

Additional handling instructions for items potentially subjected to historical insecticide treatment

This item (or items) is subject to additional handling instructions, as we believe that it may have been treated with historical insecticides prior to its acquisition by King's College London.

Why is this item subject to additional handling instructions?

The item (or items) is from the historical library of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), which was transferred to King's in 2007. Following advice from The National Archives (TNA), we have conducted an investigation into the use of organic insecticides, such as DDT, by the FCDO's predecessor departments during much of the 20th century to prevent insect damage to books and other documents received from overseas. Testing of relevant parts of the FCDO Historical Collection at King's has confirmed the residual presence of DDT in a small number of items, though at low levels. An assessment by occupational hygienists has established that the risk to human health from handling such items is minimal but as a precautionary measure we ask you to follow these handling instructions.

What are the additional handling instructions?

- When handling this item (or items) please wear the nitrile gloves provided
- Avoid touching your face, eyes or mouth while handling the item and wash your hands thoroughly with soap after your visit
- When you have finished handling the item, wipe down any mobile phone, camera, pencil or other implements you have used with the wipes provided
- When you have finished handling the item, please wipe down the surface of the desk you have been using
- Please dispose of wipes and gloves in the dedicated bin provided.

Where can I find out more?

If you have any questions or concerns, please ask a member of staff.
You can find background information on TNA's investigation into the use of historical insecticides in its collections here:

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/news/additional-handling-procedures-for-some-documents/>