

# ‘Fire in the hole!’: Back to back suspicious package scares keep the Bomb Squad busy

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**Salt Lake police investigating second suspicious package in two days**

**Suspicious package investigation at ACLU building briefly closes portion of downtown**



SALT LAKE CITY (ABC4 News) – It’s been a busy week for Bomb Squad personnel in Utah’s capital city.

For the second time in two days, the Salt Lake City Bomb Task Force detonated a suspicious package left outside of a building Wednesday, this one described as a mosquito abatement device left at Valley Behavioral Plaza at 280 East, 600 South.

Personnel from the Salt Lake City Police Department, Salt Lake City Fire Department, FBI, Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco & Firearms and the 85th Civil Service Unit of the Utah National Guard responded and after surrounding the device with water-filled plastic bricks, blew it up at 4:10 p.m.

On Tuesday, a cardboard box outside of the offices of the American Civil Liberties Union of Utah caused 300 West to be shut down for over an hour.

“We were able to disrupt that device,” Det. Greg Wilking of the Salt Lake City Police Department said. “At this time it appears it’s...papers.” Specifically, ACLU magazines shipped from their main office in New York, left outside the entrance because the doorbell isn’t working.

Unfortunately, the shipping label was on the bottom of the box so employees couldn’t determine its origin.

We’ve seen these type of false alarms before. On March 10th, 2017 Utah Highway Patrol Troopers shut down streets near the State Capitol because of a suspicious trash can which contained...trash.

On March 6th of this year, the SLCPD responded to an abandoned box outside the Salt Palace Convention Center where former President Barack Obama was speaking. What was inside?

“It was about a 60s to 70s era phonograph,” SLCPD Det. Jess Perea said. “Just a record player.”

Asked if the subject, in that case, had a record, Det. Perea responded “Not that I’m aware of. Might have been scratched.”

The SLCPD says there’s no way to quantify a cost for these incidents but based on the dozens of officers, firefighters, and EMTs on standby at the scenes Tuesday and Wednesday, it’s easily thousands of dollars of taxpayer money for time and resources but their efforts are appreciated.

“Yesterday they took good care of us,” ACLU Strategic Communications Director Jason Stevenson told ABC4 News. “They responded quickly. They kept us safe. They kept everybody in the neighborhood safe as well. So we wanted to give our thanks to Salt Lake City Police and Fire Department and Bomb Squad for their assistance.”

One reason for the big response we saw Wednesday is there was a bomb squad training going on in Salt Lake City and when the call came in they all left their classrooms to experience a real-life incident.