



**MEDIA ALERT**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **CompactFlash Association Issues Warning Concerning Risk Of Irradiation Damage Through U.S. Mail**

### **Mailing CompactFlash™ and CF™ I/O Cards Will Risk Permanent Damage To Cards**

Las Vegas, NV, January 7, 2002 – The CompactFlash Association (CFA) announced today that semiconductors used in electronic systems, including CompactFlash and CF I/O cards, would be irreparably damaged if subjected to the irradiation process that was being used by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) to sanitize the mail. Such damage will not only cause loss of data stored on the cards, but the cards will no longer be operable.

To protect public health and ensure confidence in the US Mail system, the USPS in October began using electron beam irradiation systems to sanitize certain mail streams against anthrax and other possible biological agents. Testing has confirmed that these systems, which operate in the range of 55 kGy, damage not only semiconductors, but other goods as well, including pharmaceuticals, contact lenses, biological samples, and photographic film.

The following statement appears on the USPS website: *“The Postal Service is working with the mailing industry to develop procedures to ensure that sanitization of the mail will not damage sensitive items in the mail. Sanitization technology is currently being tested on a wide range of film products, digital and magnetic storage devices, laboratory samples, food and plant products, and "smart" credit cards with embedded chips to ensure that all business mail can be safely processed through the postal system.”*

While it is possible that the USPS is no longer passing targeted mail streams through these e-beam systems, the CFA is alerting all users of CompactFlash cards of the inherent risk of damage to CompactFlash cards should they pass through an e-beam irradiation system.

Other delivery services have no plans to use irradiation systems, but users should remain alert for any changes in the future.

**The CFA will continue to work with USPS and others to develop shipping procedures that will ensure the safety of CompactFlash and other semiconductors through the mail.**

While e-beam irradiation systems for the mail will damage CompactFlash cards, the x-ray scanners at airports will not. As has always been the case, passing CompactFlash cards through the carry-on or check-in baggage x-ray systems used at airports has no effect on CompactFlash cards.

A CFA representative will be available to discuss these issues in the CFA booth at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES 2002) in Las Vegas, Jan. 8-11, 2002.

The CompactFlash Association is a non-profit, mutual-benefit corporation that promotes adoption of CompactFlash as a worldwide, ultra-small, removable data storage card standard for capturing and transporting digital data, audio and images.

The CFA, which makes the CompactFlash, CFA logo and CF logo and CF+ trademarks available royalty-free to member companies, is headquartered in Palo Alto, CA.

The CF Specification is available to download free from the CFA web site at <http://www.compactflash.org>.

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