs U Foundation regards my proposal proficient and cost-effective. I am confident that the strategy in this proposal will fulfill our objective to improve the life at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.

Sincerely,

Yesenia E. Ahumada

**BIOTERRORISM SECURITY  
FOR THE  
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY'S  
BUSCH CAMPUS MAILROOM**



**Submitted to:**

The R Needs U Foundation  
321 Olde Queens Avenue  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

**Submitted by:**

Yesenia E. Ahumada

**Submitted on:**

May 6, 2002

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## **ABSTRACT**

Bioterrorism safety measures are lacking in the present procedures of the Rutgers University Busch Campus Mailroom. Currently mailroom procedures only specify visual inspection of correspondence and do not maintain policies to secure the protection of its staff and facility against bioterrorism. Employees, currently, are not provided with protection against inhalation anthrax or cutaneous anthrax. Additionally, the mailroom staff feels unsafe when handling mail and feels that mail screening is an issue at Rutgers. Employing a combination of paradigms from governmental agencies on mail center security, a strategy to upgrade the Busch Campus mailroom system against bioterrorism was formulated. The implementation of a strategy focusing on three principal areas, employee safety education, safety equipment, and safety procedures, will alleviate this obstacle.

### **KEYWORDS:**

Anthrax

Mailroom

Bioterrorism

Postal Service

Security

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To protect and guard Rutgers' staff and students against bioterrorism via the U.S. postal service, a combination of policies specified by governmental agencies such the Center of Disease Control, the U.S. Postal Service and the U.S. General Services Administration must be implemented. Currently mailroom procedures only specify visual inspection of correspondence and do not maintain policies to secure the protection of its staff and facility against bioterrorism. As one of the largest educational institutions in the Tri-state area, Rutgers must guard itself against past and future implications with biological terror campaigns.

An analysis of permanent literature illustrates that bioterrorism safety measures are essential and critical to the well being of a community and its inhabitants. The Center of Disease Control provides a model directed towards engineering controls to capture the spores, housekeeping measure to reduce the spread of spores and personal protective equipment to prevent worker exposure. The U.S. General Services Administration emphasizes the education of employees pertaining to precautions for mail handling and characteristics of suspicious letters and parcels, and the U.S. Postal Service recommend procedures for well-developed mail center security. These procedures are logical and practical to direct towards the Rutgers' community.

Employing a combination of paradigms acquired in the literature of mail center security, a strategy to upgrade the Busch Campus mailroom system against bioterrorism was formulated. This strategy focuses on three principal areas: employee safety education, safety equipment, and safety procedures. An Anthrax threat workshop and a library of posters and brochures will be provided to advise staff of procedures and precautions in opposition to bioterrorism threats. High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filter equipped vacuums and ultraviolet duct systems will be acquired and installed, for engineering and housekeeping control. An employee

identification/personal security program will be established, including restricting entrance to the facility and mandatory visible I.D. cards. Safety procedures also comprise of a new dress code and hand cleansing and protection policies.

The proposal will have a first year cost of approximately \$18,000.00 dollars and a yearly maintenance cost of approximately \$1,500.00 dollars. This is a small price to pay for the security and added protection that this proposal can provide. This proposal hopes to assist the R Needs U Foundation in its mission to *improve life at Rutgers University*.

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# PROBLEM STATEMENT

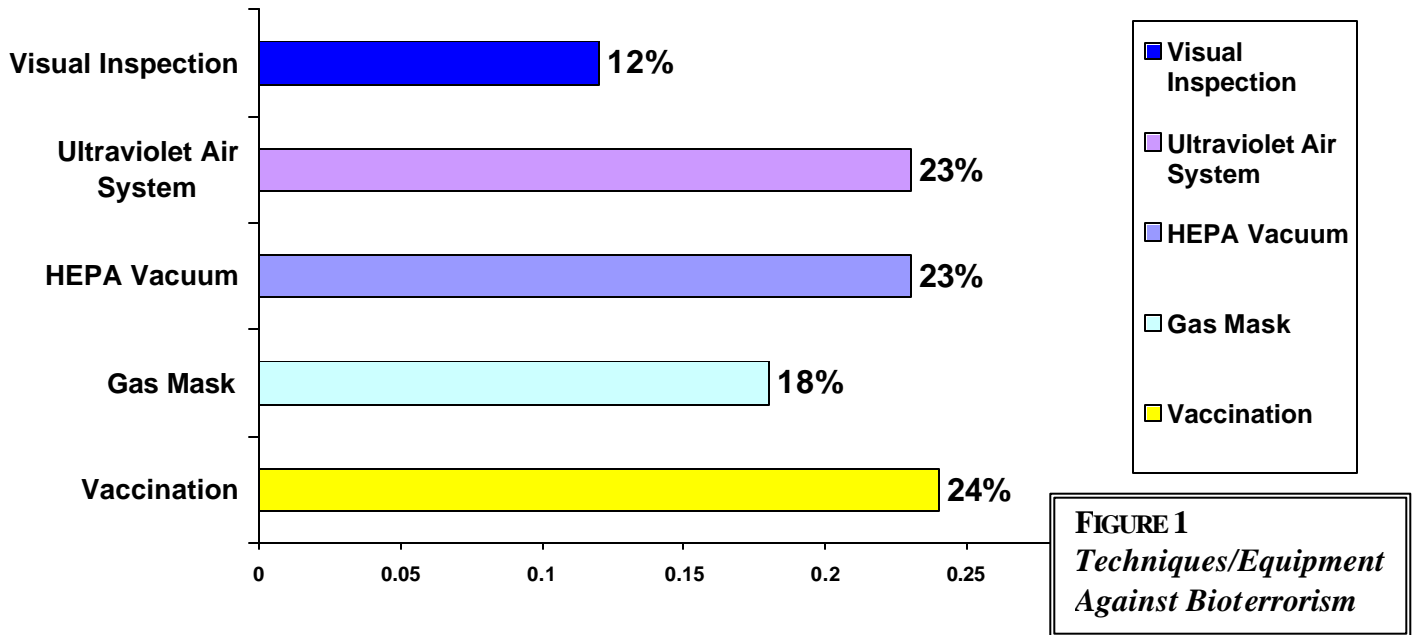
The prime interest of this proposal is to protect and guard Rutgers' faculty and students against the use of U.S. mail to transport biological agents. Rutgers has over 50,000 people in its community and is one of the largest educational institutions in the Tri-state area. It must guard itself against the threat of mail-transported bioterrorism. Since the 9/11 World Trade Center catastrophe, there have been twenty-two cases of inhalation anthrax among postal worker and mail handlers, including four fatal cases, with additional cases of Cutaneous anthrax (GSA, 2002).

Primary research conducted on the opinion of the Rutgers Busch Campus mailroom staff displayed a concern for the overall safety of the Rutgers community. The survey asked the respondents if they feel secure when handling incoming Rutgers mail, if they feel that screening the mail against Anthrax is an issue at Rutgers, and if they feel that money should be allocated toward redesigning the mailroom system, with ratings of yes or no. The analysis showed that 91% of the faculty felt unsafe when handling mail, 54% felt that mail screening is an issue, and 73% felt that money should be allocated towards redesigning the mail system.

The survey also asked the participants to rate from 1 to 5 the technique or equipment that they prefer in the protection of the mailroom staff against anthrax. The study demonstrates that the least popular technique to protect the mailroom faculty against bioterrorism is visual inspection, as shown in Figure 1 on page 2. According to a Rutgers memorandum from the Office of the Associate Vice President for Administration and Public Safety, currently the mail addressed to a Rutgers address is screened twice by the U.S. Postal Service before it is delivered. The distribution staff at Rutgers then visually inspects the mail for suspicious-looking markings.

The Rutgers course of action against bioterrorism is very inadequate given that it pays

## Techniques/Equipment Against Bioterrorism



insignificant attention to the courier shipments or the protection of the Rutgers staff.

Two incidents have been reported on the Busch Campus and one in the near by, Cook Campus. On April 2, the Food Science Building was evacuated, after a letter containing a suspicious white power was received. The Federal Bureau of Investigations, on October 23, tested photocopiers and public areas in the Waksman Institute of Microbiology. In an interview with Mary Creteau, the Department Administrative Assistant for the Biomedical Engineering Department, she depicts her encounter with a suspicious letter delivered to the BME Department in December 2001. She expressed that after this incident, the realization that "we are all at risk!" struck her.

The incidents in the United States and in our Rutgers' community should not be ignored. There has not been anyone contaminated with Anthrax at Rutgers, but we should not wait for this to happen to take action. Following paradigms set forth by governmental agencies can insure the safety and health of the Rutgers' community.

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# LITERATURE REVIEW

A variety of innovative tactics to safeguard employees and scan mail against biological agents are utilized in institutions throughout the world. Combinations of equipment such as gasmask, germicidal ultraviolet air system and vacuums with High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filters are essential for the protection of mailroom employees (CDC, 2001). To compliment these equipment practices such as anthrax vaccination and paradigms set forth by the U.S. General Services Administration, the U.S. Postal Service and the Center of Disease Control create the perfect model to tackle this crisis.

The Center of Disease Control provides recommendations for protecting workers involved in mail sorting, distribution, and handling. The CDC procedures to control the potential exposure to *B. anthracis* are directed towards engineering controls to capture the spores, housekeeping measures to reduce the spread of spores, and personal protective equipment to prevent worker exposure (CDC, 2001).

Engineering control in mail facilities consist of equipping the mailroom with industrial vacuum cleaners equipped with a High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filter and installing filters in the Heat Ventilation and Cooling (HVAC) system. HEPA vacuums are the first choice for cleaning high-speed mail-sorting equipment (CDC, 2001). HEPA vacuums are designed for operator comfort and are ideal for working around machinery and in cramped work environments (Don Smith & Associate, Inc, 2002). These HEPA vacuums contribute to housekeeping control because dry sweeping and dusting should be avoided. Ultraviolet duct-mounted systems are effective in destroying and eliminating re-circulation of aerosolized spores. These systems are conventionally used in hospital operating rooms, disinfection in food

processing, sterilization of contact lens solutions or in any enclosed environment occupied by people (USA Light & Electric, 2002).

Personal protective equipment for workers handling mail is broken down into inhalation prevention and the prevention of cutaneous anthrax. People who work with or near equipment or machinery known or suspected to generate aerosolized particles should wear a mask equipped with a respirator and filters (CDC, 2002). Gasmasks protect the wearer's respiratory tract, face and eyes and protects against biological hazards such as Anthrax and chemical agents (CEO Group, Inc., 2002). To prevent cutaneous anthrax worker should wear protective gloves, whose material varies on the task, and the use of gloves should be measured against potential injury. Health safety procedures including the risk of facial hair interfering with protective respirators or entrapping spores should be deliberated. Long-sleeved clothing should be worn to protect exposed skin, and hands should be washed thoroughly with non-alcohol-based hand cleaners (WGCB, 1999).

The U.S. General Services Administration (2002) emphasizes the need to inform mail handlers of what constitutes as a suspicious letter or package and general precautions for mail handling. Suspicious characteristics include excessive postage, poor handwriting and misspelling, no return address, marked with restrictions, or postmarked from a different city or state not matching the return address. The appearance of packages is significant including apparent oily stains, uneven envelopes, or excessive packing material. Most importantly it is necessary to stress that if a package appears suspicious it should not be opened.

The U.S. Postal Service (2002) provides summation procedures for well-developed mail center security. Personnel should be trained in policies and procedures relative to mail security, including topics such biological and chemical weapons or natural disaster. Employee security

measures are highlighted including good hiring practices, establishing a strict employee identification/personnel security program and establishing health safety procedures.

According to McPhee (2002) protective anthrax vaccines are not currently available for civilians. The current vaccine supplies are limited and the US production capacity is modest. Vaccination of some essential service personnel should be considered if the vaccine becomes available (WGCB, 1999). This opinion is high-priced due to its scarcity and its requirement of six doses over an 18-month period.

In conclusion a combination of policies specified by governmental agencies such as the Central of Disease Control, the U.S. Postal Service and the U.S. General Services Administration form a proficient and cost-effective resolution. The final design for mailroom security consists of a variety of procedures, equipment and education tactics. The proceeding strategy, has taken the principal concepts of mail security, to form the ideal plan to meet the necessities of Rutgers University.

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# PLAN

This strategy's main interest is to protect and guard Rutgers' staff and students against the use of U.S. mail to transport biological agent. Visual inspection, the current method that is employed at Rutgers needs to be advance to guarantee the community's safety. Models discussed in the literature analysis offer vast approaches towards a solution to this problem. Employing a combination of paradigm acquired in the literature of mail center security, a strategy to upgrade of the Busch Campus mailroom system against bioterrorism was formulated.

This design focuses on three principal areas: *employee safety education, safety equipment, and safety procedures.*

**Employee Safety Education:**

The most important area is the education of the employees on safety and characteristics of suspicious mail. An employee safety workshop and a library of posters and brochures will be provided to advise staff of procedures and precautions in opposition to bioterrorism threats.

Figure 2, shows a detailed summary of the intended activities.

ITEM	SOURCE	CONDUCTED BY	TASK	LOCATION	WHEN
<b>Anthrax Threat Workshop</b>	National Safety Compliance / OSHA	National Safety Compliance	Address all mailroom staff	Busch Student Center Multipurpose room	Saturday Morning 6/15/2002 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Anthrax Threat Video</b>	National Safety Compliance / OSHA	Training Officer	Purchase & Conduct Screening	TV rooms in Allison Road Classrooms (ARC)	Training Day of new employee
<b>Posters &amp; Brochures</b>	U.S. Postal Service website provides PDF file <sup>2</sup>	Manager	Reproduction and Maintenances	Placed → Mailroom Replicated → Reproduction Center (Livingston Student Center)	Throughout the whole year

**FIGURE 2**  
*Employee Education Summary*



**FIGURE 3**  
*U.S. Postal Service Poster*



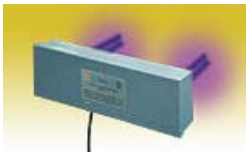
<sup>1</sup> During the Saturday *Anthrax Threat Workshop*, mandatory over-time will be put into play. All mailroom staff must report to the Busch Student Center Multipurpose room for the 3-hour mandatory workshop.

<sup>2</sup> The posters and brochures are downloadable from the official U.S. postal service website. An example of the posters available appears in Figure 3.

**Safety Equipment:**

Equipment for the personal protection of employees and engineering and housekeeping control is indispensable. High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filter equipped vacuums and ultraviolet duct systems will be acquired and installed, for engineering and housekeeping control.







Figure 4, shows a detailed summary of the intended equipment to be purchase.

ITEM		SOURCE	INSTALLATION	TASK	LOCATION	WHEN
<b>Wet-Dry HEPA Vacuum</b>		Euroclean® HEPA Vacuum	No assembly required.	Engineering Control and Housekeeping Control (Capture Spores & Reduce Spread of Spores)	Busch Campus Mail Room	Delivered a week after workshop approx.6/22/02
<b>Carry-on HEPA Vacuum</b>		Euroclean® HEPA Vacuum	No assembly required.	Engineering Control and Housekeeping Control (Capture Spores & Reduce Spread of Spores)	Busch Campus Mail Room	Delivered a week after workshop approx.6/22/02
<b>Ultraviolet Duct System</b>		AiraBella® Germicidal	AiraBella®	Engineering Control (Capture Spores)	Busch Campus Mail Room	Installation will begin Summer 2002 (June 3)

**FIGURE 4**  
*Safety Equipment Summary*

**Safety Procedures:**

Instituting a strict employee identification/personal security program and establishing health safety policies is critical to prevent tampering in the mailroom facility. An employee identification/personal security program will be established, including restricting entrance to the facility and mandatory visible I.D. cards. Safety procedures also comprise of a new dress code and hand cleansing and protection policies. Figure 4, shows a detailed summary of the intended procedures.

ITEM		SOURCE	INSTILLATION	TASK	LOCATION	WHEN
<b>Rutgers I.D.</b>		RUconnected Card Office	Manager	Visible Identification Cards	RUconnected Card Office – Busch Student Center	Employee must have by 7/21/02
<b>Card Entry System</b>		TESA Entry Systems, Inc.	TESA Entry Systems, Inc	Restricts Entrance	(2) Entrance Busch Campus Mail Room	Instillation will begin Summer 2002 (June 17)
<b>Protective Gloves</b>		agsa gomma	Manager	Worn when Handling Correspondence	Busch Campus Mail Room	Delivered approx.6/03/02
<b>Non-alcohol hand cleaner</b>	 Non alcohol soap	Nutraceutic, Inc.	Manager	Employee Must Watch hands before & after entering facilities.	Before & After Entering Facilities	Delivered approx.6/03/02
<b>Dress Code</b>	 Long Sleeves and Pants	Employees	Manager	Cutaneous Anthrax Prevention	Busch Campus Mail Room	Affective Immediately
<b>Policies</b>	 Mini. Facial Hair	Employees	Manager	Inhalation Anthrax Prevention	Busch Campus Mail Room	Affective Immediately

**FIGURE 5**  
*Safety Procedures Summary*

The manager and training officer must enforce these safety policies. The list in Figure 6 titled *New Policies* should be displayed from July 17, 2002, indefinitely. If an employee doesn't follow these instilled policies, behavior warnings should be submitted. Upon the accumulation of three warnings, the institution has grounds to terminate the employee.

- New Policies***
- Visible Identification Cards at all times
  - Minimum Facial Hair
  - Long-sleeved Clothing & Full-length Pants
  - Hands washed with non-alcohol based cleaner before & after entering facilities
  - Protective Gloves when handling correspondence

**FIGURE 6**  
***New Policies***

# BUDGET

<b>BUSCH CAMPUS MAIL ROOM SECURITY BUDGET</b>				
SUBDIVISION	QUANTITY	PRODUCT	DESCRIPTION	UNIT PRICE
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
	1	<b>Anthrax Threat-Video</b>	<i>14 Minute Video, Quiz and Answer Sheet</i>	<b>\$125.00</b>
	1	<b>Anthrax Threat-Workshop</b>	<i>Workshop, Procedures &amp; Precautions</i>	<b>\$500.00</b>
	10	<b>Mandatory Over-time</b>	<i>3-hour overtime for workshop attendance Approximately \$20/hour</i>	<b>\$60.00</b>
	1	<b>Posters &amp; Brochures</b>	<i>U.S. Postal Service website provides PDF file – Reproduction Yearly Supply</i>	<b>\$ 100.00</b>
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>				
	2	<b>Euroclean® HEPA Vacuum</b>		
		<b>Carry-on HEPA Vacuum</b>	<i>0.8 Gallon Hip/Backpack Vacuum, for hard to reach places</i>	<b>\$380.00</b>
		<b>Wet/Dry HEPA Vacuum</b>	<i>4 Gallon Vacuum for Dry or Wet areas</i>	<b>\$450.00</b>
	2	<b>AiraBella® Germicidal</b>		
		<b>Ultraviolet Duct System</b>	<i>2 Lamp Unit Indoor Mounted Version w/ 2-36 Watt Lamps 120 Volts</i>	<b>\$798.40</b>
		<b>Instillation</b>	<i>Includes Cables, etc.</i>	<b>\$1600.00</b>
<b>SAFETY PROCEDURES</b>				
	2	<b>Slash Card System</b>	<i>Restricts Entrance</i>	<b>\$2000.00</b>
		<b>Instillation</b>		<b>\$2000.00</b>
	20	<b>Slash Card &amp; I.D. Card</b>	<i>Utilizing the current RUconnected Card Office</i>	<b>\$ 15.00</b>
	1	<b>Gloves</b>	<i>Yearly Supply</i>	<b>\$300.00</b>
	1	<b>Non-alcohol Hand Cleaner</b>	<i>Yearly Supply</i>	<b>\$400.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$17,751.80</b>

**FIGURE 7**  
*First Year Budget*

<b>BUSCH CAMPUS MAIL ROOM SECURITY BUDGET</b>				
<b>SUBDIVISION</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>PRODUCT</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>UNIT PRICE</b>
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
	<b>1</b>	<b>Posters &amp; Brochures</b>	<i>U.S. Postal Service website provides PDF file – Reproduction Yearly Supply</i>	<b>\$ 100.00</b>
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>				
	<b>2</b>	<b>Euroclean® HEPA Vacuum</b>	<i>HEPA filter &amp; Exhaust Filter</i>	<b>72.00</b>
	<b>4</b>	<b>AiraBella® Germicidal</b>	<i>36W Replacement Lamp</i>	<b>105.00</b>
<b>SAFETY PROCEDURES</b>				
	<b>10</b>	<b>Slash Card &amp; I.D. Card</b>	<i>Utilizing the current RUconnected Card Office</i>	<b>\$ 15.00</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>Gloves</b>	<i>Yearly Supply</i>	<b>\$300.00</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>Non-alcohol Hand Cleaner</b>	<i>Yearly Supply</i>	<b>\$400.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$1,500.00</b>

**FIGURE 8**  
*Yearly Maintenance Budget*

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## CONCLUSION

The prime interest of this proposal is to protect and guard Rutgers' staff and students against the use of U.S. mail to transport biological agents. I have presented to you, the R Needs U Foundation, a clear and present danger in which we are implicated. Rutgers must recognize that the nation has changed since the September 11, 2001 catastrophe. The R Needs U Foundation, as part of the Rutgers community is obliged to realize that modification to existing procedures must take place to guarantee the security at Rutgers University. This simple three component plan addresses, in collaboration with models set by governmental agencies, all the concerns of the Busch Campus mailroom staff. The implementation of this project will alleviate the fears that are now present in the Rutgers' community, improving the quality of life of every individual.

This project will have a first year cost of approximately \$18,000.00 dollars, a small price to pay for the security and added protection that this proposal will provide. Implementing this proposition will assist the R Needs U Foundation in its mission to *improve life at Rutgers University*.

This added security will also alleviate the uncertainties that in-state or outer-states students may have of their safety in the tri-state area. In turn, Rutgers will be able to again successfully recruit students offering them the opportunity to enjoy a secure sociable, recreational and academic life.

The bioterrorism safety issues concerning the Rutgers' community, including the staff, students and the R Needs U Foundation are remedied by instituting a safety program, as the one provides. Finally, this proposal will help heal the worries bought on by the events that took place on Busch Campus in the past several months.

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## APPENDIX

### *Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey Student Survey on Mail Safety*

(1) Do you feel safe when handling (incoming Rutgers) mail?

Yes                      No

(2) Do you feel that screening mail against Bioterrorism is an issue at Rutgers?

Yes                      No

(3) Do you think that Rutgers should allocate a part of the budget to redesign the mailroom system with the recent Anthrax bioterrorism?

Yes                      No

If yes, rate from 1 to 5 (1 being the best) these opinions, which will protect mailroom employees from bioterrorism:

- #1      Vaccination of employees
- #2      Gas masks
- #3      Industrial Vacuum Cleaners to eliminate spores  
         from Mail-sorting equipment
- #4      Ultraviolet air systems that combat airborne  
         Biological bacteria.
- #5      Visual inspection