

'Lethal anthrax' report kept from CDC

A study showing that a letter containing anthrax was far more dangerous than anyone had believed was not made available to the Centers for Disease Control until after the anthrax attack on Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle's office, it was reported today.

More than two dozen federal government employees knew of the Canadian study, which showed that a letter laced with anthrax could release thousands of lethal doses of the bacteria within minutes of being opened, The Washington Post said.

But the CDC wasn't told about the study until a few weeks after a letter filled with anthrax was sent to Daschle.

"We were clearly dealing in a low-information environment," Bradley Perkins, the CDC's lead anthrax investigator, told the paper.

Several postal workers came down with the disease after the Daschle letter passed through two mail-sorting centers. Two employees died. Daschle's staffers were given antibiotics immediately, but the pills were not administered to postal workers until six days after the letter was opened.

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