



TRAINING BULLETIN

Volume LII, Issue 6, April 2023

Michel R. Moore, Chief of Police

PHENCYCLIDINE (PCP) – PART II PCP CONTAMINATION

The investigation of illicit laboratories has resulted in Department personnel being injured and placed off-duty due to contamination from dangerous chemicals. The purpose of this training bulleting is to provide Department personnel with methods to minimize the effects of phencyclidine (PCP) or related dangerous chemical contamination.

Chemicals used to manufacture dangerous drugs such as PCP and methamphetamine are particularly hazardous. The term “hazardous material” shall mean any chemical, chemical mixture, or contaminant that is toxic, corrosive, volatile, reactive, explosive, or flammable and has the capacity of inducing great bodily injury or illness or that has been determined to be capable of posing an unreasonable risk to health, safety, or property.

The accidental mixing of some chemicals found in an illicit laboratory could result in an explosion, flash fire, or even a lethal gas. There are also chemicals used in laboratories which cause third degree burns when spilled on skin, or cause cancer when inhaled. Additionally, not all side effects produced by these chemicals are known. It has been determined that PCP may remain in the body’s system for long periods of time, perhaps years, and may cause health problems long after contamination occurred.

When Department personnel discover the location of an illicit laboratory, it is recommended that the officers secure the perimeter of the location, evacuate adjacent inhabited dwellings and make the following notifications:

- Clandestine Lab Squad (Lab Squad), Gang and Narcotics Division (GND);
- Hazardous Materials Unit (HMU), Emergency Services Division (ESD); and,

Note: If either is closed, contact the Department Operations Center (DOC) for on-call personnel.

- Fire Department

Note: An officer shall be designated to meet Fire Department personnel at least a half mile from the location and have them standby to respond in the event of an emergency.

Officers **shall not** enter an illicit laboratory to apprehend suspects or to prevent the destruction of evidence, absent the authorization of the Clandestine Lab Squad (Lab Squad), GND, or HMU, ESD. **Illicit labs have been known to conceal traps to injure or kill intruders.**

HANDLING SEIZED QUANTITIES OF PCP

Department personnel can become contaminated from handling small quantities of PCP that are seized outside of a laboratory environment, such as an arrest of a suspect in possession of PCP. Because of its unusually hazardous nature, special handling of PCP is **required**. Officers should implement the following handling procedures to ensure the health and safety of themselves and others:

- Ensure that there is no smoking or flame in the immediate vicinity of PCP to avoid ether or fumes;
- Avoid unnecessary contact with containers of PCP or cigarettes dipped in PCP; and,
- Immediately contact the Clandestine Lab Squad (Lab Squad), GND or after hours via the DOC.

Note: Due to the risks associated with accidental or dangerous contamination and the threat of potential fentanyl exposure, officers shall not conduct field testing or screening on items suspected of being controlled substances, including cannabis as delineated in current Department policies and procedures.

PROCEDURES WHEN PERSONNEL BECOME CONTAMINATED WITH PCP

Department personnel should not attempt to handle any of the chemicals or equipment involved with a PCP lab unless directed to do so by personnel from the Clandestine Lab Squad (Lab Squad), GND. In the event Department personnel accidentally come in direct contact with PCP or any of the chemicals involved in its manufacture, it is recommended they take the following immediate actions to decontaminate themselves:

- Remove all contaminated clothing or uniforms, including shoes and leather gear;
- Place contaminated clothing items in a plastic bag, seal as air tight as possible and book as evidence;
- Report directly to a contract hospital for medical treatment; and,
- Document the incident on an Employee's Report, Form 15.07.00.

Department personnel should not send contaminated clothing to the cleaners or attempt to wash the clothing at home. Officers in the past contaminated their families by wearing or taking their contaminated clothing home. Washing the contaminated

clothing with the family wash could cause other members of the family to suffer low levels of PCP contamination because PCP does not dissolve in water. Phencyclidine can also be transferred from contaminated shoes to the carpeting at home. Low levels of PCP contamination can be experienced by young children that subsequently crawl on the floor, or by other individuals that lounge on the floor. Therefore, all contaminated clothing should be booked as evidence. Forensic Science Division personnel will examine the contaminated articles and, if possible, the articles will be cleaned and returned to the officers.

SUMMARY

When an illicit laboratory is discovered, officers should exit and secure the location and not reenter unless exigent circumstances exist. Officers should **not** handle any chemicals or equipment involved with an illicit lab, unless specifically directed to do so by personnel from the Clandestine Lab Squad (Lab Squad), GND. In the event that an officer becomes chemically contaminated, soiled clothing **should** be removed and booked as evidence. The affected areas of the body should be flushed with water and medical attention **should** be sought.

Contamination can also result from contact with small quantities of PCP that are seized outside of a laboratory. Officers should handle PCP and all chemicals with care to ensure that safety of themselves and others. Remember, chemical contamination can lead to **SERIOUS INJURIES** and even **DEATH**.

Note: All other non-narcotics related discoveries involving unknown chemicals or laboratories should be directed to the DOC and the HMU, ESD.

Gang and Narcotics Division's Clandestine Lab Squad (Lab Squad) shall be contacted via the DOC for large, multi-gallon seizures of PCP.

This Bulletin cancels and supersedes Volume XXVIII, Issue 1, Phencyclidine (PCP) - Part II, PCP Contamination, January 1996

Field Training Services Unit
Police Training and Education

DISTRIBUTION "A"

Attachment: Suspected Fentanyl Handling Protocol

LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT

Suspected Fentanyl Handling Protocol

Fentanyl and its analogues can present a significant hazard to Department personnel, particularly if inhaled. Personnel are most susceptible to inhalation when the drug particles are airborne. This is most likely to occur during the opening of containers or packages containing a fentanyl-based product, manipulating a fentanyl-based substance, or brushing/dusting fentanyl-based powders off clothing, gloves, or other surfaces. Due to this inhalation hazard, the NARK II screening tests on all suspected controlled substances has been discontinued. Officers encountering suspected fentanyl, or its analogues, shall adhere to the following guidelines:

- If the material is sealed or contained, officers shall follow existing protocols for booking evidence into Property Division without performing the preliminary NARK II testing.
 - Officers shall don the recommended personal protective equipment as follows:
 - Nitrile or latex gloves
 - Dusk mask: (N95 rated or above)
 - Eye protection
 - When possible, wear long sleeves
 - Avoid actions that may cause the material to become airborne. Officers shall not open a sealed container suspected to be fentanyl.
 - Describe the substance on the Property or Combined Evidence Report. Collect and package without agitating the substance or producing airborne particles. Write the words "Suspected Fentanyl" on the outside of the sealed plastic bag, and on the Analyzed Evidence envelope.
 - Determine the gross weight of the sample (including packaging) and include the information on the Property Report, Form 10.01.00 or Combined Evidence Report, Form 5.02.00.
 - Once the materials are collected and packaged, they should be secured in the trunk or rear cargo area of the officer's vehicle prior to transportation.
 - After the evidence has been booked, contact Forensic Sciences Division as soon as possible and request laboratory analysis.
 - Following completion of the evidence booking process, officers should wash hands with soap and copious amounts of water only. Alcohol-based wipes or hand sanitizers shall not be used.
- If any of the following occur, the involved personnel shall contact the Department Operations Center, at (213) 484-6700, and notify both the Gang and Narcotics Division Clandestine Lab Squad as well as the Hazardous Materials Unit for guidance:
 - If the material has breached its container and needs to be collected for evidence, the involved officers shall immediately exit and secure the location.

LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT

Suspected Fentanyl Handling Protocol

- If the scene involves large quantities of suspected fentanyl (e.g., distribution/storage facility, pill milling operation, clandestine lab, gross contamination, spill, or release) or an overdose resulting in a death.

Note: If a Department employee or any other person believes they have been contaminated, officers shall monitor the exposed individual(s) for signs/symptoms of opioid intoxication and request a rescue ambulance or ensure other appropriate medical treatment is immediately provided. If a Department employee is trained, equipped, and authorized to administer Naloxone or NARCAN, it can be administered (if needed).

- Contaminated employees should not enter non-contaminated vehicles.
- If a Department vehicle is believed to be contaminated with fentanyl or one of its analogues, officers shall immediately remove the vehicle from service.
- If officers encounter suspected fentanyl combined with a threat, or other terrorism nexus.

Involved officers shall immediately notify a Department supervisor of any adverse incident involving fentanyl or its analogues (spilled material, contamination, inadvertent inhalation, or other means of accidental absorption, etc.).