



PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidance on the establishment and operation of decontamination during the response to incidents involving hazardous materials.

POLICY

Each hazardous materials incident has the potential of personnel, equipment, and the general public coming into contact with the hazardous material and becoming contaminated. This contamination not only becomes a threat to the one that has become contaminated, but also to those individuals that have contact with the contaminated individual.

For this reason, it is the responsibility of the IC to confine all affected individuals in the "Hot Zone". This must be done until an appropriate method of decontamination has been chosen and a decontamination corridor has been established.

Emergency Decontamination

Emergency decontamination is used in potentially life threatening situations to rapidly remove most of the contaminants from an individual. A more formal and detailed decontamination process may follow later. Emergency decontamination usually involves removing contaminated clothing and dousing the victim with quantities of water. Efforts should be made to limit the amount of water runoff into storm drains and waterways.

Emergency decontamination is required before any rescue or mitigation efforts are attempted. It can be established by the first arriving fire company if the officer determines an emergency entry is required. At a minimum emergency decontamination should utilize a red line and tank water. Every effort should be made to establish a technical decontamination as quickly as possible.

Decontamination Site Selection

The site selection should be located in an accessible area in the "Warm Zone". Consideration should be made as to the ability for a water supply, run off potential and environmentally sensitive areas. Always place the decontamination site uphill and upwind of the contaminated area.

Decontamination Corridor

The decontamination corridor is the area leading from the "Hot Zone" into the decontamination area. This corridor shall be established by the Decontamination Group and shall be identifiable by all personnel on the scene. The corridor must be clearly defined so it is readily apparent to the entry, recon or RIC Teams (i.e. boundary tape, cones, etc.).

Approved

Fire Chief

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Decontamination Methods

This involves the contaminant's physical removal from the exposed person and allows for proper disposal. This method only reduces the concentration of the product and does not reduce the hazard potential.

1. Physical Methods of Decontamination

- Absorption and Adsorption
- Brushing and scraping
- Isolation and Disposal
- Vacuuming
- Washing
- Dilution

2. Chemical Methods of Decontamination

- Chemical degradation
- Neutralization
- Solidification
- Disinfectant or sterilization

Decontamination Site Set-up

Decontamination shall consist of the following elements at a minimum:

1. Entry and exit lanes
2. Tool drop area (Hot Zone)
3. Single wash and rinse station with the use of a liquid recovery pool
4. The "Decontamination Group" shall use PPE equal to or one step under those used by the "Entry Group"
5. SCBA removal station and reclamation site
6. Suit doffing area with disposal or reclamation drum
7. Medical monitoring station

Approved

Fire Chief