

# THE RALEIGH POLICE DEPARTMENT

**1109-16**

## RESPONSE TO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

### PURPOSE

To provide general guidelines for the initial responding officer(s) in emergencies involving explosives, toxic, radioactive or other hazardous materials.

### VALUES REFLECTED

This directive reflects our values of Service and Courage. By following these instructions we will be prepared to act effectively during hazardous materials incidents to protect the community and the well-being of all. These actions will help us keep the people in our community safe from injury, harm and danger.

### UNITS AFFECTED

All Personnel

### REFERENCES/FORMS

DOI 1107-02 "Response to Disasters"  
DOI 1109-07 "General Response to Bomb Threats"

May be Released to the Public

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City Manager

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

The Fire Department is the City agency primarily responsible for handling hazardous materials emergencies. The senior fire official present is responsible for the overall direction of operations, and police officials should coordinate their activities through that official.

All emergency services will adhere to the National Incident Management System (NIMS), to include the Incident Command System (ICS) and a Unified Command Structure.

Persons in the immediate vicinity of a hazardous materials accident should be cleared at once by police officers. Decisions concerning wide area evacuations should be deferred to fire officials.

## **INITIAL RESPONSE**

While the specific details will vary in each case depending on the material and type of hazard involved, some fundamental guidelines apply.

### **Dispatch of Units**

Upon report of a hazardous materials incident, Emergency Communications will dispatch the two closest police units and a police supervisor, in addition to any fire and rescue units that are required.

When dispatching the initial units, Communications should indicate the class of material involved (i.e. EXPLOSIVE, POISON, etc.), and the nature of the emergency (i.e. FIRE, SPILL, etc.).

After dispatching the initial units, Emergency Communications should contact the Watch Commander and the City Safety Coordinator.

### **Arrival on the Scene**

Units should approach the scene from a direction that is, preferably, upwind and shielded from a direct blast. Officers should observe the following instructions:

- Do not approach the ends of a tanker truck or railway car.
- Do not operate a vehicle within 150 feet of any spill, debris, or gas cloud. Also, do not park near any manhole cover or sewer drain. Many chemicals create explosion hazards when spilled into sewer drains, and the blast will vent through whatever openings exist.
- Use the public address, bullhorn, or any other means to clear persons in the immediate vicinity.
- Render aid to those in immediate danger if this can be done without unduly jeopardizing your own safety. The nature of the hazardous materials may be unknown, and if the initial officers are seriously injured before additional information can be relayed to Emergency Communications, rescue attempts will be delayed.
- Should a tanker car or container start emitting a rising sound from a venting safety device, withdraw or seek substantial cover immediately.
- Utilize Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as needed.

## **INITIAL ASSESSMENTS**

As soon after arrival as possible, the first officer should perform a quick assessment and relay this information to Emergency Communications.

### **Location and Approach Route**

The officer conducting the assessment should give the address and exact position of the hazard (i.e. center of the block, corner of the block). The officer should provide a suggested route and location for fire and rescue personnel. This location should be upwind and shielded from the scene.

### **Identifying the Hazard**

The officer should give the class of hazardous material involved (EXPLOSIVE, POISON, RADIOACTIVE, etc.). This can normally be determined by the markings on the vehicle or containers. The officer should state the nature of the problem (FIRE, CHEMICAL SPILL, RADIATION LEAK, etc.). If there is a possibility of chemicals spilling into storm drains, this should also be reported.

### **Locating the Driver or Operator**

The driver or person in charge of hazardous materials should have a hazardous materials information and shipping papers in their possession. Unless this person requires medical treatment, they should be escorted to the field command post.

When not in the driver's possession, the shipping papers should be in the driver's door pouch or on the seat. In the case of railroad accidents, this information will be located in the engine car and should be within reach of the engineer and conductor at all times.

If the hazardous materials information is not available, this information can be obtained from the hazardous materials Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG), by using the chemical name or ID number.

## **AREA EVACUATIONS**

The immediate scene should be cleared by the first responding officers. The nature of the hazard, though, may dictate that a wider area be evacuated.

### **Areas to be Evacuated**

Decisions concerning the area and extent of the evacuation should be deferred to Fire Department officials.

Guidelines can usually be obtained from the Emergency Response Guidebook or shipping papers carried with the hazardous materials. CHEMTREC can be contacted at 800-424-9300 to obtain additional information.

Unless otherwise directed by the senior Fire officer in charge, the City Manager, or designee, all persons except emergency personnel will be evacuated from the exclusion area.

Only the City Manager or designee may instruct the Emergency Communications center to activate the Civil Defense sirens or the Emergency Broadcast System.

### Unified Field Command Post

The Watch Commander is responsible for establishing Law Enforcement Operations in coordination with the unified field command post established by the senior Fire official. The Watch Commander is then responsible for coordinating evacuation efforts with fire, rescue, or civil preparedness personnel.

An officer, designated as incident reporter, should be assigned to the police command post. This officer is responsible for recording times, events, assignments, and activities performed by police personnel.

### Staging Area

The Watch Commander is responsible for designating a police staging area at a safe location. A Staging Area Manager should be assigned to the staging area to provide information and assignments.

### Emergency Treatment Post

Persons evacuated by the Police should be directed to this emergency treatment site.

Officers should try to obtain the names, addresses, and phone number of persons who object to being detained. The effects of many toxic substances are not immediately apparent.

### Mass Transportation

Arrangements have been made with GoRaleigh the Wake County School bus system in the event that mass transportation is needed. In addition the Public Works Department maintains a list of extra City vehicles that are available in emergencies. These extra vehicles and their drivers are listed in Raleigh's Emergency Plan and are kept on file in the Emergency Communications Center.

## **EMERGENCIES INVOLVING RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS**

Many of the same general principals apply when dealing with radioactive materials as with other hazardous materials. Some special considerations, though, are needed.

### Dispatch

After receiving a call where radioactive materials are possibly involved, the Emergency Communications Center will dispatch the nearest police and fire unit, a police supervisor, and the nearest officer trained in the use of a radiation dosimeter.

The Emergency Communications Center should then notify the Radiation Protection Center, 919-571-4141 or 1-800-858-0368, and establish an open line.

### Arriving on the Scene

Officers should approach the scene from an upwind direction, and render aid to those in immediate danger, if this can be done without unduly jeopardizing the safety of the officer.

Few radioactive substances authorized for shipment are lethal unless exposure occurs over an extended period of time. Officers should, nonetheless, avoid unnecessary contact with persons, spills or debris, and avoid inhaling any fumes.

If exposure becomes necessary, officers should utilize their Personal Protective Equipment. Officers should cover all exposed areas of the skin, if possible.

As soon as possible, inform the Emergency Communications Center of the type of placard posted on the vehicle or container (WHITE, YELLOW II, or YELLOW III).

#### Confirming Radiation Leaks

If either a visual observation or dosimeter reading leads an officer to suspect that a leakage has occurred, the Emergency Communications Center should start notifying all available dosimeter operators.

The Emergency Communications Center should also notify the Watch Commander, the City Safety Coordinator, the N.C. Radiation Protection Center, and other officials in accordance with City Standard Procedure 101-6.

#### Moving the Injured

Injured persons should be moved from the accident area with as little physical contact as possible, and held in an area shielded from the scene until emergency aid is received.

If the injured need to be transported to a hospital, Emergency Communications should notify Wake Medical Center that they will be receiving patients with possible radiation contamination. The estimated number of patients should also be included.

#### Evacuations Involving Radioactive Materials

Police officers are to rely on the advice of the Radiation Protection Team Chief concerning safety measures and possible dangers.

In general, an exclusion area of 3,000 feet should be established, or until buildings or terrain shields the radiation source. Vehicular and pedestrian traffic should be stopped at the edge of the exclusion area.

A decontamination station will be established by emergency medical personnel. Officers should attempt to segregate those persons who may have been exposed to radioactive materials and direct them to the decontamination station.

#### Decontamination

All officers and equipment involved in clean-up operations will be checked for dosimeter readings and should not be returned to normal patrol until approved by the Radiation Protection Emergency Team.

- Police officers should not attempt to clean up a collision area involving radioactive materials, except under specific instructions from the Radiation Protection Emergency Team.
- Officers are to avoid entering the exclusion area unless directed to do so. Upon leaving the area, both officers and their equipment must be checked for dosimeter readings.
- Officers who have been exposed to radioactive contamination should discard exposed clothing as soon as possible. The discarded clothing should be isolated until it can be examined by the Radiation Protection Emergency Team.

- If surface decontamination is needed, the Public Works emergency crew on call will be alerted to respond.
- If radioactive materials have spilled into storm drains, the Raleigh Public Utilities Director and the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality must be contacted.

## **REPORTING HAZARDOUS MATERIALS EMERGENCIES**

The City is legally required to report accidents involving hazardous materials to various State and Federal agencies.

### **Legal Notifications**

The agencies that are required to be notified vary according to the material involved and the type of accident. The agencies to be notified are specified in City procedure 101-6.

The City Safety Coordinator is responsible for notifying the Wake County Emergency Management Office for emergencies requiring coordination with State and other local agencies.

The designated incident commander will be responsible for preparing any after incident reports required of the Police Department.

### **News Releases**

The Public Affairs Officer is authorized to give releases concerning areas to be evacuated and exit routes. Questions concerning the type of materials involved, hazards, etc., should be deferred to Fire officials, the City Manager, or designee.