

Hazardous Materials Response

320.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Hazardous materials HAZMAT may include toxic, flammable, corrosive, explosive, radioactive or reactive materials; materials that can cause health hazards; or a combination of these materials. The purpose of this policy is to provide a general framework for handling a HAZMAT incident.

320.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Fresno County Fire Protection District to protect the safety of the public and responders to HAZMAT incidents and to comply with the Hazardous Waste Operations Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) standard during all HAZMAT incidents (29 CFR 1910.120).

320.3 PROCEDURE

Information should be provided by Emergency Command Center to the units responding to a HAZMAT incident including the name and type of the material involved (e.g., hydrochloric acid and corrosive), the size and quantity of the containers involved, the nature of the problem (e.g., spill, leak) and any known dangerous properties of the materials.

The first-in company approaching the incident should use caution, approach from upwind and upgrade of the incident, establish the Incident Command System (ICS) and begin a size-up of the situation. The purpose of the size-up by the first-in company is to determine the nature and severity of the HAZMAT incident and formulate an initial Incident Action Plan (IAP). While it may be necessary to take immediate action to make a rescue or evacuate an area, any action should be taken with an awareness of the risk to District personnel and making appropriate use of available protective equipment. It is important to avoid the premature commitment of personnel to potentially hazardous locations. In some cases, isolating the incident and denying entry until more resources arrive may be the safest approach.

In assessing the incident, all available references should be used to determine the hazards that are or potentially could be present. These references may include, but are not limited to, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Emergency Response Guidebook, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazards, Safety Data Sheets (SDS), HAZMAT business plans, manifests or bills of lading, National Fire Protection Association placards, U.S. DOT placards and United Nations Substance Identification Numbers. Other sources of information may be available, such as the Chemical Transportation Emergency Center (CHEMTREC®), facility personnel, District specialists or manufacturers of the materials involved.

The hazards presented by a HAZMAT incident may change significantly as the materials interact with other materials, the surrounding environment and the actions taken by responders. Responders should consider site topography, surroundings, other potential hazards and prevailing weather conditions. The initial perimeter established for the incident may need to be expanded

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to establish the appropriate control zones for the response (e.g., exclusion zone, contamination reduction zone, support zone).

Members will comply with the HAZWOPER standards during all HAZMAT incidents (29 CFR 1910.120).

320.4 INCIDENT ACTION PLAN

Most HAZMAT incidents will require the Incident Commander to request additional resources in order to implement the IAP and safely mitigate the hazard. The primary goal of the IAP will be to protect the safety of the public and responders.

The ICS will be used to coordinate resources as the response is reinforced. It is important that duties assigned to personnel are suitable for their level of training under this standard. It is also important to consider the limitations of available personal protective equipment (PPE) and the limitations of chemical detection or monitoring equipment on hand when preparing to commit personnel to a potentially hazardous area.