



Article: RESPONDING TO BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS: THE EFFECTS OF CHLORINE DIOXIDE, ETHYLENE OXIDE, FOAM, AND IRRADIATION ON PEOPLE AND CULTURAL PROPERTY

Author(s): Andrew Robb

Topics in Photographic Preservation, Volume 10.

Pages: 1-1

Compiler: Brenda Bernier

© 2003, Photographic Materials Group of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works. 1156 15th St. NW, Suite 320, Washington, DC 20005. (202) 452-9545, www.aic-faic.org. Under a licensing agreement, individual authors retain copyright to their work and extend publication rights to the American Institute for Conservation.

Topics in Photographic Preservation is published biannually by the Photographic Materials Group (PMG) of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works (AIC). A membership benefit of the Photographic Materials Group, *Topics in Photographic Preservation* is primarily comprised of papers presented at PMG meetings and is intended to inform and educate conservation-related disciplines.

Papers presented in *Topics in Photographic Preservation, Vol. 10*, have not undergone a formal process of peer review. Responsibility for the methods and materials described herein rests solely with the authors, whose articles should not be considered official statements of the PMG or the AIC. The PMG is an approved division of the AIC but does not necessarily represent the AIC policy or opinions.

**RESPONDING TO BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS:
THE EFFECTS OF CHLORINE DIOXIDE, ETHYLENE OXIDE, FOAM, AND
IRRADIATION ON PEOPLE AND CULTURAL PROPERTY.**

Andrew Robb

Presented at the 30th AIC Annual Meeting, Miami, Florida, 2002

Abstract

The recent incidents involving letters containing anthrax and the subsequent decontamination efforts have raised the need for biological hazard responses in emergency response plans. This paper discusses the nature of biological hazards, the organization of the emergency response, the various response methods, and the risks of these methods to people and cultural property. The Senate Hart Office Building emergency response is examined as a case study. Recovery of the building and its contents included decontamination by liquids, foams, and gases (including chlorine dioxide and ethylene oxide) as well as vacuuming. Treatment of the mail involved irradiation. Their effects on photographs, works of art on paper, manuscripts, books, and architectural drawings subjected to these response methods are discussed. In addition, other possible methods of recovery and prevention are described in relation to emergency response planning for cultural institutions.

Andrew Robb
Senior Photograph Conservator
Conservation Division
Library of Congress

Papers presented in *Topics in Photographic Preservation, Volume Ten* have not undergone a formal process of peer review.