

Hazardous materials



Running Head: SKIP NAVIGATION LINKS Skip Navigation Links Hazardous materials (HAZMAT) are the materials that pose as a threat to the environment or human health if released in large amounts. Incidences related to hazardous materials are normally complex in the public safety industry. Some of the risks that may arise due to the use of hazardous materials are; a fire hazard, an explosion, threat or a chemical gas threat. They occur due to the logistics involved in the response and operations that have to do with the way multiple units function at a scene . The multiple functions involve contraction and expansion as well as due to weather changes.

The factors that are used in evaluating the environment in which hazardous materials incidents could be taking place involve; location of the incident, exposures to the proximity of the scene. The other factors include; population density, location of the highways, waterways railroads as well as the areas whose environment is affected by the incidents.

The hazardous material incident representatives such as the local and state environmental agencies can be used to provide information concerning the assessment of factors pose as a threat to the environment. Confinement and containment are first lines of defense that are used at the early stages of the incidents that are aimed at minimizing risks to life and the environment. In addition, the natural and synthetic methods can be used to limit the rate at which materials are released.

In case a reported incident is taking place in a building, a telecommunicator should seek information from a caller about the contents of the building and the area that surrounds it. It is imperative to ask about the type of business in a building because it could be as an indicator of the hazardous materials .

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This information should be directed to responding units. A caller should inform a responder on the location and the nature of the hazardous material when it is safe to do so (DeLisi, 2006).

Placards are used to identify the substance that could cause an incident to occur. It has an identification number for the material identified and are referred to by their color code. There is an requirement by the Federal Law that when hazardous materials of a certain quantity are being transported , identification placards should be displayed on the vehicle. The number and color combination on placard can be referred to the North American Emergency Response Guidebook (NAERG) which is used as reference during hazardous materials incident calls. The book addresses the issue of hazardous materials is categorized by its name, reference number and guidelines on how to handle the substances and isolation distances (Clifford 1998, 150).

Extensive research should be carried in regard to factors that cause the hazardous materials incident to occur so as to assist the administrators in providing a solution to the problem. The administrators should be trained on how to handle the problem of hazardous incidents so as to avoid its occurrence in the future.

References

- Clifford, M. (1998). Environmental crime: enforcement, policy, and social responsibility. Massachusetts, United States of America: Jones & Bartlett.
- DeLisi, S. M. (2006). Hazardous materials incidents: surviving the initial Response. Tulsa, Oklahoma: Pennell Books.