

**HEMS
SPECIAL OPERATIONS
HAZARDOUS MATERIAL PROCEDURE**

Date: March 1, 2013
Last Revised: 2/8/2024

Section 10-19

Hazardous Material Procedure

Dispatch Responsibilities

In addition to routing information, try to obtain the following information:

1. Exact nature of illness/injury.
2. Type of location (i.e., highway, factory, farm, office building, etc.).
3. If the call is for an auto accident, attempt to identify the types of vehicles involved. (i.e., passenger, tanker, cargo truck, lab courier, etc.).
4. The exact identity of the hazardous material involved.

All responding units must be notified if the dispatcher suspects a hazardous material is involved in the incident.

It is the jurisdictional fire department's responsibility to activate the HAZMAT team.

Crew Responsibilities

Pre-Incident

If hazardous material protective equipment is stocked on the vehicle, the crew must inspect/check all equipment at the start of every shift, in accordance with in-house policy/procedure.

On-Scene – First Responders

1. Ensure that the HAZMAT team is responding.
2. Remain at least 300 feet upwind of the incident. **EVEN IF PATIENTS ARE VISIBLE/OBVIOUSLY INJURED, DO NOT ENTER THE SCENE UNLESS PROPERLY TRAINED AND EQUIPPED!!!**
3. Notify all responding units of the upwind position.
4. Isolate the area and deny entry of other.
5. Note any DOT numbers or placard that might aid in identifying the hazardous material.
6. Attempt to positively identify the hazardous material using the DOT guidebook and follow any initial instructions given in the appropriate guide number. Do not contact Chemtrec until as much of the information on page "v", near the front of the book, as possible has been obtained.
7. The jurisdictional fire department and/or the HAZMAT team will establish and utilize the Incident Command System for these incidents.
8. Attempt to determine the number and severity of the injuries, and the degree of injury from the hazardous material.

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9. If patients are visible and ambulatory, but are contaminated by the hazardous material, then establish an area of refuge upwind of the incident site where patients may be isolated for decontamination. Do not enter this area to begin triage or treatment unless properly trained and equipped.

On-Scene – Secondary Responders

The Incident Command System will be utilized for these incidents. In hazardous material emergencies, the medical response is only a very small portion of all the events/responses being coordinated. In addition, many things must take place before the medical responders are allowed to perform their duties (i.e., containment of the incident, establishing “safe” areas for personnel to work, establishing a decontamination area, etc.). All secondary responders must work within the Incident Command structure. Most likely, a Medical Officer will be appointed, from the fire department personnel on the scene, to coordinate the medical response. All secondary response personnel must report to this individual.

1. Report to the location specified by the Incident Commander/Medical Officer on scene.
2. Coordinate with a HAZMAT team member for the appropriate medical treatment of patients (i.e., some medical procedures are contraindicated in the presence of certain hazardous materials).
3. All non-emergency patients should be fully decontaminated prior to being treated/transported by medical responders not trained/equipped to deal with contaminated patients.
4. All priority #1 patients must be at least grossly decontaminated prior to being treated/transported by medical responders not trained/equipped to deal with contaminated patients.
5. If necessary to transport a patient after only gross decontamination, personnel must wear protective equipment appropriate for the remaining risk. A HAZMAT team member will provide advice in these situations.

Post-Incident

1. All personnel coming in contact with patients that have not been fully decontaminated, MUST remove and bag all clothing and shower in a decontamination shower (one that collects the runoff) prior to returning to duty.
2. All personnel exposed to contaminated patients MUST document that exposure on the Medical Report Form and an Exposure Report Form to be filed by the employer.
3. If symptoms of an exposure occur at any time after the incident, personnel MUST obtain a complete physical and post-exposure procedure should be followed.
4. A complete post-incident analysis should be completed as soon as possible, after the incident, usually within 72 hours.

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5. Some form of Critical Incident Stress Debriefing may be appropriate for some personnel. Each employer is responsible for this process.