

INTERIM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT FOR PUBLIC SAFETY FIRST RESPONDER PERSONNEL (INCLUDING POLICE, SHERIFF, FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE) TO USE IN EVALUATING BIOTERRORIST THREATS INVOLVING ANTHRAX POWDERED SUBSTANCES
REVISED JANUARY 15, 2002

The following recommendations are for bioterrorist threats involving powdered substances and are intended to provide some basic information for public safety first responders (such as police, sheriff, fire and emergency medical services) who may be on the scene before the nature of a threat has been determined. After a credible threat has been determined, hazardous materials (HAZMAT) teams and environmental cleanup crews should refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Interim Recommendations for the Selection and Use of Protective Clothing and Respirators Against Biological Agents at <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/DocumentsApp/Anthrax/Protective/10242001Protect.asp>.

These recommendations are meant to identify basic personal protective equipment (PPE) that could be used when called into a situation where public safety first responders are asked to assess the potential credibility of a bioterrorist threat involving anthrax powdered substances. They also provide suggested procedures for post-event decontamination.

Personal Protection Equipment for Law Enforcement/Fire/EMS When Determining the Credibility of an Event

At present, there have been no credible incidents involving exposure to anthrax or other biological agents in Oregon. Law enforcement personnel may be at a somewhat higher risk than the general population because they respond to multiple threats.

Public safety first-responder personnel who are called in to assess the potential credibility of a bioterrorist threat involving powdered substances can use the protective equipment described below to reduce the risk of exposure:

- **Respiratory Protection:** Personnel evaluating the threat may wear a half-mask or full facepiece air-purifying respirator with particulate filter efficiencies rated P-95 or P-100 to minimize exposure to airborne particles. Replace filters and/or cartridges per manufacturer's recommendations or at least after each workday.

NOTE: An N-95 disposable mask will provide protection of up to 95% efficiency for 0.3 micron particulates in dry and non-oil aerosol exposures when all manufacturers' guidelines are followed. An N-100 disposable mask will provide protection of up to 99.97% efficiency for 0.3 micron particulates in dry and non-oil aerosols. Anthrax spores are 1-5 microns. These masks are ineffective on persons with facial hair.

- **Gloves:** Use powder free, lightweight, single-use nitrile and/or vinyl gloves (nitrile gloves may be more durable). Replace gloves at the end of the assessment. If more than one sample is collected, replace gloves after each sample collection.
- **Clothing:** "Street clothes" with long sleeves, optimal disposable coveralls (e.g. Tyvek).
- **Other:** Wash hands for up to 3 minutes with soap and water after removing gloves.

Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for Law Enforcement/Fire/EMS at a Credible Event

The CDC PPE recommendations should be used to determine the appropriate Level of PPE needed. See <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/DocumentsApp/Anthrax/Protective/10242001Protect.asp>.

Personal Protection Equipment for HAZMAT and Private Environmental Clean Up Personnel at a Credible Event

The CDC PPE recommendations should be used to determine the appropriate Level of PPE needed. See <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/DocumentsApp/Anthrax/Protective/10242001Protect.asp>.

Decontamination and Disposal

- Decontamination and disposal of items associated with a credible or non-credible threat should also be considered. Masks, gloves and any disposable protective clothing worn routinely in the absence of a credible threat can be discarded in garbage bags, sealed (twist tie or knotted), and disposed of as general waste (municipal solid waste).
- Note: If the powdered material is determined by law enforcement officials to be a credible threat, the Department of Environmental Quality considers masks, gloves, and disposable protective clothing to be infectious waste. Infectious waste must be appropriately contained and labeled, then transported to an appropriate treatment (incineration or steam sterilization) facility before disposal to a landfill operating under a permit issued by a state or federal agency. Refer to www.deq.state.or.us/wmc/solwaste/infect.html and to <http://www.ohd.hr.state.or.us/acd/docs/infectw.htm> for information on handling infectious waste.
- If decontamination of building materials is to be performed, refer to <http://www.ohd.hr.state.or.us/acd/bioterr/decon.pdf>.

For credible threats, see **INTERIM GUIDELINES FOR DECONTAMINATION PROCEDURES TO USE IN BIOTERRORIST THREATS INVOLVING POWDERED SUBSTANCES – OREGON, 2001** for more information on this topic.

Remember, even in the presence of a credible threat, in almost all of these events nation-wide there has been no evidence of anthrax. Anthrax is not contagious from person-to-person. In cases of actual anthrax exposure, treatment is available.

Information on steps to be taken immediately after identifying a suspicious substance (before reporting to law enforcement or health officials) is documented at <http://www.oshd.org/acd/bioterr/home.htm> or www.bt.cdc.gov/DocumentsApp/Anthrax/10312001/han51.asp.

Descriptions of potentially suspicious items can be found at www.usps.gov/news/2001/press/pr01_1010tips.htm and at www.usps.gov/news/2001/press/mailsecurity/postcard.htm. After a suspicious item has been reported, it can be grouped into two general categories, a credible threat or no credible threat. Law enforcement officials determine if a credible threat is present.

Additional manufacturer information for employers and workers concerning respirator use can be found at www.mmm.com/occsafety/html/anthrax_notice.html.

For additional information, please contact:

Department of Human Services - Public Health
Office of Disease Prevention and Epidemiology
800 NE Oregon Street
Portland, OR 97232

(503) 731-4024 (M-F, 8-5)
(503) 731-4030 (after hours)

www.ohd.hr.state.or.us

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.bt.cdc.gov

or