

PITTSFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURE

POLICY & PROCEDURE: 49	SUBJECT: Hazardous Material Incidents
EFFECTIVE DATE: 01/01/2013	EXPIRATION DATE: Indefinite
THIS POLICY RESCINDS ANY PREVIOUSLY ISSUED MEMORANDUM, DIRECTIVES, NOTICES, SPECIAL OR GENERAL ORDERS IN CONFLICT WITH THIS POLICY.	
AUTHORIZED BY:	Matthew E. Harshberger Director of Public Safety
REVISIONS:	

POLICY:

This policy shall be followed by all Department Personnel. Adherence to any and all procedures related to this policy are required and hereby incorporated by reference for the purpose of determining compliance.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to recognize and prepare for situations involving hazardous materials.

APPLICATION:

This policy is for internal use only and is not intended to enlarge or negate the employee's civil and criminal liability in any way. Non-compliance with this policy and procedure constitutes a violation of Department Rules and Regulations, except in such case where compliance would cause a violation of state or federal laws.

NON-COMPLIANCE:

Failure to comply with any provision of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. **First Responder:** As defined in 29 CFR 1910.120, that person (police officer, fire fighter, EMS Technician) who first arrives at the scene of a potential hazardous material incident.
- B. **Hazardous Material:** A substance which has been determined by any of various recognized authorities, such as the Federal Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act of 1986, the U.S. Department of Transportation Safety Act of 1974, etc., to be capable of posing an unreasonable risk to health,
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safety, and property when transported, spilled, or otherwise released into the environment, etc.

C. Hazardous Material Placards:

1. Hazardous material placards are square in shape and mounted with a corner down. The color and symbols vary according to the type of material being transported.
2. Many carriers of hazardous materials are required to display, on all four sides of the container, the appropriate hazardous material warning placard with a number on the placard, or a hazardous material I.D. number mounted on orange panels beside the placard. Several regulations apply to this concept, and it cannot always be assumed if there is no placard that there is no danger, or no hazardous materials.

D. I.D. Number: The number on or near a placard that specifically identifies the material being carried. Examples are 1090, 1067. All are four (4) digit numbers sometimes preceded by two letters, UN or NA. UN stands for United Nations. NA stands for North American. Refer to D.O.T. Hazardous Materials Label Reference guide for examples.

E. Disaster: An occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damage, injury, or loss of life or property resulting from a natural or manmade cause.

F. Evacuation: An orderly and controlled exit of persons from areas with dangerous or potentially dangerous concentrations of hazardous materials to safe areas.

II. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY

A. The Fire Department will be responsible for the investigation, control, removal, and reporting of hazardous material incidents to the appropriate state and federal agencies.

B. The Police Department is responsible for the investigation and reporting of traffic accidents involving hazardous materials, as well as any criminal acts involving hazardous materials. The Police Department will provide other such assistance to the Fire Department as may be required to ensure the continuing safety and well-being of the community.

C. Dispatch is responsible for:

1. Obtaining as much information as possible about the exact nature of the problem. If possible, the person who was responsible for the hazardous

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material prior to the incident should be interviewed to determine the exact material involved.

2. Information should be obtained regarding the current status of the material (i.e., still in original container, on fire, liquid material flowing into sewer system, etc.) and the weather conditions at the scene to include an estimate of wind speed and direction.
3. Dispatch police personnel to the scene. A supervisor will respond to all such incidents. Any information regarding the potential hazards of the material known at the time units are dispatched will be relayed to the assigned personnel.
4. Notify the Fire Department. The Fire Department has primary responsibility for the scene of hazardous materials incidents.

III. HAZARDOUS MATERIAL IDENTIFICATION

- A. This is usually accomplished directly or indirectly by the descriptive data in shipping documents, container markings, package labels, and vehicle placards.
- B. If this information is not readily obtainable due to an incapacitated driver or destruction of a bill of lading or other shipping papers, obtain assistance through dispatch from the Washtenaw County Hazardous Materials Response Team, or by contacting the Chemical Transportation Emergency Center (CHEMTREC) at 800-424-9300.
- C. CHEMTREC provides technical expertise in handling hazardous material emergencies.
- D. CHEMTREC also provides additional phone numbers for emergencies such as accidental poisoning.

IV. FIRST RESPONDER RESPONSE

- A. Prior to arriving on scene, officers should obtain wind speeds and directions from Dispatch to facilitate positioning that is upwind of the incident.
- B. Officers should not enter into the area of a spillage or leak.
- C. Officers will coordinate their actions with those of the Fire Department and other agencies at the scene. The Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) requires that an Incident Command System (ICS) be utilized during a response to a hazardous material incident. The individual in charge at the scene shall be the senior emergency response official responding to an incident. Once the Fire Department arrives, the senior fire official at the

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scene shall be the incident commander. The first fire and/or police personnel on the scene will:

1. Establish a command post. The command post should be located a safe distance from the scene (upwind, uphill, upstream). This will be the location where agencies responding to the incident will report.
2. Examine the hazardous materials field site location or container (truck trailer, rail car, drum, etc.) from as great a distance as possible and from an upwind position. Use binoculars if available.
3. If a vehicle or container is involved and there is any sign of leakage, attempt to obtain the hazardous material I.D. number from the placard or label on the side of the vehicle or container and relay it to dispatch.
 - a. DO NOT approach the material involved until it has been determined safe to do so.
4. Try and locate the person responsible for the hazardous material prior to the incident.
 - a. If a vehicle is involved obtain the shipping papers.
 - b. If a fixed site is involved attempt to obtain the Material Safety Data Sheet.
5. When ambulance or rescue squad personnel arrive, they should be informed of the known or suspected presence of hazardous materials.
6. Relay the following information to Dispatch:
 - a. Type of incident (railway, highway, factory);
 - b. Basic description (explosion, fire, etc.);
 - c. Exact location;
 - d. Name of hazardous material and class; and
 - e. Quantity involved.
7. Restrict access to the scene and limit response personnel and the public's exposure to the hazardous materials.
 - a. If appropriate, detour vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

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- b. Access should be permitted only to those persons identified with an emergency organization and to those who can prove that they have an official responsibility for the site, buildings, equipment, or material affected by the emergency.
8. Obtain the names and addresses of persons who are, or may have been, in the immediate area.
 9. If the personnel and resources initially dispatched to the scene are insufficient to properly control the situation, make an assessment of the number of additional personnel that are needed and request same from Communications.
- D. Personnel must remember that if a flammable or explosive material is present or if identification of the material involved has not been made, do not use flares, smoking materials, or matches near the leak or spill area. Keep ignition sources and internal combustion engines upwind and a safe distance from the leak or spill area. This distance may be 100 yards or more depending on the levels of concentration.
- E. Evidence
1. Evidence or property from a hazardous material spill or illegal dumping will not be transported to the station or logged into Property. Evidence samples will be handled by the appropriate Fire Department, Department of Environmental Quality Emergency Response Division, or Hazmat Team.
 2. If the hazardous material or spill is on private property, the property owner is responsible for the proper disposal of the material. The Department of Environmental Quality can be contacted by the property owner and DEQ will advise the property owner on proper disposal methods.

V. DISPATCH RESPONSIBILITY WITH RESPONDERS ON SCENE

- A. After the on-scene personnel provides their initial assessment of the incident, **dispatch will coordinate with other agencies (County HazMat, DEQ, CHEMTREC)** to identify the hazardous materials involved and take the following action:
1. Provide on-scene personnel with information on the potential hazards of the material involved and the recommended protective measures to be taken.
 2. If the information from these sources indicates that it is hazardous to approach the material without a self-contained breathing apparatus, advise the on-scene personnel of this information as soon as possible. The Police Department's gas masks are ineffective against most hazardous substances.

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The Fire Department has self-contained breathing apparatus to handle the approach to such materials.

3. If the incident commander decides that an evacuation or in-house shelter situation exists, the Emergency Management Director will determine whether or not to activate the Emergency Response Plan (ERP) and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). If the EOC is activated, the ERP Emergency Notification List will be used to contact the proper officials to report to the EOC.
4. If the hazardous materials emergency involves a railroad, notify the chief dispatcher for the affected railway.
5. Notify the owner of the facility or vehicle involved if such notification has not been made by on-scene personnel.

VI. EVACUATION

- A. The evacuation of persons and protection of property should be the first priority in an effected area. Careful thought should be given to what danger or hazard is posed to the people living or working in the immediate area or its proximity. To determine the proper course of action, a number of factors must be taken into account including weather conditions, population, and traffic patterns.
- B. The decision to evacuate will be made by the incident commander on the scene.
- C. It is the Police Department's responsibility to assist in accomplishing a safe evacuation of the area endangered by a hazardous materials emergency; however, personnel are not to enter an unsafe area without the proper equipment, such as self-contained breathing apparatus or encapsulating suits, as necessary.
- D. Establish an initial staging area, outside of the hazard zone, where evacuees can gather until shelters are opened.
- E. The evacuation area must be defined. A priority of evacuation areas must be established based upon the relative degree of danger present.
 1. Persons downwind and closest to the incident would probably be considered in more immediate danger and evacuated first.
 2. Those persons further downwind or upwind of the scene would most often be considered in less danger and evacuated after those persons who are in more immediate danger.

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- F. Evacuation routes should be established that will present evacuees with minimal danger from the hazardous material.
- G. The evacuation area may be enlarged as conditions change and time permits.
- H. Every effort shall be made to prevent outsiders and nonessential personnel from entering the evacuated area until an all clear is given by the Fire Department. To the greatest extent possible, this will be accomplished through road blocks and police patrols.
- I. When notification of an evacuation is made and where practical, the persons evacuated should be advised of:
 - 1. The evacuation route to be used;
 - 2. The initial staging areas to go to until shelters are ready to accept evacuees; and
 - 3. The location of shelters that are, or will be, available.
- J. On-scene personnel may choose to use one or both of the following notification methods if scene conditions permit:
 - 1. The police vehicle's siren system will be used in PA mode to notify the persons within the evacuation area of the order to evacuation; and/or
 - 2. Door-to-door contacts may be required to insure that all persons within the evacuation area have been notified and evacuated.
- K. Dispatch and command personnel have the following means available for assisting on-scene personnel in notifying persons within the evacuation area:
 - 1. Siren warning system: Those sirens located within or near the evacuation area can be used;
 - 2. The department's established web based system in which our personnel can report the incident to the public, and identify evacuation areas; and/or
 - 3. Activation of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) under the Emergency Operations Plan, or notification of appropriate radio stations for broadcast of information.

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VII. EMERGENCY FIRST AID

- A. Segregate and detain those who have possibly been in contact with the hazardous materials until they can be examined. Obtain names and addresses of those involved.
- B. Take measures necessary to save life, but only carry out that first aid necessary to preserve life until medical help arrives.
- C. If the officer comes in contact with any of the suspected dangerous material, medical assistance should be sought immediately.
- D. If clothing becomes contaminated, seek medical assistance for proper disposal.
- E. Any exposed personnel, clothing, and equipment, must be quarantined to prevent further contamination.

VIII. ROAD CLOSURES

- A. Closures of public streets (non-state trunk lines) can be ordered for an indefinite period of time by the ranking police officer at the scene of a hazardous materials incident. Other providers of emergency services and those who will need to know of the closure must be notified of the decision.
- B. Closures of expressways and state trunk lines.
 1. The ranking police officer at the scene of a hazardous materials incident can order the closure of these roadways.
 2. The Brighton Post of the Michigan State Police and the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department, in addition to others who will need to know of the closure, must be notified of all closures of expressways and state trunk lines.
 3. If the closure is expected to last more than one hour, or if traffic will be detoured from the expressway or state trunk line, the appropriate State Highway Department representative shall be notified.
 4. The State Highway Department representative will consult with the officer in charge to either:
 - a. Designate an alternate route and appropriate traffic control measures; or
 - b. In cases where due to emergency conditions an alternative route has already been established, concur with that alternate route or request that a different alternate route be established.

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5. The State Highway Department representative, in concurrence with the officer in charge, will determine if the closure will be "short term" or "long term."
 - a. Short term closures are for a duration of four (4) hours or less with police personnel controlling the traffic points.
 - b. Long term closures are more than four (4) hours in duration and may require additional safety precautions such as flashing lights, barricades, and semi-permanent signs to control traffic points.
6. The public must be notified of all such road closures. Those means of notification deemed appropriate under the circumstances of each hazardous materials incident will be used to make such notification.

IX. TRANSPORTATION

- A. Police personnel shall not transport hazardous materials.
- B. All hazardous material transports shall be the responsibility of the Fire Department, HazMat Team, and/or Department of Environmental Quality.
- C. Police personnel may transport hazardous materials as evidence directly from the scene to the appropriate laboratory.
 1. The hazardous material must be properly sealed in accordance with MIOSHA and all other state and federal laws prior to transport.
 2. Transportation shall occur immediately, and the hazardous material shall not be secured or stored in any department vehicle or facility.

X. REVISION RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Responsibility for continuous updating and revision of this policy and order lies with the Director of Public Safety. Continuous shall mean when necessary or mandated by law.
- B. In the event this procedure conflicts with or supersedes any previous departmental order, procedure, or directive, to that extent the conflicting or superseded order is cancelled.

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