



POLICY AND PROCEDURE NO. 400.4

Pepperball Guidelines

Date Issued: April 13, 2007
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2 Pages

1. PURPOSE:

To provide sworn members of the Worcester Police Department with guidelines in the use of the Pepperball System. Authorized launching system will be Tippman Pro and Jaycor projectiles only.

2. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Worcester Police Department that the use of the Pepperball System on a person is in compliance with this protocol and the Worcester Police Department's Use of Force Policy (see policy # 400, Use of Force).

3. DEFINITION:

Pepperball: Pepperball projectiles are plastic spheres that are filled with powdered or liquid 5% Oleoresin capsicum (OC). The projectiles, when delivered by an air-powered launching device, burst on impact and release the OC. Pepperball projectiles subdue suspects by inflaming the mucous membrane in their nose, lungs and respiratory tract. When inhaled, Pepperball projectiles OC leads to coughing, shortness of breath and involuntary closing of the eyes. Response to inhaling Pepperball projectile OC powder varies greatly among individuals. In most cases the symptoms last for a few (five to twenty five) minutes. The Pepperball system can deliver projectiles with enough kinetic energy to produce temporary abrasions, bruises and/or welts.

4. PROCEDURES:

The Worcester Police Department authorizes sworn members who are trained and certified in the use of the Pepperball system to use this tool when they reasonably believe the subject to be taken into custody is either a Resistant (Active) Subject (Level Three) or Assaultive (Bodily Harm) Subject (Level 4) or higher (see policy # 400, Use of Force).

The Resistant (Active) Subject (Level Three): Officers may use the Pepperball system (Saturation Technique):

- To deliver OC to an area when the use of OC is justified, but unsafe for an officer to approach a subject within contact range (4-8 feet), or
- Upon the order of a supervisor on the scene, to disperse unruly or rioting crowds threatening unlawful property damage or physical force.

The Assaultive (Bodily Harm) Subject (Level Four): Officers may use the Pepperball system to directly impact a subject with the projectiles in accordance with the Escalation of Trauma Chart for the perceived threat, or when higher use of force options may be justified, but an

opportunity exists for the use of OC or impact techniques before these other options are employed.

5. DECONTAMINATION PROCEDURES:

Officers shall follow the same procedures as with an exposure to OC (see OC Aerosol Spray Guidelines, # 400.2).

6. REPORTING PROCEDURES:

The use of Pepperball is a reportable Use of Force. See policy # 400, Use of Force (section X, Reporting Use of Force Incidents).

Per:

Gary J. Gemme
Chief of Police