

#### RELATED TERMS

- Chemical Release
- Evacuation
- Shelter-In-Place



## Lessons Learned Information Sharing

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#### PRIMARY DISCIPLINES

- Emergency Management
- Hazardous Materials
- Law Enforcement

## LESSON LEARNED

### Hazardous Materials Response: Ensuring that Law Enforcement Officers are Trained in the Use of Personal Protective Equipment

#### SUMMARY

Police departments should ensure that police officers responding to hazardous materials incidents are briefed on specific incident conditions and are equipped with and trained on the proper use, capabilities, and limitations of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

#### DESCRIPTION

At 11:30 a.m. on November 17, 2003, the failure of a safety mechanism at a chemical repackaging facility in Glendale, Arizona, led to an uncontrolled release of chlorine gas into the environment. The release led to the evacuation of a one and a half square-mile area surrounding the facility and the implementation of shelter-in-place procedures at a nearby elementary school. Firefighters and police officers from the cities of Glendale, Phoenix, and Tempe responded to the incident. Police officers used their vehicles' public address systems to broadcast evacuation notices to residents in the hazard zone.

The Glendale Police Department dispatched officers to the hazard zone without first directing them to a staging area where they could be briefed on incident conditions, review safety procedures, and test their PPE. As a result, several officers operated in the hazard zone without wearing respiratory protection or any other form of PPE. Eleven of these officers eventually sought medical attention for symptoms resulting from chlorine exposure. Following the incident, the US Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board recommended that police officers be trained in the use of PPE and briefed on incident conditions prior to responding to hazardous materials incidents.

Police departments should ensure that police officers responding to hazardous materials incidents are briefed on specific incident conditions and are equipped with and trained on the proper use, capabilities, and limitations of appropriate protective equipment.

#### CITATION

US Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board. *Investigation Report: Chlorine Release (16 Medically Evaluated, Community Evacuated)*. Feb 2007.

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