



**County of Ulster**  
**Department of Emergency Services**  
Division of Fire Services  
Fire Mutual Aid Plan – Hazardous Materials Response Plan Annex

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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 first responders 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 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 decide where in Ulster County first responders will most likely encounter a hazardous material incident, four general factors are 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 first responders to encounter a hazardous material incident is in the transportation of hazardous materials over our highways.

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

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

## **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 public on 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 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. Battalion Fire Coordinator
3. Director of Emergency Services
4. Deputy Director/County Fire Coordinator
5. Deputy Director/Emergency Manager

The incident commander may request notification of the incident be made to:

1. New York State Department of environment Conservation Spill Hotline
2. New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control
3. New York State Watch Center

A release of a hazardous material into the environment may become harmful to public health. The public, however, can be protected through the implementation of emergency protective actions. 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 public a variety of methods may be used:

- IPAWS
- NY Alert
- Swift 9-1-1
- Social Media
- Door to Door Notification
- Messages distributed via commercial broadcasters

## **Command and Control**

### **Purpose**

To provide for effective leadership, coordination, and unified on-scene command of emergency first responders 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
- Volunteer Organizations
- 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. Department of Emergency Services
  - c. Department of Health
  - d. Public Information Officer
  - e. Department of Public Works
  - f. Sheriff's Office
3. State Agencies
4. Federal Agencies
5. City of Kingston Fire Department HazMat Response Team
6. New York City Department of Environmental Protection
7. Facility and Transportation Representatives
8. Industry Team 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 Procedure**

#### **Unified Command**

This plan addresses the need to ensure 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 declare a Response Level according to the Response Level Criteria listed in this section. Upon notification of a hazardous material emergency, the Battalion 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 0:**

An incident controlled by the facility or local response jurisdiction, where control of the incident is within their capabilities and resources.

### **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 Battalion Fire Coordinator may advise 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 (firefighting, 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, unless Unified Command is established
- Command Post is established
- Incident Commander evaluates the need to fill out the incident command organizational chart
- Incident Commander designates a Safety Officer
- County Director of Emergency Services notifies and briefs the local and County Chief Executive
- County Director of Emergency Services and Deputy Director/Emergency Manager briefs the Public Information Officer and activates the Joint Information System/Joint Information Center (JIS/JIC), if necessary
- Director of Emergency Services, Deputy Director/Emergency Manager and Chief Executive evaluate the need to declare a local State of Emergency under NYS Executive Law, Article 2-B
- Deputy Director/Emergency Manager notifies:
  - State Emergency Management Regional Director
  - New York State Watch Center
  - New York State Office of Fire Prevention Control (as needed)
- Incident Commander, Battalion Fire Coordinator, Director of Emergency Services, Deputy Director/Fire Coordinator and Deputy Director/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, Battalion Fire Coordinator, Director of Emergency Services, Deputy Director/Fire Coordinator and Deputy Director/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
- Deputy Director/Emergency Manager notifies the NYS Office of Emergency Management (if not already involved)
- JIS/JIC 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.

### **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 status information to the appropriate dispatchers and request any additional resources needed.
7. Assess resources which are available.
8. Prevent container failure, if needed
9. Avoid runoff water which may be hazardous.
10. Extinguish ignited materials using ERG or manufacture recommendations
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 plume with modeling based on the weather conditions
  - b. If fire is involved.
  - c. If containers are involved in a fire
5. In some situations, sheltering people in place and shutting off the air handling system may be considered
6. Evacuees should be directed to safe areas within the current situation and conditions
7. Continuing re-assessment will be necessary for changes in conditions such as:
  - a. Fire, toxicity, or reactivity.
  - b. Spill increase or decrease.
  - c. Involvement of multiple hazards.
  - d. Wind direction.

***Note:** Executive Order 125 directs New York State agencies to strengthen the state's preparedness for incidents involving the transportation of crude oil. In response, the DEC led a multi-stakeholder effort with the guidance of county and local responders and municipal workers to develop Inland Geographic Response Plans (GRPs). These GRPs are reviewed on a yearly basis between OBG (consulting firm hired by NYS), the local Authority Having Jurisdiction and the Ulster County Department of Emergency Services. GRPs are map-based, location specific incident plans that provide guidance to first responders to maintain situational awareness during the initial stages of incidents involving the transportation of crude oil. They are used for a variety of accidents including tanker truck rollovers on major highways, large facility fires, and flooding events. Designed as a one-page layout, on-scene first responders are given a broader picture of what is happening, what is being changed, and what relief steps can be taken. They help to identify assets, infrastructure, or receptors that were initially overlooked.*

### **Training and Exercising**

The Ulster County Department of Emergency Services, Division of Fire Services will work with the local fire departments and community leaders to evaluate the hazardous materials training

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needs of local emergency personnel. The Ulster County Department of Emergency Services, Division of Fire Services 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 Hazardous Materials Response Plan will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary by the Ulster County Department of Emergency Services, Division of Fire Services.