



# **MCFRS SPECIAL OPERATIONS 5-MINUTE DRILL: “DO I NEED THE **HAZMAT** TEAM?”**





Before you ask if you need the hazmat team, it is important to understand what the hazmat team does and does not do.

The hazmat team deals with substances or chemicals that have escaped from their containers and have the possibility of harming people or the environment.



## What does the hazmat team DO?

- Identify unknown chemicals/substances through different types of metering technologies.
- Identify the presence or absence of oxygen, carbon monoxide, and flammable gas, as well as identify the presence of "exotic" chemicals such as hydrogen cyanide, ammonia, phosphine, hydrogen sulfide, and chlorine.
- Identify hazards associated with chemicals/substances through various means of research.
- Attempt to control leaking chemical containers through patching, plugging, damming, and diking.
- Overpack damaged lithium ion (li-ion) batteries to contain thermal runaway.
- Act as a single point of contact between MCFRS and local, state and federal agencies such as MD Dept of Environment.

## What does the hazmat team NOT do?

- For the most part, the hazmat team does not clean up released hazardous materials. The burden for cleanup lies with whomever owns the hazardous material(s), otherwise known as the responsible party (RP). This could be a private citizen, corporation, government agency, etc.
- The hazmat team will work with the responsible party to make sure the materials are cleaned up. If the RP cannot take care of the materials themselves, the hazmat team can put them in touch with hazmat cleaning vendors who can assist.



## When Do I Need Hazmat?

Call hazmat for any call involving:

- Leaking gasoline or diesel fuel
- Leaking/spilled chemical(s)
- Radiation
- Spilled Mercury
- Damaged or potentially damaged li-ion batteries or other types of batteries
- Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)
- Chemical Warfare Agents (CWA)
- Clandestine/Drug labs
- Unknown powder

Some questions to ask yourself before requesting hazmat:

- Am I dealing with a substance that if it escapes its container will harm people or the environment?
- If yes, is its container damaged?
- Do I know what the substance is?
- What are my Ventis, Sensit, and/or Tango meters telling me?





# Still unsure whether you need hazmat?

Call station 7 or 28 to speak to a hazmat officer

or

Request to speak to a hazmat officer on an alternate talk group.