

	Hampton-Valley Forge Vol. Fire Dept. Standard Operating Guidelines	
	Subject: Response to Potential Anthrax/ Bio-Terrorism Emergencies	SOG # 2-20
	Approved: Fire Chief Chris Isaacs	Initiated 01/01/2019 Revised 01/01/2019

As a result of the heightened awareness of terrorism and extensive media coverage, Carter County can expect to receive calls for service, related to a suspected anthrax exposure. The following procedures are to be followed by Hampton-Valley Forge Volunteer Fire Department personnel in the event of a reported threat or exposure.

1. When the receipt of a threat or exposure is reported to the Emergency Communication Center, the dispatch shall be a hazmat investigation, which includes the first due engine company, EMS company and the Hazmat Team from Carter County EMS. EMS will notify the Emergency Management Agency and Health Department of the incident and someone from E.M.A. will respond directly to the scene. This response should only be initiated if the caller is reporting the presence of a suspicious substance. There are checklists in all apparatus pertaining to potential anthrax exposure that should be utilized in these instances.
2. The response will be *routine* on these particular incidents.
3. By Federal Law, incidents involving weapons of mass destruction, or the threat to use such weapons, is a federal crime. As such, if an actual material or substance is found and it appears to be suspicious the Officer-in-Charge should make sure that the Law Enforcement personnel on scene contact the FBI. The Hazmat Team should collect any substance or suspect packages for evidence. Other than isolating a suspect package or area where a substance is found, there should be no need for fire department personnel to come in contact with the material. The packages should be turned over to E.M.A./Health Department once contained by the Hazmat Team.
4. Anthrax is mainly an inhalation hazard, though a cutaneous form also exists and is caused by direct skin contact. Individuals who are exposed to anthrax do not require decontamination unless they come in physical contact with the substance. They also do not require any medical treatment unless and until a lab test confirms that a substance is anthrax. Therefore, individuals who are in close proximity to a suspected anthrax substance should be removed from the area. Emergency responders should take their names and telephone numbers, inform them that anthrax is not contagious and that they will be contacted within 24 hours with results of the test. If an individual has come in physical contact with a suspect material they should wash affected areas (normally hands). If contact is with clothing, they should remove affected clothing, place it in a

double plastic bag and wash the area thoroughly with soap and water. There is no need to decontaminate the victim(s) in the HAZMAT decon showers in this case.

5. There is no advantage to be gained by field testing a substance or material to determine if it is anthrax. We do not have the capabilities to do so and the suspect package(s) will be taken by E.M.A./Health Department personnel and sent to a laboratory for analysis. Since the incubation time for exposure is 3 to 5 days, exposed people have time to be treated medically if the substance is confirmed as anthrax.
6. Responders handling “unknown” or suspicious spilled substances, shall meet minimum competencies at the “Haz-Mat Technician” level, as required by:
OSHA: 29 CFR 1910.120
EPA: 40 CFR 311
NFPA: 471, 472, 473
7. Suspicious packages and letters may be identified by some of the following characteristics:
 - Excessive postage
 - Handwritten or poorly typed addresses
 - Incorrect titles
 - Title, but no name
 - Misspelling of common words
 - Oily stains, discoloration or odor
 - No return address
 - Excessive weight
 - Lopsided or uneven envelopes
 - Protruding wires or aluminum foil
 - Excessive amounts of packing materials such as tape, string, etc.
 - Markings depicting an explosion, chemical or biological agent release
 - Ticking or other unusual sounds
 - Marked with restrictive endorsements, such as “Personal” and “Confidential”
8. Biological agents can cause infection in the skin, gastrointestinal system or the lungs. In order for this to occur, the organism must be rubbed into abraded skin, swallowed or inhaled as a fine, aerosolized mist. Disease can be prevented after exposure to the anthrax spores by early treatment with the appropriate antibiotics. Anthrax is not spread from one person to another.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN ON RECEIPT OF AN UNOPENED SUSPICIOUS LETTER OR PACKAGE

1. A citizen’s 9-1-1 call will be routed to the Emergency Communications Center. For an unopened package, the caller should be instructed to:
 - a. Do not shake or empty the contents of any suspicious envelope or package.

- b. Place the envelope in a plastic zip lock bag or other type of clear container to prevent leakage of contents. The zip lock bag or clear container should then be placed inside a second zip lock bag or container if possible.
 - c. If they do not have a bag or container, cover the envelope or package with an article of clothing, paper or trashcan. Instruct the caller not to remove this cover.
 - d. Leave the room, close the door or section off the area to prevent others from entering. Leave the building and meet responders outside.
 - e. Wash hands with soap and water to prevent the spread of contaminants to the face.
 - f. Develop a list of anyone who was in the room or area when the suspicious letter or package was discovered. Give this list to the fire and law enforcement responders.
2. When fire and law enforcement arrive at the location, they will interview the caller about the package and determine any actions taken by the caller prior to arrival.
- a. If the caller has placed the letter/package in a container or bag, they will be asked to bring it to a police officer, sheriff's deputy or State Trooper. He/she will inspect the object while leaving it in the container and document the event. Law enforcement officials or fire personnel will take custody of the letter/package. Law enforcement officials and/or fire personnel will then turn over the letter/package to Emergency Management Agency personnel who will deliver to Carter County Health Department.
 - b. If the caller was not able to bag the letter/package then the Haz-Mat team will enter the building in protective clothing to secure the letter/package. The following protective clothing is recommended:
 - Tyvek suit(does not need to be splash resistant)
 - Latex gloves
 - Rubber/latex shoe covers
 - Air purifying respirator with HEPA or P100 filter cartridge
 - Structural firefighter protective clothing and SCBA will also provide sufficient protection.

Personal protective clothing is purely precautionary and this environment is not considered to be immediately dangerous to life and health.

The Haz-Mat Team member will double bag the letter/package and remove it to the outside. The Haz-Mat Team will turn over the bagged letter/package to Emergency Management Agency personnel.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN FOR AN OPENED SUSPICIOUS LETTER OR PACKAGE AND MATERIAL HAS SPILLED

1. A citizen's 9-1-1 call will be routed to the Emergency Communications Center. For an opened letter/package, the caller should be instructed to:
 - a. Do not try to clean up the powder. Carefully cover the spilled contents immediately with an article of clothing, paper or trashcan. Try to avoid creating air currents, which may cause the substance to become airborne. Do not remove this cover.
 - b. Leave the room, close the door or section off the area to prevent others from entering. Leave the building and meet responders outside.
 - c. Wash hands with soap and water to prevent the spread of contaminants to the face.
 - d. Remove heavily contaminated clothing as soon as possible and place in a plastic bag or some other container that can be sealed. This clothing bag should be given to emergency responders for proper handling.
 - e. Shower with soap and water as soon as possible. Do not use bleach or other disinfectant. If the individual is not at their home or a shower capability is not available, the fire department will provide a means of decontamination.
 - f. Develop a list of anyone who was in the room or area when the suspicious letter or package was discovered, especially those who had actual contact with the material. Give this list to the fire and law enforcement responders so that proper instructions can be given for medical follow-up and further investigation.
2. If the local Hazmat Team (NACW) is not available, Emergency Communications should request assistance from the Tennessee Department of the Environment. Law enforcement will dispatch officers for investigation, traffic control and scene security. Local health department officials must be notified and should be by Emergency Management Agency personnel.
3. When fire and law enforcement arrive at the location, an interview of the caller will be done in regards to the letter/package and determine any actions taken by the caller prior to arrival. This may be done verbally or by phone. If communicating verbally, remember to be upwind and at a sufficient reasonable distance that cross contamination is not likely.
4. On-scene engine company(s) will provide support to the Hazmat Team.
5. The Hazmat team will ensure that the occupants of the affected area are identified. If self decon has not been performed and is an option it should be done immediately. If self decon is not a viable option, the Hazmat team will commence decon operations and collection of potentially contaminated clothing.
6. Potentially exposed personnel will be evaluated by an EMS unit after decontamination for baseline patient assessment and documentation (MAIS sheet and Additional

Narrative). Exposed personnel should be referred to see their physician for monitoring and/or treatment if law enforcement and Hazmat personnel determine that there is a credible threat of exposure based on the circumstances of the incident and on scene characterization of the material.

For cases where no credible threat is determined, those persons potentially exposed should be advised to seek medical attention **if** they start to develop flu like symptoms.

7. The Hazmat Team will make a Level B or C entry (depending on available equipment). An Air Purifying Respirator with HEPA or P-100 filter will provide sufficient respiratory protection in this situation. The entry team will secure the agent by double bagging and placing in an appropriate container. The Hazmat entry team may photograph the letter/package prior to securing the agent. The entry team should clean up as much spilled agent as possible by placing it into double bags. The affected surface should be sprayed with a 0.5% bleach solution and allowed to stand for 10 minutes. The surface may then be wiped dry or rinsed as appropriate.
8. The Hazmat entry team will decon per their standard operating guidelines.
9. Emergency Management officials at the scene will take custody of the contained letter/package. If law enforcement and Hazmat personnel determine that there is credible threat of exposure based on the circumstances of the incident and on scene characterization of the material, then a sample of the material should be forwarded to the DHMH Laboratory in Baltimore for further analysis.
10. Results from state laboratory will be communicated to the local health department for proper notifications.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN IF A ROOM IS CONTAMINATED BY AN AEROSOL

(Examples: aerosol device discharged, warning is received that the air handling system has been contaminated or warning is received that a biological or chemical agent has been released into a public space)

1. A citizen's 9-1-1 call will be routed to Emergency Communications Center. The caller should be instructed to:
 - a. Turn off local fans or ventilation units.
 - b. Leave the area immediately
 - c. Close the door or section off area to prevent others from entering.
 - d. If available, notify the building security official or any available supervisor.
 - e. Shut down the air handling system in the building, if possible.

- f. Remove heavily contaminated clothing as soon as possible and place in a plastic bag or some other container that can be sealed. This clothing bag should be given to emergency responders for proper handling.
 - g. Shower with soap and water as soon as possible. Do not use bleach or other disinfectant. If the individual is not at their home or a shower capability is not available, the fire department will provide a means of decontamination.
 - h. Develop a list of anyone who was in the room or area when the suspicious letter/package was discovered, especially those who had actual contact with the material. Give this list to law enforcement responders, Emergency Management Agency personnel so that proper instructions can be given for medical follow up and further investigation.
2. A Hazmat Assignment will be dispatched. If the local Hazmat Team (NAWC) is not available, assistance from the Tennessee Department of the Environment should be requested. Law enforcement will be dispatched for investigation, traffic control, and scene security. Local health department officials must also be notified.
3. When fire and law enforcement personnel arrive at the location, they will interview the caller about the package and determine any actions taken by the caller prior to arrival. This may be done verbally or by phone. If communicating verbally, remember to be upwind and at a sufficient reasonable distance that cross contamination is not likely.
4. On scene engine companies will provide support to the Hazmat Team.
5. The Hazmat Team will ensure that the occupants of the affected area are identified. If self decon has not been performed, the Hazmat Team will commence decon operations and collection of potentially contaminated clothing.
6. An EMS unit will evaluate potentially exposed personnel after decontamination for baseline patient assessment and documentation (MAIS sheet and Additional Narrative). Exposed personnel should be referred to see their physician for monitoring and/or treatment if law enforcement and Hazmat personnel determine that there is a credible threat of exposure based on circumstances of the incident and on scene characterization of the material.
7. The Hazmat Team will make a Level B or C entry (depending on available equipment). An Air Purifying Respirator with HEPA or P-100 filter will provide sufficient respiratory protection in this situation. The entry team will secure the agent (if possible) by double bagging and placing in an appropriate container. The Hazmat entry team may photograph the site and objects of interest as needed. The entry team should clean up as much spilled agent as possible by placing it into double bags. The affected surface should be sprayed with a 0.5% bleach solution and allowed to stand for 10 minutes. The surface may then be wiped dry or rinsed as appropriate.
8. The Hazmat entry team will decon per their SOG.
9. Emergency Management officials at the scene will take custody of the contained letter/package.

10. Results from the state laboratory will be communicated to the local health department for proper notifications.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AT POTENTIAL EXPLOSIVES INCIDENTS

1. Law enforcement will dispatch an officer(s).
 - a. Officers shall establish a 300 foot perimeter (car and truck bombs require larger distances (500-1500 feet)). Refer to the Bio-Chem Handbook
 - b. Officers shall detain persons who were in the vicinity of the event.
 - c. Officers will establish an area of safe refuge and relocate everyone involved to that area for interviews.
 - d. Officers shall not enter potentially hazardous areas.
 - e. Officers shall establish and control perimeters.
 - f. Officers shall initiate crime scene policies and procedures.
2. Law enforcement will notify the State Fire Marshal's Office Bomb Squad for all incidents.
3. Due consideration must be given to the possibility of secondary devices.
4. Law enforcement and/or fire personnel will notify the Department of Emergency Management.
5. Upon request or if an actual device is located, law enforcement personnel will request an engine company and EMS unit to stand by.
6. The Officer in Charge on the Engine Company will make contact with the ranking law enforcement officer and establish a unified command.
7. The Engine Company is to ensure evacuation has been completed and to coordinate protection of the bomb technician and the entire scene.
8. All of these events are potential crimes and the scenes are crime scenes. Chain of custody and evidence rules apply.

NOTE: All personnel are to review the SOG 2-22 "Response to Incidents Involving Weapons of Mass Destruction" for additional information.