



# NORFOLK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT, INC

119 YEARS OF SERVICE

JULY 1902 - JULY 2021



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## Hazardous Material Response Plan

The Norfolk Volunteer Fire Department functions at the OPERATIONS level.

When an alarm is received for a hazardous materials incident a full response will be dispatched to the incident.

At the operations level, we possess the basic knowledge and equipment necessary to protect the public from harm due to the exposure of hazardous materials. Prior to responding to a known or suspected hazardous materials incident, all firefighters shall have at minimum Hazardous Materials training at the awareness level.

An incident involving hazardous materials can pose significant risk to the public and responding personnel. While all effort shall be made to protect the public, responders must NOT rush into the incident. Many HAZMAT incidents require the assistance, involvement, and response of other agencies; as such, mitigating the incident can take an extended period of time. All actions shall be based on informed decisions from qualified individuals.

### Responding to HAZMAT Incidents is an Eight-Step Process

- **STEP 1:** Site Management & Control. ...
- **STEP 2:** Identifying the Problem. ...
- **STEP 3:** Hazard & Risk Evaluation. ...
- **STEP 4:** Protective Clothing & Equipment. ...
- **STEP 5:** Information Management & Resource Coordination. ...
- **STEP 6:** Implementing Response Objectives. ...
- **STEP 7:** Decontamination.
- **STEP 8:** Incident Termination

Examples of activities and functions appropriate at the AWARENESS level include:

- Recognition of a Hazmat incident
- Recognition of hazards
- Identifying resource needs
- Initiating response of operations and/or technician level personnel
- Establishing scene control and management

## **Arrival on Scene**

A. The Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG) shall be used to identify containers, chemicals involved, staging, and isolation zones.

B. All units shall stage a safe distance away from the incident in accordance to ERG recommendations and current conditions. When selecting a staging area take into consideration the following: Wind direction, topography, accessibility, proximity to the incident, overhead obstacles, and potential for fire.

C. The first arriving officer should establish command and complete an initial size-up.

D. Isolate the incident from all directions and evacuate as needed. Refuse admittance to the area.

Note: In some situations, sheltering-in-place may be the most viable option.

E. All persons who have been exposed to the material(s) shall be moved to a location where they are isolated from others and the incident so that they may be monitored and decontaminated if necessary.

F. Obtain Safety Data Sheets and any chemical information available. This may include a, waybill, manifest, or other form of shipping papers if the incident involves the transportation of hazardous materials.

G. Make contact with any company representatives and notify the appropriate agencies as needed by the OIC. Ie. D.E.E.P. Response Team, Torrington Hazmat team, Regional Incident Management Team (IMT), Regional Haz-mat Task force, Class B Foam Trailer deployment.

H. Assign an incident safety officer immediately. It is also suggested that the incident commander assign an assistant or scribe to begin documentation of all incident plans and operations.

## **Scene Safety**

### The Four Don'ts

1. Don't become a victim yourself.
2. Don't rush in. Always assess the situation before doing anything. Always minimize exposure by separation and relocating upwind, and uphill. Establish an outer Cold Line perimeter early and control crowds.
3. Don't T.E.S.T. – Taste, eat, smell and touch anything.
4. Don't assume anything – Given the potential for a terrorist event, booby traps, secondary devices and perpetrators may be present.

Safety of personnel must be a top priority. If your personnel are exposed and contaminated they have become part of the problem and must be dealt with immediately. As stated prior, you may not know what you have just rolled into, but if you treat each incident with care and consideration of basic hazardous materials response tactics you can minimize the potential of exposing yourself or your crew to an unknown agent. If you have been exposed to an unknown agent it is imperative that you perform self-decontamination.

A. Establish hot, warm, and cold zones based on the hazard/chemical (utilize barrier tape and natural boundaries)

B. Ensure that unauthorized/untrained personnel do not enter the hazardous area.

C. From a distance/Apparatus P.A. system; Guide contaminated civilians away to a safe area where they can be decontaminated if necessary.

## **Levels of Protection**

Level A – The highest level of skin, respiratory and eye protection. Consists of SCBA and vapor tight, fully encapsulating, chemical protective clothing.

Level B – *\*Highest Level Capable by NVFD\** High level of respiratory and eye protection but a lower level of skin protection. Consists of SCBA and liquid splash-chemical protective clothing.

Level C – Lower level of respiratory, eye and skin protection than Level B. Consists of an air purifying respirator and support function protective clothing.

Level D – Consists of normal work uniform affording minimal protection.

## **Incident Actions**

A. Collaborate with the D.E.E.P., EPA, Local Officials, Company representatives, specialists/technicians, and the HAZMAT team as needed to formulate a mitigation plan if needed.

B. An Incident Action Plan shall be created that identifies exposures, hazards, and incident objectives.

C. All incident actions shall not exceed the scope of the hazardous materials operations level which is limited to establishing command, identifying the materials involved, isolating the incident, and securing the scene. Other actions may occur only if the personnel have the appropriate level of PPE and training to SAFELY carry out the tasks associated with his/her assignments. Chemical Specific PPE must be utilized for mitigating the product involved.

D. Dike and/or dam areas to contain run-off and prevent further contamination of other areas and water sources.

E. Remove all ignition sources if materials are combustible or flammable in nature.

F. Communications and accountability of all incident personnel shall be maintained at all times.

G. Appropriate Decon will be set up prior to any team making entry into the “hot” zone.

## **Reports and Documentation**

A. The release of information regarding the incident shall be controlled by the OIC and the designated Public Information Officer. Only the OIC, County Emergency Management, or other designated Public Information Officer shall have the authority to provide public information.

B. The Incident Action Plan and all operations performed on the incident shall be documented. A written report shall be completed by the OIC and filed with all other documents created.

C. A log of all department personnel who were exposed or potentially exposed shall be maintained during the incident and filed along with other incident reports.

D. A record of all other agencies and their corresponding personnel who responded shall also be kept.

E. A record of all items used that will need to be replaced and any other expenses shall be kept during the incident and filed with the other incident reports.

## **Decontamination**

A Decontamination area must be established prior to any operational task being performed. The positioning should be located in the Warm Zone and exit into the Cold Zone. Only Operationally trained firefighters are permitted to perform decon

Firefighters performing Decon must don the same PPE as the entry team.

Emergency Self Decontamination:

- Wet down prior to removing clothing for nuclear or biological agents
- Blot chemical agents from exposed skin immediately
- Strip off all the clothing
- Flush the affected area with large amounts of water, working from top down
- Cover and seek immediate medical intervention

At a minimum, all members must have on their turnouts with SCBAs and Nitrile gloves. Based on information received prior to arrival

### **Clean-Up & Incident Termination**

Clean up of materials is the sole responsibility of the person or company responsible for the hazardous material(s) incident.

All of the personnel and equipment in contact with the hazardous material(s) shall be decontaminated prior to returning to service.