



COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS FIRE SERVICE POLICY

Policy No. 5900	Date Issued: June 1, 1996
Section: 5900 – Specific Procedures, Continued	Date Revised: July 10, 2023
SUBJECT: HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	
APPROVED: <signed copy on file>	_____
	Chairperson, Fire Service Users Subcommittee
APPROVED: <signed copy on file>	_____
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1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To define a hazardous material
- 1.2 To provide dispatch guidelines for hazardous material incidents

2.0 Hazardous Material

- 2.1 A hazardous material is any material, substance, liquid, vapor, container, etc., which is known or suspected to be hazardous or which cannot be readily identified.
- 2.2 Sewage spills of less than 1000 gallons are not considered a hazardous material. Sewage spills should be handled in concordance with Policy 5901, Sewage Spills.

3.0 Dispatch Guidelines

- 3.1 Attempt to obtain a description of the material and the nature of release (liquid or gas) including the amount and contained, from the caller. Provide all descriptive information to the responding units.
- 3.2 If the incident involves a fire or vehicle accident, use the appropriate incident type and dispatch according to CAD recommendations. Advise the responding units of the possible hazardous material involvement.

- 3.3 Upon the Incident Commander's request, or according to procedure, notify the on-call County Environmental Health Officer and OES Officer of all reports of hazardous material incidents.

4.0 Incident Levels

- 4.1 Fire personnel may refer to a hazardous material incident by level (for example level 1, 2, or 3). When established, provide the level to responding agencies and personnel.
 - 4.1.1 A **Level 1** incident is a minor incident that falls within the mitigation capabilities of the fire jurisdiction, most often within the capabilities of a single engine company. This includes spills of motor fuels less than forty-two gallons and spills of known substances that can be handled without calling additional resources.
 - 4.1.2 A **Level 2** incident is a major incident that poses additional problems to the responding units and requires activation of the county's Haz Mat Response Plan and /or mutual aid response from other agencies. Level 2 incidents require the establishment of an Incident Command System and perimeter zoning and may require localized evacuation. This includes spills of motor fuels in excess of forty-two gallons and quantity of unidentified substances.
 - 4.1.3 A **Level 3** incident is a major emergency that has escalated beyond the capabilities of the local agency's resources. This is the worst-case scenario requiring a major incident command structure and management system and possibly large-scale evacuations.