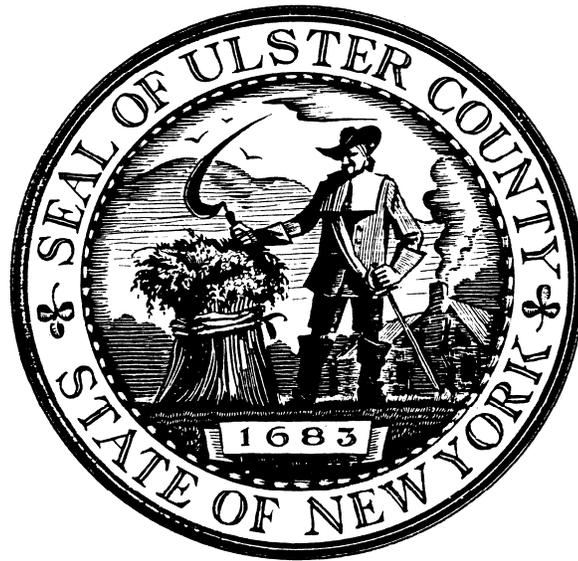


Ulster County

Fire Service



Hazardous Materials Response Plan

August 2011

ULSTER COUNTY FIRE SERVICE
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS RESPONSE PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This Hazardous Materials Response Plan for Ulster County is developed to meet statutory planning requirements of Section 204F, General Municipal Law, State of New York, the federal Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA Title III) and to provide the fire service of Ulster County with a higher degree of preparedness to deal with incidents involving hazardous materials in a safer and more efficient manner.

This plan is designed to serve as an Annex to the County Fire Mutual Aid Plan, the Ulster County Hazardous Material Response Plan developed by the Local Emergency Planning Committee and the Ulster County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

Objectives

The objectives of this plan are to:

1. Identify probable locations of hazardous material incidents and to assess the levels of vulnerability associated with those locations.
2. Identify a command and control structure which places responsibility for each of the pre-response, response and post-response phases.
3. Define the organizational responsibilities and relationships among city, county, fire district, state and federal agencies.
4. Identify the various agencies and organizations that have a role in hazardous material response.
5. Identify and outline procedures and the system to disseminate information to responders and the general public.
6. Establish and identify a central location for initial notification of a hazardous material incident.
7. Identify resources available to assist emergency responders during a response to a hazardous material incident.
8. Clarify and identify the various responsibilities associated with the response to a hazardous materials incident including tactical and evacuation considerations.
9. Set a policy for review and testing of this plan.

HAZARD ANALYSIS/VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Purpose

The purpose of the plan is to identify those areas of Ulster County most prone to a hazardous material incident, and to evaluate the impact on life, property and the environment at these locations.

Process

To make a determination on where in Ulster County the fire service is most likely to encounter a hazardous material incident, four general factors were considered:

1. Historically, where have hazardous materials incidents been encountered?
2. What loss of life or property could result from an incident?
3. Whether or not the local fire service would be involved if the event occurred.
4. Whether specific plans are needed to respond safely and efficiently to an incident at a specific location.

The answers received reflect local knowledge and experience.

Situation

As a result of a hazard analysis, it was determined that in Ulster County the most likely place for the fire service to encounter a hazardous material incident is in the transportation of hazardous materials over our highways.

The second most likely place for fire service to encounter a hazardous material incident is in the transportation of hazardous materials by rail.

The third most likely place for the fire service to encounter a hazardous material incident is in fixed facilities either using or producing hazardous materials.

Most hazardous material transportation incidents occur on state and interstate highways. The CSX rail line running along the eastern boundary of Ulster County also presents a significant exposure. The railroad, along with the identified state highway routes comprise the transportation corridors presenting the greatest threat of a hazardous material incident and, consequently, present the largest vulnerable population to the effects of a hazardous material incident.

NOTIFICATION AND ALERTING

Purpose

Timely notification and alerting will provide initial dispatch information to the local fire departments and other emergency response organizations of a hazardous material emergency, and for the subsequent notification of the general public of the appropriate actions to take.

Situation

Timely, informative, and accurate notification of a hazardous material emergency is critical for an effective emergency response. When receiving a report of a hazardous material incident, the Ulster County Emergency Communications Center will obtain as much information as possible from the calling party including, but not limited to, incident location, type(s) of vehicles involved, whether or not there is an obvious spill or fire, information regarding injuries, and contact information for the calling party.

Note: Ulster County operates a centralized 911 public safety answering point (PSAP) responsible for receiving reports of all emergency situations and dispatching the appropriate fire department, emergency medical services and police agencies.

Once a report of a hazardous material incident is received, the following agencies are notified: (1) local Fire Department EMS agency and police department, (2) area Deputy Fire Coordinator, (3) County Fire Coordinator and (4) Director of Emergency Management.

The incident commander may request notification of the incident be made to DEC Spill Hotline (1-800-457-7362), OFPC (1-518-474 6746), or the NYS Warning Point (1-518-292-2200).

A release of a hazardous material into the environment could quickly bring harm to public health. The public, however, can be protected through the implementation of emergency protective actions. In order for protective actions to be effective, the public must be first, warned or alerted that an emergency exists and second, instructed on what to do. To notify the general public a variety of methods may be used including door to door notification, messages distributed via commercial broadcasters, NY Alert and/or the CityWatch notification system.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

Purpose

To provide for effective leadership, coordination and unified on-scene command of emergency response forces in the event of a hazardous material emergency.

Situation

A hazardous material emergency may require a broad range of on-scene response organizations, including: emergency services personnel from all levels of government; industry representatives; private contractors and the media. The need for specialized equipment and technical knowledge during response may also be extensive, as are the number of critical decisions that must be made in areas of release containment, emergency worker safety, public protective actions and environmental protection.

In Ulster County, response organizations are trained to operate under the Incident Command System (ICS) utilizing a Unified Command Structure to perform these response duties. Also, response organizations often utilize the county mutual aid system to provide the necessary response required to deal with any specific incident. Therefore, this plan will reflect usage of the ICS and mutual aid when dealing with Hazardous Materials Response situations.

Command and Control begins with the initial local response, but is expanded as the emergency escalates to a larger response that may be directed by the county, or possibly the state.

Participating Agencies

1. Local:
 - a. Chief Executive
 - b. Fire Departments
 - c. EMS
 - d. Police
 - e. Public Works
 - f. Other Volunteer Groups
2. County
 - a. County Executive
 - b. Office of the Fire Coordinator
 - c. Office of Emergency Management
 - d. County Health Department
 - e. Public Information Officer
 - f. Public Works Department
 - g. Sheriff's Department
3. State Agencies
4. Federal Agencies
5. City of Kingston Fire Department's Haz-Mat Response Team
6. New York City Department of Environmental Protection
7. Facility and Transportation Representatives
8. Industry Teams and Specialists
9. Contractors

Note: Refer to Section of the Ulster County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan for additional information on the county's emergency response organizational structure.

Response Procedures

Unified Command

This plan addresses the need to insure Command and Control for a multi-jurisdiction/multi-agency response to a hazardous material emergency, which highlights the demand for a unified command structure among responding organizations under the direction of one Incident Commander. The concept of “Unified Command” simply means that all agencies who have jurisdictional responsibilities and authority at an incident will contribute to the process of:

- ▶ Determining overall response objectives
- ▶ Selection of response strategies
- ▶ Ensuring joint planning and application of tactical activities
- ▶ Ensuring integrated planning and application of operational requirements including: emergency protective measures, containment, safety and security
- ▶ Maximizing use of available resources

Incident Commander

Upon notification of a hazardous material emergency, the ranking officer of the local fire department with jurisdiction and authority will act as initial Incident Commander. As the situation escalates to include additional agencies, then the Incident Commander will be designated by mutual agreement of the primary responding agencies. This designation would be based on the following criteria:

- ▶ Agency with the greatest jurisdictional involvement and authority; or
- ▶ Agency with the greatest number of resources committed; or
- ▶ Agency with the greatest degree of technical knowledge and qualifications regarding the situation

As the situations and conditions surrounding the emergency change, the Incident Commander may also change. Each discipline will continue their involvement in the Unified Command structure, and will be responsible for providing the required level of support.

Command Post

The Incident Commander will assess the emergency situation and, if appropriate, establish a Command Post. The Incident Commander should also declare a Response Level according to the Response Level Criteria listed in this section. Upon notification of a hazardous material emergency, the Deputy Fire Coordinator will contact the Incident Commander to assess the situation. This contact can be made by radio, telephone or personal contact.

Note: The Command Post is the location from which all on-scene operations are directed. There should be one Command Post for an emergency. In a unified command, under the Incident Commander, each of the responding agencies designates a senior staff member or officer to be located at the Command Post where integrated communications systems should be available and where major operational planning and decision-making

takes place. In a unified command structure, individual agencies can choose to establish an independent site from which to base their operations, but that site is not a Command Post and they must participate in Command and Control at the designated Command Post.

Response Level Criteria

Level I: Local emergency personnel handle incidents which are within the capabilities and resources of the organization. Action is focused on recognition, identification and basic decision-making with emphasis on the safety of the public, as well as that of emergency personnel.

Level II: An incident which is beyond the capabilities of local emergency response personnel. This level involves regionalized or other appropriately organized response teams which are proficient in the use of specialized protective equipment, detection devices and leak and spill control equipment.

Level III: A major disaster requiring the use of resources from the state, federal and private sector – whereas Levels I and II incidents generally last several hours, Level III incidents are complex emergencies lasting days.

Declaring a Response Level

The Incident Commander should declare a Response Level. If a response level has not been declared, the Deputy Fire Coordinator should provide advice to the On-Scene Commander in declaring a Response Level.

Authority - Dynamics and Transfer

Just as the dynamics of on-scene Command and Control operations expand and change as an incident escalates, leadership and authority may also have to be transferred as an emergency expands. In this regard, the following criteria could be used to determine where Command and Control authority should be centered:

- ▶ Geographic area involved
- ▶ Single or multiple-jurisdictions affected
- ▶ Number of response agencies
- ▶ Resource commitments
- ▶ Response operational requirements (fire fighting, environmental contamination, public health impacts, evacuation, containment, emergency medical)

Based on these criteria, authority, unified command and the designation of an Incident Commander could change as a hazardous material emergency expands.

Command Responsibilities

Response Level I:

- ▶ Ranking officer of the local fire department serves as Incident Commander
- ▶ Incident Commander establishes liaison with the facility Emergency Coordinator or transporter
- ▶ Incident Commander evaluates the need to declare a higher response level, if appropriate

Response Level II:

- ▶ Ranking Officer of the Fire Department with primary jurisdiction and authority serves as Incident Commander
- ▶ Command Post is established
- ▶ Incident Commander evaluates the need to fill out the incident command organizational chart
- ▶ Incident Commander designates a Safety Officer
- ▶ County Emergency Manager notifies and briefs the local and county Chief Executive
- ▶ County Emergency Manager briefs the Public Information Officer and activates the PIO, if necessary
- ▶ County Emergency Manager and Chief Executive evaluate the need to declare a local State of Emergency under NYS Executive Law, Article 2-B
- ▶ County Emergency Manager notifies the State Emergency Management District Office (454-0430), the 24-hr State Warning Point (518-292-2200) and NYS OFPC (518-474-6746) as needed
- ▶ Incident Commander, Deputy Fire Coordinator, Fire Coordinator or Emergency Manager evaluate the existing designation of the Incident Commander

Response Level III:

- ▶ Designation of the Incident Commander should be re-evaluated at this level based on the scope and technical complexity of the emergency. The Incident Commander, Deputy Fire Coordinator, Fire Coordinator and County Emergency Manager will confer with additional state resources and subject matter experts to determine an appropriate Incident Commander
- ▶ Command Post required; consideration should be given to opening the County Emergency Operations Center
- ▶ Incident Commander will designate a Deputy and key assistants as required under the format of the Incident Command System
- ▶ Safety Officer required
- ▶ Chief Executive declares a local State of Emergency under NYS Executive Law, Article 2-B, if appropriate
- ▶ County Emergency Manager notifies the NYS Office of Emergency Management (if not already involved)
- ▶ Public Information Officer activated

Response Level III could be of the magnitude that requires resources from New York State. The State Emergency Management Office coordinates the activation of the State's resources in an emergency.

State Assistance

1. State agency personnel will work with their local or county agency counterparts as appropriate.
2. State agency personnel will monitor the response, assess the situation and act as advisor when the local or county agency is controlling the response.
3. When local and county resources are fully committed, the county may formally request state assistance for any of the necessary activities or request a State Disaster Declaration.
4. Once a State Disaster Declaration is made, the State assumes direction of the incident response.

Tactical Considerations

To the extent possible, utilizing available resources, the following priorities or actions should be initiated by first responders under the direction of the Incident Commander.

1. Ensure safety of emergency personnel and others in the area.
2. All responders must be briefed on hazards and precautions before entering the scene.
3. Determine the hazard and its potential effects, through reference materials, guidebooks and CHEMTREC.
4. Carefully rescue injured or endangered persons.
5. Evaluate the need for traffic control and evacuation.
6. Communicate current status information to the appropriate dispatchers and request any additional resources needed.
7. Assess resources which are available or on standby.
8. Prevent container failure.
9. Avoid runoff water which may be hazardous.
10. Extinguish ignited materials where this can be safely done.
11. Control or neutralize the hazard.
12. Carefully contain any spill if necessary.
13. Coordinate cleanup and site remediation with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and private contractors.
14. RECORD IDENTIFICATION OF ALL PERSONS AT THE SCENE OR POSSIBLY EXPOSED.

Note: The County of Ulster has a contractual relationship with the City of Kingston to provide hazardous materials response throughout Ulster County as requested by a local Incident Commander. This specialized service is provided through the City of Kingston Fire Department's hazardous materials response team. The team is trained and equipped to perform initial assessment and spill control. The team will not perform cleanup duties.

Special Evacuation Considerations

1. Nearby people should be isolated from any spill or leak of any material suspected to be hazardous. Depending on the circumstances, this may be accomplished by in-place sheltering or by physical movement away from the site.
2. The hazard must be assessed to determine the need for further isolation and evacuation for surrounding and downwind areas.
3. Recommended distances for evacuation areas are given in:
 - a. Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Guidebook and other reference material.
 - b. Diagrams found in Emergency Action Guide for selected Hazardous Material.
 - c. CHEMTREC guidance.
4. Evacuation distance should be modified according to the following considerations:
 - a. A hazardous cloud passing between several tall buildings or down a valley may not disperse normally, and downwind evacuation distances may need to be increased.
 - b. If fire is involved, the poisonous effects may be altered resulting in a need to decrease or increase the evacuation distance.
 - c. If containers are involved in a fire, a possible explosion and container fragmentation hazard may require isolation in all directions of up to one-half mile.
5. In some situations, evacuation may be impossible or unwise. Because of the time factors for large or tall buildings, it may be wise to consider sheltering people inside and shutting off the air handling system.
6. Evacuees should be directed to areas not likely to be involved if the situation worsens or the wind changes direction.
7. Continuing re-assessment will be necessary because there may be a change in conditions such as:
 - a. Fire, toxicity or reactivity.
 - b. Spill increase or decrease.
 - c. Involvement of multiple hazards.
 - d. Wind direction.

TRAINING AND EXERCISING

The Ulster County Office of Fire Coordinator will work with the local fire departments and community leaders to evaluate the hazardous materials training needs of local emergency personnel. The County Office of the Fire Coordinator will coordinate local training initiatives annually to ensure consistency with the Hazardous Materials Plan and will maximize training resources available from all levels of government and the private sector.

PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATE

THE ULSTER COUNTY FIRE SERVICE HAZARDOUS MATERIAL RESPONSE PLAN will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary by the County Fire Coordinator.