



**DAYTON, OHIO REGIONAL
HAZ-MAT RESPONSE TEAM
NEWSLETTER**

June 2005

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Dry Decon

WHAT is dry decon? WHY and HOW do we do it? The following information was shared with us by our longtime friend and former Haz-Mat Team member, Dr. Jim Augustine, M.D. Jim is currently the Medical Director at the Atlanta, Georgia Fire Department and his son, Josh, is a firefighter with Washington Township and West Carrollton. Many thanks to Dr. Augustine for some thought-provoking ideas.

Biological agents almost always are managed with dry decon. Do it as soon as the contamination is recognized and contain the dirty clothing. Use a dry decon kit, if one is available. Typically, biological contamination does not have the same time urgency as chemical contamination. Consider input from the medical control physician or the local Health Department.

A **Decontamination Pack** should include the following contents:

- A printed plastic bag with a cinch tie at the top. On one side instructions should be printed on how to use the decontamination pack (these instructions are listed in Attachment A.) The other side should contain a blank space with a surface that can be written on. .
- A large pair of non-sterile hospital gloves should be attached to the outside of the bag.

- The bag should contain the following contents:
 - An instruction sheet on how to properly dispose of belongings.
 - A small, clear, plastic bag marked VALUABLES, with a writing surface for the victim's name. This bag should be able to be sealed, so a 10 inch Zip-Lock type bag would be ideal.
 - A marking pen for writing the victim's name on the bags.
 - Post decontamination clothing for the victim—inexpensive, lightweight cloth coveralls of a standard color would be ideal (like old hospital scrubs.) Ideally, the color of these clothes will be distinct, so victims will not be mistaken for emergency workers (bleach the old hospital scrubs, or dye them.)
 - Foot coverings (booties)
 - A personal mask to cover the victim's nose and mouth.
 - 2 wet wipe napkins
 - Another dry soft wipe to clean glasses or hearing aids.
 - An identification bracelet

- Instructions for proper disposal of clothing
- A second pair of non-sterile gloves (placed inside the bag.)

Using this pack and its instructions will facilitate rapid cleaning of large numbers of people. Each of the decon packs would be self-contained, and with minimal instruction by the emergency staff, would allow the victims to be uniformly cleaned and masked and carrying a bag of valuables that includes their identification documents, as well as placing a bag of (potentially) dirty belongings in a central collecting area. After the victims have been appropriately assessed and any care provided, the emergency staff should have determined whether it is safe to return the bag of belongings. The only additional items that that victims might need at the end of the incident are follow-up instructions and any prescriptions.

INSTRUCTIONS PRINTED ON BAG

- Peel the gloves off the outside of the bag and put them on.
- Empty the bag onto the ground. Find the clear plastic bag marked VALUABLES and the marking pen.
- Write your name with the magic marker on the main bag and the bag for your VALUABLES.
- Take your valuables and put them in the VALUABLES bag and seal it. This bag will stay with you during the decontamination process. The bag with your clothing and shoes will remain outside.
- Use the dry wipes in the bag to wash off your glasses, hearing aid, or other medical device that must stay with you.
- Use the wet wipes in the bag to wash off your face. Throw the wet wipes away.
- Put the surgical mask on your face.

- Remove all of your clothing, shoes first, and place them in the bag. Do not shake out or wave your clothing!
- Close the bag, twist and secure the opening with the tie band, and make sure your name is readable.
- Put on the scrubs and foot coverings from the bag.
- Remove your gloves and place in the trash.
- Put the identification bracelet on your wrist.
- The other items from the bag include instructions for cleaning or disposing of your dirty clothes, and a second set of gloves to use in disposing of these clothes.
- If rescue officials ask you to leave contaminated belongings with them, please do so. It may be dangerous to you and your family.
- Bring your two bags (the bag with your clothing and your valuables bag) to the next step in the cleaning process. You will most likely be keeping the bag of valuables with you, and the bag of contaminated belongings will be left outside in a secured area.

Hospitals should lead the effort to design and prepare Decontamination Packs for use by EMS, Fire, Police, and HAZ-MAT agencies outside the hospital. The community should approach exposure incidents in a consistent manner. Depending on the nature of exposures, most situations will be managed by "dry" decontamination using the process and the materials provided in the Decontamination Pack. The process described, and the use of these packs, will facilitate the rapid decontamination and reclothing of large numbers of victims.

With economies of scale, it is likely that the materials and bags described could be

assembled for less than \$5 apiece. Preparing hundreds of these packs, which have an indefinite shelf life, and distributing them to public safety agencies represents a cost-efficient method for communities to prepare for mass casualty incidents of a chemical, biological, or nuclear nature.

Many thanks to Dr. Augustine for some thought-provoking ideas.

New Vehicle Update

The new *Haz-Mat 1* has been delivered and we are expecting to get it in-service in the next few weeks.

June Training

This month's training will be held on the 16th, 17th and 18th at the Dayton Fire Training Center on McFadden Avenue off of Springfield Street. 0900-1200 hours each day. We will be reviewing monitoring and detection equipment and techniques.

2005 Training Schedule

June 16-17-18

0900-1200 hours
DFD Training Center

July 21-22-23

0900-1200 hours

August 18-19-20

0900-1200 hours

September 15-16-17

0900-1700 hours

October 20-21-22

0900-1200 hours

November 17-18-19

0900-1200 hours

December

No Training