

Hazardous Material Response

406.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Hazardous materials present a potential harm to employees and others as a result of their exposure. To comply with applicable law, the following represents the policy of this department.

406.1.1 HAZARDOUS MATERIAL DEFINED

Hazardous material - A substance which by its nature, containment and reactivity, has the capability of inflicting harm to people, other living organisms, property or the environment during exposure. Hazardous materials are characterized as being toxic, corrosive, flammable, explosive, oxidizing, asphyxiating, pathogenic, allergenic, biohazardous, or radioactive and pose a threat to health when improperly managed.

406.2 HAZARDOUS MATERIAL RESPONSE

Employees may encounter situations involving suspected hazardous materials, such as at the scene of a traffic collision, chemical spill or fire. When employees come into contact with a suspected hazardous material, they should take certain steps to protect themselves and other persons.

The fire department is the agency trained and equipped to properly respond and mitigate most hazardous materials and biohazards.

Responders should not perform tasks or use equipment without proper training, unless the members best judgment, life saving exigent circumstances exist.

A responder entering the area may require decontamination before he/she is allowed to depart the scene and should be evaluated by appropriate technicians and medical professionals for signs of exposure.

The following steps should be considered at any scene involving suspected hazardous materials:

- (a) Make the initial assessment of a potentially hazardous material from a safe distance.
- (b) Remain upwind, uphill and at a safe distance, maintaining awareness of weather and environmental conditions, until the material is identified and a process for handling has been determined.
- (c) Wear personal protective gear, being cognizant that some hazardous material may quickly volatilize into a form which is readily inhaled. Members should be aware that standard issued gas masks are ineffective in most HazMat environments.
- (d) Attempt to identify the type of hazardous material from a safe distance using optical aids (binoculars/spotting scopes) if they are available. Identification can be determined by:
 1. Placards and use of the Emergency Response Guidebook.
 2. Driver's statements or shipping documents from the person transporting the material.

Hazardous Material Response

3. Information obtained from any involved person with knowledge regarding the hazardous material.
- (e) Obtain information from any involved party who has knowledge regarding the hazardous material. Information should include:
 1. The identity of the material.
 2. How to secure and contain the material.
 3. Any other information to protect the safety of those present, the community and the environment.
 - (f) Notify the appropriate fire department and EHS. Provide weather conditions, wind direction, a suggested safe approach route and any other information pertinent to responder safety.
 - (g) Provide first aid to injured parties if it can be done safely and without contamination.
 - (h) Begin evacuation of the immediate and surrounding areas, dependent on the material. Voluntary evacuation should be considered. Depending on the material, mandatory evacuation may be necessary.
 - (i) Make reasonable efforts to secure the scene to prevent access from unauthorized personnel.
 - (j) Establish a decontamination area when needed.
 - (k) If available, request the Communications Center to activate the Mass Emergency Notification System to the affected area.

406.3 REPORTING EXPOSURE

Department personnel who believe they have been exposed to a hazardous material shall immediately report the exposure to a supervisor, who will submit an online first report of injury/exposure to the University's Risk Management. Should the affected employee be unable to document the exposure for any reason, it shall be the responsibility of the notified supervisor to complete the online report.

Injury or illness caused or believed to be caused by exposure to hazardous materials shall be reported the same as any other on-duty injury or illness, in addition to a crime report or incident report.

406.3.1 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

When a supervisor has been informed that an employee has been exposed to a hazardous material, he/she shall ensure that immediate medical treatment is obtained and appropriate action is taken to treat the exposure.

Safety items not maintained by the Department may be obtained through the appropriate fire department or EHS.