

OPERATIONS-HEADQUARTERS BUREAU

NOTICE

8.2.3

June 3, 1999

TO: All Commanding Officers

FROM: Commanding Officer, Operations-Headquarters Bureau

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS BULLETIN – INCIDENTS INVOLVING
TENTED STRUCTURES

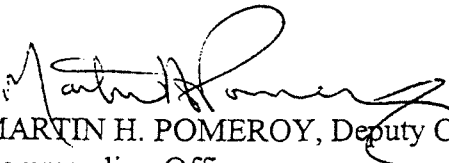
Recently, Department personnel responded to a "burglary in progress" at a single-family residence that was undergoing tent fumigation. The primary unit apprehended one suspect outside, a second suspect fled on foot, and a possible third suspect was thought to be inside the structure. Three officers "stuck" their heads inside the tenting (near the front door) to look for this suspect. This resulted in the officers becoming chemically contaminated. All three were transported to a local hospital for decontamination and medical treatment.

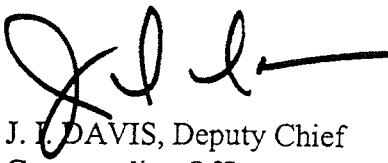
While focusing on the suspect's actions and disregarding the chemical hazard, the officers risked incapacitation, and long-term illness or death, by exposing themselves to poisons without proper protective equipment.

Attached is the Emergency Preparedness Bulletin, Volume 3, Number 1, titled "Incidents Involving Tented Structures." This bulletin has been prepared by the Emergency Operations Section to provide guidance to Department personnel when responding to a tented structure. Commanding Officers shall ensure this bulletin is distributed to all Department personnel. Additionally, patrol watch commanders shall discuss the contents of this bulletin at roll calls.

Any questions regarding this correspondence can be directed to Lieutenant C. G. Roper, Emergency Operations Section, (213) 485-4011.

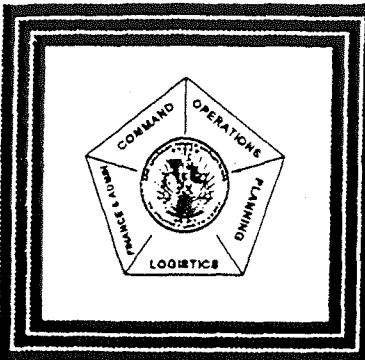
APPROVED:


MARTIN H. POMEROY, Deputy Chief
Commanding Officer
Operations-Headquarters Bureau


J. I. DAVIS, Deputy Chief
Commanding Officer
Human Resources Bureau

Attachment

Distribution "B"



Los Angeles Police Department EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

BULLETIN

Volume 3, Number 1

April 1999

Prepared by Emergency Operations Section

INCIDENTS INVOLVING TENTED STRUCTURES

Chemicals used to fumigate structures are designed to do one thing, kill infestations of pests. These chemicals are extremely toxic (poisonous) and are equally dangerous to humans without proper protection. Methyl Bromide, Sulfuryl Fluoride and Chloropicrin are three chemicals primarily used in the fumigation of business and residential structures. Methyl Bromide and Sulfuryl Fluoride are poison gases. Chloropicrin is a poisonous liquid and all are "poison-inhalation hazards." All three chemicals are extremely toxic and very small amounts can cause incapacitation, long-term illness, and/or death.

Note: When applied, these chemicals may persist for up to three days in a lethal dose.

Officers responding to a call for service or a crime in progress at a fumigated structure should make no attempt to enter the structure or "stick their heads" inside to search for suspects. Without proper protective equipment, officers risk chemical contamination, illness and death. This bulletin provides guidelines for response to an incident at a structure that is being fumigated.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

Officers conducting an investigation at a tented structure location shall notify the Hazardous Materials/Environmental Crimes Unit (HM/ECU) for technical advice and guidance.

Indicators to identify a structure under fumigation include:

* Structure completely or partially covered with tarps (tenting consists of wide stripe alternate color fabric) clamped together.

* Signs posted; stating (all or in part):

DANGER
PELIGRO
FUMIGATION
-Chemical name of product-

In addition to the obvious clues, officers should be alert for:

- * Physical evidence or witnesses that can corroborate the presence of suspects.
- * Signs indicating damage or openings in the tenting enclosure.
- * Other indicators that would cause responding officers to form a reasonable suspicion that the tenting has been compromised and suspects may be inside.

SAFETY

Officers should avoid entering a tented structure for any reason. This includes searching for suspects, evidence recovery or to reseal open tenting. Officers must employ sound tactics in the apprehension of suspects and good survival skills around chemical hazards. Do not stick your "head inside" the tenting to look for suspects or to order suspects out of a location. This is dangerous and potentially life threatening to the officer.

ISOLATE

Establish an appropriate perimeter around the structure (refer to the North American Emergency Response Guidebook). The downwind perimeter should be further from the structure than the upwind distance. Greater distances should be used when open or damaged tenting is discovered.

Officers **shall not** enter the tented structure for any reason until the structure has been properly vented (cleaned) of the fumigant **AND** a Los Angeles County Health Haz Mat Specialist or an investigator from the HM/ECU has declared the structure safe.

NOTIFY

Discovery of suspect(s) at a tented structure where the tenting has been compromised requires immediate notification to Communications Division requesting the dispatch of:

- * Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD).
- * A police supervisor.
- * Hazardous Materials/Environmental Crimes Unit and a representative from Los Angeles County Fire Health Hazardous Materials Division.
- * Los Angeles County Department of Agriculture (investigate pesticide/insecticide contamination).

Obtain a situation estimate and report to Communications Division as soon as possible the:

- * Location of the incident.
- * Size of the involved area (actual and potential).
- * Type of area (business, residential, etc.).
- * Ingress/egress routes for emergency vehicles.
- * Wind direction.
- * Possible threatened special locations: Hospitals, schools, rest homes, etc.

DECONTAMINATION

Decontamination (decon) is the process of removing or neutralizing contaminants that have accumulated on personnel and equipment. Decon is required at any hazardous materials incident where personnel or equipment have become contaminated by hazardous materials/chemicals. Failure to decon can cause acute or chronic health conditions or death to personnel.

Prevention of contamination is the first step of decontamination. Personnel who are exposed to hazardous materials shall seek direction from and be guided by LAFD, when at scene, for decon procedures.

Note: LAFD Haz Mat Safety Officer will be responsible for the safety of all responders at hazardous materials incidents.

Guidelines for Personal (Self) Decontamination Procedures for Respiratory Contamination, when LAFD is not at scene:

1. Immediately withdraw from the area where contamination occurred.
2. Relocate immediately all contaminated personnel to a safe, open and clean area, upwind of the contaminated area.
3. Request medical assistance.
4. Remove bulky clothing such as coats, jackets and hats that may retain the chemical.
5. If water is available, flush skin and clothing with copious amounts of water.
6. Remove contaminated clothing.
7. Flush skin with water again.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information regarding hazardous materials response can be found in the Supervisor's Field Operations Guide, First Responder's Field Operations Guide and the North American Emergency Response Guidebook.

Questions regarding this Bulletin may be directed to Sergeant J. Bonner, Officer-in-Charge, Hazardous Materials / Environmental Crimes Unit, at (213) 485-4011.