

**Water Rescue Decon – Hazmat Guidelines**

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## Reference:

Firescope Field Operations Guide, ICS 420-1, Incident Command System Publication, January 2001, Chapter 15 – Urban Search and Rescue, SF/SAR Decontamination, Pages 15-43 to 15-46.

Note: These guidelines are relative to general water rescue environments anticipated to be encountered. This is not applicable to hazardous materials spills or work outside of normal flood working environments. Qualified Hazardous Materials personnel should direct operations when dealing with chemicals outside the scope of general water rescue operations.

**Information Sheet #1**

TOPIC: SOP FOR WORKING AROUND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IN WATER ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION: Guidelines for work around hazmat in the water

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Identify Contamination Level in Working Environment – Evaluate Risk

Basic No Known or Suspected Exposure  
Examples: Floodwaters, Lake or River With No Known Contaminates

Level 1 Potential for Exposure to General Contaminates  
Examples: Floodwaters In Residential or Agricultural Area With No Evidence of Large Release of Hazardous Materials

Level 2 Hazardous Materials Identified or Likely Present  
Examples: Sewage, Agricultural and Chemical Contamination

Prepare for Work in Hazmat Environment – Determine if Safe Work Area  
Appropriate Contamination Protection for Working Area

Basic: None                      Level 1: Dry Suit                      Level 2: Dry Suit

Appropriate Decontamination Available Before Entering Area  
Refer to Guidelines for Decon of Personnel and Equipment

Control Work in Hazmat Environment

Do Not Enter If Possible – Minimize Exposure, Limit Number of People  
For Breach of Contamination Protection Gear in Level 2 Area  
Immediate Removal From Operation If Safety Compromised  
Immediate Decon of Personnel if Contaminated

Decontaminate as Required

Basic: Before Meals, Transport, or Inactive Periods  
Level 1: End of Operational Assignment  
Level 2: After Exiting Water

If Interior of Vehicle Contaminated – Wipe Down With Bleach Solution  
30cc Sodium Hypochlorite 5% (Household Bleach) / Gallon Water  
Allow To Stand Minimum of 15 Minutes

Document Potential or Known Exposures

Duration, Potential Hazmat, Concentration  
Level 2 Exposure – Notify Medical Unit Lead (1, 12 and 24 hr Med Check)  
Level 2 Environment – Take Water Sample of Working Area

**Information Sheet #2**

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR DECONTAMINATION OF PERSONNEL

INTRODUCTION: Guidelines for removal of hazardous substances from people

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Hazmat Professionals May Indicate a Deviation From Following Guidelines

**Basic Decontamination** – No Known or Suspected Exposure

Wash Hands and Face With Normal Dish or Bath Soap and Clean Water

Use Wet Wipes When Soap and Clean Water Not Available

**Level 1 Decontamination** – Potential for Exposure to General Contaminates

Wash Hands and Face With Anti-Microbial Soap and Clean Water

Examples of Anti-Microbial Soap Include Vionex and PhisoHex

Use Wet Wipes When Soap and Clean Water Not Available

End of Duty Period – If Contamination Protection Not Breached

Shower At End of Shift and Change into Clean Clothing

Use Normal Bath Soap

**Level 2 Decontamination** – Hazardous Materials Identified or Likely Present

Drop Tools and Contaminated Equipment, Discard Gloves

Wash Hands and Face With Anti-Microbial Soap and Clean Water

Use Wet Wipes When Soap and Clean Water Not Available

Scrub Gross Decontamination – Before Safety Gear Removed

Rescuer In Safety Gear Scrubbed With Brushes and Soap Solution

Rescuer Rinsed With Clean Water

Contain Run-Off for Proper Disposal If Able

End of Duty Period – If Contamination Protection Not Breached

Removal of Safety Gear – Treat as Contaminated Equipment

Shower With Anti-Microbial Soap As Soon As Possible

Showering Before Leaving Scene Preferred

### Information Sheet #3

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR DECONTAMINATION OF EQUIPMENT

INTRODUCTION: Guidelines for removal of hazardous substances from equipment

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Hazmat Professionals May Indicate a Deviation From Following Guidelines

**Basic Decontamination** – No Known or Suspected Exposure

At End of Operational Assignment Rinse With Clean Water

Remove Visible Contaminates (Mud and Light Oils) With Soap

May Substitute Use Of Powerwasher to Remove Mud

**Level 1 Decontamination** – Potential for Exposure to General Contaminates

Wash With Soap and Water

**Level 2 Decontamination** – Hazardous Materials Identified or Likely Present

Treat Equipment By Spray or Wipe With Bleach Solution

30cc Sodium Hypochlorite 5% (Household Bleach) / Gallon Water

Allow To Stand Minimum of 15 Minutes

Rinse All Treated Equipment With Clean Water (May Also Use Soap)

Allow To Dry Before Storage With Other Equipment

Bag Any Equipment That Cannot Be Dried for Return Home Trip