
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE – 114.007
HANDLING UNKNOWN NARCOTICS, SUBSTANCES AND BIOLOGICAL/CHEMICAL THREATS

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 3, 2008

REVISION DATE: June 26, 2018

REVIEW DATE:

AFFECTS: All Personnel

I. PURPOSE

This administrative directive addresses best practices for handling a hazardous substance, especially heroin or drugs that could potentially be mixed with fentanyl. This directive also provides general guidelines for making preliminary identification of a controlled substance or a dangerous drug in the field; and instructions for responding to incidents involving suspicious packages or mail with specific emphasis on handling biological/chemical threats.

II. POLICY

The preservation of life will be the foremost consideration of the Plano Police Department in the event of an exposure to a hazardous substance, especially fentanyl, or a threat involving suspicious substances sent through the mail or found in packages. Plano Police Department employees should assume all powdered drugs may contain fentanyl and should exercise safety precautions at all times. To limit the potential for exposure, employees should refrain from eating, drinking, or smoking while in the presence of any suspected substance. It is important to note that in any circumstance where a Plano Police Department employee is known or suspected to have been exposed to fentanyl in the scope of their employment, the incident will be immediately reported to the employee's supervisor and to the Risk Management Department of the City.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Controlled Substance – A substance, including a drug or an immediate precursor, listed in Schedules I through V or Penalty Groups 1 through 4 of Title 6, Subtitle C, Chapter 481, Subchapter B and D, of the Texas Health and Safety Code.
- B. Dangerous Drug – a device or drug that is unsafe for self-medication and is not included in Schedule I through V or Penalty Groups 1 through 4 of Title 6, Subtitle C, Chapter 481, Subchapter B and D, of the Texas Health and Safety Code.
- C. Fentanyl – A potent and powerful Schedule II narcotic synthetic opioid approved by the Food and Drug Administration for use as an analgesic (pain relief) and anesthetic. It is approximately 80 times more potent than morphine and 50 times more potent than heroin as an analgesic. Two milligrams, equal to a few grains of salt, can be lethal. Fentanyl can be injected, snorted/sniffed, smoked, taken orally by pill or tablet, and spiked onto blotter paper. Fentanyl often appears as a white powder/crystalline substance or in grains similar in size to grains of salt. It is often mixed with heroin or a variety of other products to change its appearance to increase potency.
- D. FD Field Test - Fire Department procedure to check the presence of radiological, biological, chemical, and volatility (flammability) in or around a package.
- E. FD ID Test - Fire Department procedure to obtain information to identify a specific substance (i.e. salt, sugar, flour, etc.) or chemical compound. Testing to identify a substance is more geared toward dry product or liquids without water content. The test signature of water overrides/masks the graph spikes preventing identification.
- F. Field Test Kit – a reagent test kit designed to detect for the presence of a controlled substance.
- G. Hazmat Team - Personnel from the Fire Department Hazmat station who are trained to the Hazardous Materials Technician level as defined by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection.
- H. Inconclusive – The results of a presumptive field test that indicates no definitive result that the sample contains the presence of a controlled substance or dangerous drug for which the sample was tested.

I. Isolation Perimeter - Isolation Perimeter – The designated crowd control line surrounding the

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Hazard Control Zones. The isolation perimeter is always the line between the general public and the Cold Zone.

- J. Laboratory Response Network for Bioterrorism (LRN) - A network of governmental (local, state and federal laboratories) that has been trained by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- K. Naloxone (Narcan) – A prescription drug which reverses the toxic effects of opioids by competing with the presence of opiates in the brain. It is a fast acting drug that acts within one to eight minutes of administration.
- L. Opiates – Synthetic or natural substances, prescribed and/or illicit, that cause sedation or pain relief effects. Excessive levels of opiates depress vital bodily functions such as respirations and maintaining consciousness. The most common illicit form of an opiate is heroin.
- M. Presumptive Field Test – The preliminary identification of a substance as a controlled substance or a dangerous drug by means of a reagent test or by visual/physical comparison for the purpose of determining if a criminal offense has been committed.
- N. Plano Police Department facilities are referenced in this directive as:
 - 1. 800 – Main Station at 909 14th Street
 - 2. 801 – Substation at Building A, 7501 Independence Parkway
 - 3. 802 – Substation at 5600 Democracy Drive

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Handling and Testing Unknown Substances or Narcotics
 - 1. When arriving at any scene, especially a scene where there has been a suspected overdose incident, or suspected overdose death, it is important to examine the environment and situation before proceeding in order to detect any signs of fentanyl contamination. The employee should ask: Is there any information to suggest the method of potential exposure or hazard such as drug paraphernalia or indications of large volumes of unknown powders?
 - 2. Officers should approach each incident involving an overdose victim, the handling of suspected illicit drugs, or any unknown as if there is possible involvement of fentanyl.
 - 3. Employees should look for any cyanosis (turning blue or bluish color) of victims, including the skin or lips, as this could be a sign of Fentanyl overdose caused by respiratory arrest.
 - 4. Before proceeding, employees should examine the scene for any loose powders (no matter how small), as well as nasal spray bottles, as these could be signs of fentanyl use.
 - 5. Take care not to disturb any powder or dust as airborne particles can lead to accidental inhalation.
 - 6. **When encountering any unknown powders, officers should refrain from opening any bag or container and should refrain from inhaling or sniffing any substance.** Only properly trained department personnel should handle any substance suspected to contain fentanyl or a fentanyl-related compound.
 - 7. Employees should always wear 9mil nitrile gloves, N-95 mask/respirators, and UVEX safety glasses when handling any type of substance, especially if it is believed to be heroin or which may contain fentanyl. These items are available at 800.

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8. If the gloves are torn or punctured, they should be changed immediately. Gloves should be replaced after 30-60 minutes of use.
9. The practice of “double gloving” (wearing two sets of gloves) is suggested while handling fentanyl-related compounds. De-contaminate hands after removing gloves by washing hands (40-60 seconds).
10. Any employee coming into contact with suspected fentanyl, or even an item contaminated with fentanyl, should treat the incident in the same manner as a biohazard incident.
11. Do not ever taste, feel, or smell suspected drugs. Treat any unknowns as if they contain, or are, fentanyl.
12. Never transport any drug item, particularly fentanyl in the passenger compartment areas of vehicles to minimize chances of exposure.
13. Any substance believed to contain any quantity of fentanyl or unknown powder should be double-bagged and appropriately marked to show their contents and sent to the Property and Evidence Unit to send off for proper testing.
14. **Do not field test any substance believed to be Fentanyl or any containers suspected of containing Fentanyl. Any evidence involving drug substances should be handled with another officer nearby so that action can be taken in case of Fentanyl exposure.**
15. All disposable personal protective equipment must be placed and sealed into an exhibit bag and clearly marked “fentanyl contaminated” or “possibly fentanyl contaminated” and sent for incineration. These items include gloves, masks, and disposable items.

B. Fentanyl

1. Accidental exposure to fentanyl can occur under a number of circumstances, including during the execution of search or arrest warrants, the purchase of fentanyl during undercover operations, the processing of drug evidence containing fentanyl or fentanyl-related substances, or the processing of non-drug evidence such as drug paraphernalia which may be contaminated with these substances.
2. Detention personnel should be most attentive when handling an arrestee’s clothing and property during intake.
3. If any unknown powder gets on any part of the clothing of an employee, the employee should notify a co-worker and either remove the clothing or seek assistance to rinse it off. Notify a supervisor as well immediately.
4. Canines should not be deployed in any situation where fentanyl is suspected and should be used cautiously in other situations involving other illicit drugs.

C. What To Do If Exposed to Fentanyl

1. Fentanyl can work very quickly, so in cases of exposure, it is important to seek immediate medical attention and immediately notify a supervisor.
2. Symptoms of exposure may include:
 - a. Respiratory distress,
 - b. Disorientation,
 - c. Drowsiness,
 - d. Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea,

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- e. Muscle rigidity,
 - f. Seizures,
 - g. Low blood sugar,
 - h. Clammy skin,
 - i. Fever and chills.
- 3. If inhaled, move the victim to fresh air.
 - 4. If ingested and the victim is conscious, wash out the victim's eyes and mouth with cool water. Do NOT take this action without wearing proper personal protective equipment.
 - 5. Do NOT use hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizers may contain alcohol, a skin penetrant, which may increase the absorption of Fentanyl through the skin.
 - 6. Use soapy water to wash away any powder or substances.
 - 7. Administer intranasal naloxone (Narcan) immediately and continue administering naloxone every 5-10 minutes until EMS arrives. (See Administrative Directive 114.010 – Administration of Nasal Naloxone)

D. Suspicious Packages – Biological/Chemical Threats

- 1. Suspicious packages can vary in type. When the initial suspicious package call does not provide sufficient information for Public Safety Communications to identify one of the problem natures listed below, Plano police officers will be dispatched to determine the appropriate resources to be used. Suspicious package calls will usually be determined to be one of the following three call types.
 - a. Abandoned Property – Explosive/Bomb Threat – to be handled in accordance with A.D. 112.002; or
 - b. Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Threat - to be handled in accordance with this Directive and FD SOP 326.1.
- 2. A large number of potentially suspicious letters and packages are reported to federal, state, and local law enforcement and emergency response agencies nationwide each year. In some instances these letters or packages include powders, liquids, or other material. Responders should be mindful of the potential for small-scale exposure when dealing with suspicious substances contained in threatening or suspicious packages.
- 3. In the event that microbiological culture in an LRN laboratory produces a positive result, decisions regarding quarantine and treatment of potentially exposed individuals must be made as an integrated process involving local public health, law enforcement, hazmat first responders, and local federal management. In all cases of suspected mail threats, regardless of the type, jurisdiction will fall to the FBI for criminal investigation. As a result, Plano Police Department officers are instructed to notify the FBI.

E. Plano Police Department Responsibilities:

- 1. Assist in the evacuation of persons from the scene, if necessary
- 2. Assist in the evacuation of injured
- 3. Oversee security and preserve the crime scene including applicable evidence

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4. Conduct criminal investigations regarding the incident and/or assist the FBI in criminal investigations
5. Conduct pedestrian and vehicular traffic control
6. Follow “Suspicious Package Flowchart”
- G. Fire Department Responsibilities per Plano FD SOP 326.1.
 1. If the first arriving company is not a Hazmat unit and receives information that the incident may be a potential chemical or biological threat, the Fire Department commander should:
 - a. Not make entry or attempt to mitigate the incident
 - b. Establish an isolation perimeter of at least 100 feet
 - c. Keep all citizens on the outside of the isolation perimeter
 - d. Call for the Hazmat Team
 - e. Wait upwind until arrival of Hazmat team
 - f. Operate in a support role for the Hazmat Team upon their arrival
 2. The Hazardous Materials Team OIC will assume either Command or Hazmat Branch as appropriate.
 3. The Hazmat Team OIC will base operational decisions upon the “Suspicious Package Flowchart.” (Shown Below)

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Suspicious Package Flowchart

