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Anthrax scare closes Linn County Courthouse

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ALBANY - An anthrax scare shut down the Linn County Courthouse Monday, but the threat proved to be a hoax.

All 29 court hearings were canceled for the day. The only people going in and out of the building were those ready for disaster and prepared to find anthrax. It all started just after six Monday morning when a custodian found a note written in an unknown substance on the west and south entrance doors.

The Linn County Sheriff's office said the notes indicated there was anthrax in an envelope nearby. It took crews several hours to identify the substance.

"We had physical evidence that we needed to contain and control," said Under sheriff Will McAnulty.

Members of the Linn-Benton Haz-Mat team, Army National Guard, FBI and the Department of Homeland Security were all called in. Crews entered the building just before eleven. They took what was believed to be anthrax to a mobile testing center, where results came back negative. There are no suspects in the case, but authorities said a criminal investigation is underway. Those involved could face felony charges. The courthouse will be back open Tuesday