

---

---

**Ocean City Fire Department  
Standard Operating Guidelines**

---

---

## General Policies

Subject: Use of Non-Deadly Force  
Revised: 4-24-2012  
Effective: 9-01-2012  
Approved: 4-24-2012  
Section: 230.00

### 230.00 Purpose

To establish guidelines and types of equipment allowable for non-deadly force.

### 230.01 Policy

- A. Personnel should assess the situation in order to determine which non-deadly force technique or defensive equipment will best de-escalate the incident and bring it under control in a safe manner.
- B. Personnel are authorized to use non-deadly force techniques and issued defensive equipment for resolution of an incident and to protect themselves or another from the threat of physical harm or act of physical harm.
- C. Anytime the use of non-deadly force is utilized an Incident Report must be completed and turned over to the Officer in Charge by the end of the shift.
- D. The only non-deadly force defensive equipment that is authorized to be carried by personnel is Oleoresin Capsicum (OC spray).
  1. Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) is a powerful inflammatory agent that occurs naturally in cayenne pepper that when sprayed into the face of a violent or uncooperative subject, results in a swelling of eyes and airway, yet causes no permanent injury to the subject.
  2. Effects of OC are:
    - a. burning sensation in eyes
    - b. burning sensation and swelling of mucous membranes
    - c. sensation of intense burning of skin
    - d. interrupted thought process leading to loss of coordination and loss of upper body control
    - e. is effective on people under the influence of alcohol and/or controlled dangerous substances.
    - f. is effective on people who are highly agitated
    - g. is effective on animals if necessary

---

---

**Ocean City Fire Department  
Standard Operating Guidelines**

---

---

- E. Personnel shall only use authorized defensive equipment when necessary for self-defense and in the defense of another. Nothing in this policy shall prevent individuals from utilizing any readily available object, which may substitute as defensive equipment under circumstances that are justifiable.
- F. The on-duty OIC must authorize replacement canisters for personnel.
- G. Personnel must receive training from a certified OC instructor prior to carrying OC with them to work as an Ocean City Fire Department member.
- H. The canister shall be removed from the personnel and left in the responding apparatus when responding to any type of fire alarm.
- I. Personnel shall use only the amount of OC needed to control the situation. Once the situation is under control, the use of OC must be discontinued.
- J. Personnel shall make every reasonable attempt to warn and remove bystanders from the area, prior to the use of OC. Additionally, the use of OC should be avoided inside the ambulance.
- K. It is the individual's responsibility to make an effort to relieve discomfort to the subject exposed to OC as soon as it is safe and reasonable to do so. Personnel shall flush the eyes and other contaminated areas with water for 45 minutes. If the effects do not dissipate after that amount of time, seek medical attention.
- L. The improper use of OC will not be tolerated. Any violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.