


STRATFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT 	Type of Directive: Policy and Procedure	Updated: 12-21-2023
	Less Lethal Force – O.C. Spray	No. 7.2-B
	Issuing Authority: Chief Joseph McNeil	Issued: 10-09-2019
	Reference: 04-01-23 Rescinds 7.1.1, 7.1.1A-1, 7.1.2, 7.2 and 13.4 Tier One Accreditation Chapter 14	

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to set procedures for the Stratford Police Department regarding the use of less lethal force.

POLICY:

The policy of the Stratford Police Department is to value and protect human life. The public authorizes the police to use that force which is objectively reasonable for the protection of human life. Officers shall use only the minimum amount of force objectively reasonable to bring a person or incident under control, in pursuit of this mission.

PROCEDURE:

Officers shall be ever mindful of the seriousness of the offense for which the person is being arrested and shall use the utmost discretion in determining the necessity for using physical force.

OLEORESIN CAPSICUM (OC) SPRAY

Only O.C. products approved and supplied by the Stratford Police Department are authorized.

- MK-6 canister 0.4% stream for plainclothes department members, with an effective range of approximately ten (10) to twelve (12) feet.
- Standard canister of MK-3 .4% stream for uniformed department members with an effective range of approximately ten (10) to twelve (12) feet.
- All the OC that is issued is EDW (Electronic Discharge Weapon) safe. If O.C. is used and a need to use the Taser arises the O.C. used by the department is non-flammable.

O.C. Spray is an organically based non-lethal aerosol defensive weapon designed to distract an individual(s) instantly, with no permanent after effects, in order to be restrained and/or controlled with minimal physical contact.

Its speed and effectiveness normally decrease the need to escalate to intermediate weapons or lethal force.

All sworn members of this department may carry O.C. Spray as issued equipment upon successful completion of O.C. training course approved by the training division. Only those members of the department that are trained and certified in the use of O.C. may carry or use O.C. Spray. The Training

Lieutenant is responsible for ensuring that all members who carry O.C. Spray have received initial and bi-annual proficiency training.

It shall only be used under circumstances that may result in injury to either the officer or the suspect after such department member has displayed a clear show of authority in conjunction with a verbal command to submit to such authority. This would include overcoming physical force towards a department member(s) by an individual(s), or resistance to a department member's verbal command to submit to their authority by an individual(s).

O.C. Spray shall not be used to retaliate against verbal abuse expressed by an individual towards a department member. O.C. Spray shall not be used to elicit information from a person, or under circumstances that create an unreasonable risk of danger to the subject (i.e., subject is operating a motor vehicle, or standing near the top of a stairway, roof edge, etc.)

Operation/Usage

The O.C. delivery system is a stream spray pattern. The most effective method of delivery is a series of short, one quarter bursts aimed at the eyes in a sweeping motion from ear to ear. Should the person be wearing glasses the area would be the forehead and more time will be needed for the agent to seep into the eyes and take effect. The minimum distance when feasible is 3 feet to prevent the hydraulic needle effect (Damage to soft tissue due to the pressure of the stream of liquid).

Recovery

Fresh air and flushing of the eyes with fresh water is all that is required. Fresh water shall be made available to the person(s) sprayed in order to flush the eyes, as soon as practicable, after being subject to O.C. Spray. All symptoms of the spray should disappear within 45 minutes with no after effects. However, if symptoms persist beyond that time, or the person requests medical assistance, those department members involved in the incident shall see that such medical treatment is provided.

Documentation - Officers shall document all O.C. Spray deployments in the related arrest/crime report and a POSTC Form-PUOF (Use of Force) shall be completed and submitted before completing their tour of duty. Notification shall also be made to a supervisor in compliance with the use of force policy. Unintentional discharges, and compliance submissions will also be documented on the report form.

Supervisor Responsibilities - A supervisor shall be notified of all incidents where O.C Spray was deployed. A supervisor shall review each incident, including Body Cam video and POSTC Form-PUOF where a person has been exposed to an O.C. deployment. Body Cam videos of an O.C. Spray deployment shall be tagged, including any witness interviews.

Should a determination be made by the supervisor that the deployment of O.C Spray was questionable or inappropriate; the matter shall be immediately referred for further review per department policy.