
Ocean City Fire Department
Standard Operating Guidelines

SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Subject: Hazardous Materials Incident Response
Revised: 8-11-10
Effective: 10-4-10
Approved: 9-1-10
Section: 503.00

503.01 Purpose

To establish guidelines for responding to Hazardous Materials Incidents.

503.02 Definitions

- A. Engine Company Response – one or more hazardous materials/weapons of mass destruction operations level responders, as part of an engine company, responding for the purpose of protecting persons, the environment, or property from the effects of a release.
- B. Hazardous Materials Technical Response – one or more hazardous materials/weapons of mass destruction technician level responders, who responds to hazardous materials/WMD incidents, to provide technical assistance to the incident commander, using a risk-based process by which he analyzes a problem involving hazardous materials/WMD, recommends the appropriate response, applicable decontamination procedures, uses specialized identification equipment and protective clothing and applies release mitigation strategies.
- C. Hazardous Materials Response Team (HMRT) - a group of resources and personnel, organized and trained to perform offensive skills and tasks for the mitigation of hazardous materials/weapons of mass destruction (WMD) incidents

503.03 Policy

Responses to Hazardous Materials Incidents fall into one of three response categories.

- A. Engine Company Response
- B. Hazardous Materials Technical Response
- C. Hazardous Materials Response Team

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503.04 Hazardous Materials Response

An engine company is generally the first unit to respond to and arrive at a hazardous materials incident, preceding all other levels of response. First responding units are expected to recognize the presence of the hazardous materials/WMD, protect themselves and the public, secure the area, and determine the appropriate level of response.

The Incident Commander may select any level of response they believe is necessary based on available information. **If they are not sure if the incident necessitates a full HMRT response, request a technical response first.**

- A. Engine Company Responses include but not limited to:
 - 1. Report of a possible or confirmed small spills or releases of an unknown or known hazardous substance, and has a potential risk to the environment.
 - 2. No current indication of injuries or affect on human or animal life is observed.
 - 3. No reported formation of a plume or chemical reaction.
 - 4. All hydrocarbon fuels, gas or liquid, spills or leaks, which are typically not a hazardous materials incident.
 - 5. Provide Rapid Intervention Team for Water/Waste Water Department chemical alarm investigations.
- B. Hazardous Materials Technical Responses include but not limited to:
 - 1. Units are dispatched, en-route or on-scene to an incident and request technical assistance.
 - 2. Law enforcement requests for technical assistance on hazardous drugs or unknown substances.
 - 3. Any response that exceeds the capability of an engine company response and may not need the full response of the HMRT.
 - 4. Complex or large fluid spills, requiring extended operational periods.
- C. Hazardous Materials Response Team responses include but not limited to:
 - 1. Leaks, spills or releases that are believed to be hazardous and have a potential for risk to life and health.
 - 2. Any information of a large plume, cloud or unusual reaction by a chemical that is significant or large.

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503.05 Dispatching and Initiating Hazardous Materials Responses

- A. Engine Company Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents are automatically dispatched by communications with one engine due.
- B. Hazardous Materials Technical Response – The Incident Commander requests the on-duty Fire Marshal Supervisor via communications to contact him for consult and appropriate resources needed. The Fire Marshal Supervisor will coordinate through the Incident Commander, the appropriate resources to the incident.
- C. Hazardous Materials Response Team
 - 1. The Incident Commander may request communications to dispatch the Hazardous Materials Response Team, which will include:
 - a. FM Supervisor
 - b. On-call FM Hazmat Technicians
 - c. All Available OCFD Hazmat Technicians
 - d. Hazmat Response Unit(s)
 - e. Apparatus: 1 Engine/1 Rescue/1 Staffed Ambulance
 - 2. These listed additional resources may be requested at the discretion of the Incident Commander
 - a. Worcester County Special Hazards Response Team
 - b. Worcester County Decontamination Unit
 - c. Salisbury Fire Department Hazmat Team
 - d. Maryland Department of the Environment
 - e. Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

503.06 Hazardous Materials Incident Operations

Hazardous materials responses have such a broad potential to be any type of solid, liquid, radioactive material, or gas substance, including weapons of mass destruction, that when released can create harm to people, the environment and property. It is impractical to develop a set of operational guidelines that accurately cover all potential incident scenarios, therefore, below is a list of basic fundamental operational guidelines that may be expanded upon depending on the complexity of the incident.

- A. All hazardous materials incidents shall operate under the incident command system and/or the National Incident Management System.
- B. Personnel responding to and operating at an incident shall only perform duties within their level of hazardous materials training (awareness, operations and technician level) and competencies.
- C. The incident commander shall designate an incident safety officer at large incidents and when the HMRT is operating.

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- D. Initial Incident Tasks:
1. From a safe location assess and analyze the incident
 - a. Secure the scene
 - b. Detect the presence of a hazardous materials/WMD
 - c. Identify the hazardous materials/WMD present
 - d. Collect information from the DOT Emergency Response Guidebook.
 - e. Identify the hazards from the materials present
 - f. Determine level of personal protection equipment
 - g. Develop an action plan
 2. Implement an action plan consistent with the emergency response guidebook
 - a. Protect against potential hazards (Health, Fire and/or Explosion)
 - b. Assess Public Safety (evacuation, protect in place, establish Hot/Warm and Cold Zones)
 - c. Determine and Initiate proper emergency response and resources
 3. Communicate above information to responding units