

# STATE OF COLORADO

Bill Owens, Governor  
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*Dedicated to protecting and improving the health and environment of the people of Colorado*

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Colorado Department  
of Public Health  
and Environment

## Responding to Chemical Weapons Incidents

### • INTRODUCTION

- While hazardous materials incidents are most often accidents, events involving the intentional release of chemical, nuclear, biological or explosive materials are classified as acts of terrorism.
- Advance planning, coordination and cooperation are required to ensure a rapid and effective response to a terrorist incident, particularly those in which mass decontamination may be necessary, or which would tax the response and medical resources of a community.

### • BACKGROUND

#### ▪ Department of Public Health and Environment Role

- ✓ **Response role.** Local emergency response agencies are the “first responders” in a chemical event. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment is a secondary resource.
- ✓ **Chemical spills.** The department maintains a 24-hour hotline for hazardous materials spills or releases and for events involving the intentional release of chemical, nuclear, biological or explosive materials. Contact the 24-hour, toll-free hotline at 1-877-518-5608.
- ✓ **Transport of hazardous waste.** Colorado Hazardous Waste Regulations require that transporters obtain a permit from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment for transporting certain hazardous wastes.
- ✓ **Toxicology.** Toxicologists are available during office hours to provide information on the impacts of chemicals on human health and the environment.

#### ▪ State Preparedness

- ✓ **Colorado State Patrol.** The Colorado State Patrol is responsible for providing the state’s emergency response component to a hazardous materials incident that occurs within a highway right-of-way for federal, state and county roads, outside of a municipal city limits.
- ✓ **Colorado Office of Emergency Management.** During an emergency or disaster, the agency coordinates the state response to and recovery from a chemical incident in support of local governments and maintains the state's Emergency Operations Center where representatives from other state agencies meet to coordinate the state response to an emergency situation.
- ✓ **Civil Support Team.** The Civil Support Team of the Department of Military Affairs is a response organization that is fully dedicated to working with federal, state and local agencies to provide cutting edge technologies in assessment, detection and field laboratory identification of biological and chemical agents.

### • FOR MORE INFORMATION

- ✓ Call the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment at (303) 692-3300.
- ✓ For emergency spills or releases of hazardous materials, call 1-877-518-5608 toll-free.