

Hazardous Materials/Local Emergency Planning Committee Functional Annex

Updated: September 11, 2024

I. PURPOSE

These operating procedures provide additional information to the basic plan for response to hazardous materials emergencies and to meet the jurisdiction's responsibilities according to the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA).

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. The specific facilities involved with hazardous materials which are subject to the emergency planning requirements of Section 302 of SARA, identified by the LEPC during the hazard analysis process, are listed in the facility files.
2. The LEPC receives the N.C. Community Right-to-Know Tier II reports by E-Plan submission or by mail. Facility emergency response plans submitted to the LEPC are filed with Alexander County Emergency Management and with local fire departments by the reporting organization. Tier II reports submitted to E-Plan by the facilities that report to the LEPC are maintained in the E-Plan database and can be accessible by submitting a request to Alexander County Emergency Management authorized personnel.
3. The routes for the transportation (highways, railroads, pipelines, etc.) of hazardous materials have been determined due by the location of Tier II reporting facilities and major highways. Routes likely to be used for the transportation of substances on the list of extremely hazardous substances would be NC HWY 16, NC HWY 127, NC HWY 90, and US 64.
4. The threat of a major disaster involving hazardous materials has increased in everyday use and transportation of chemicals by the various segments of our population.
5. The results of a hazardous material incident could include the death or serious injury of persons exposed to the material, the spread of contaminants in varying degrees throughout the County, and the destruction of property from fire, explosion, or exposure.
6. Evacuation, a protective measure, could isolate evacuees from their homes indefinitely.
7. Victims of a hazardous material incident may require unique or special medical care not typically required in other emergencies.
8. The release of hazardous material may have short and/or long-term health and environmental effects depending upon the chemical composition of the substance.
9. A hazardous materials incident may affect hundreds of people within the jurisdiction without warning.
10. A hazardous material incident may require the public to shelter in place or to evacuate, depending upon conditions at the time of the emergency.
11. Cleanup of an oil and/or hazardous material spill is the duty of the responsible party. The responsible party is required to notify the National Response Center (1-800-424-8802) of the event.

12. Assistance from the NC Regional Response Teams can be secured from the State EOC, 24 hours/day. Assistance may be in the form of advice or technical guidance, a limited response involving two to three hazmat team personnel, or full team activation.
13. An oil and/or hazardous material incident will be invoiced to the responsible party per the Alexander County Emergency Management Ordinance and fee schedule. If no responsible party can be identified, then the expense of cleanup is borne by federal, state, or county government.

B. Assumptions

1. This plan can be effective if the following assumptions prove true:
 - a. Most, but not all, people affected by a hazardous material incident will follow instructions and shelter-in-place or relocate to designated shelters.
 - b. Public notification/warning and evacuation, if required, will be per the standard operating procedures developed to implement the Notification and Warning and Evacuation and Transportation portions of this plan.
 - c. The local jurisdiction must respond to the incident in the initial phase without assistance from outside the jurisdiction. It is assumed that emergency response agencies will, based on their standard operating procedures, take appropriate actions to prevent or minimize the spread of the material, provide first aid as necessary, and manage the incident scene with emphasis on the safety of the public and responding personnel.
 - d. Planning and training before an incident will significantly reduce the risk to personnel.
 - e. The hazardous material involved in an incident can be identified within a reasonable time by the owner of the facility or the vehicle, by shipping documents, by the properties of the material itself, or by information provided under SARA, Title III, or the North Carolina Right-to-Know Act.
 - f. The North American Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG), CAMEO Software, or an equivalent document, either alone or in combination with other information sources, can be used as a guide for initial action to be taken to protect the responders and the general public when responding to incidents involving hazardous materials.
 - g. A facility involved in a hazardous material incident will provide all information required by Section 304 of SARA on a timely basis.
 - h. Emergency response personnel are knowledgeable in the use of available resources.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

1. There are several types of incidents involving a response to oil or hazardous materials that responders could be faced with in the County. Hazardous materials incidents may involve:
 - a. Fixed facilities and pipelines
 - b. Improper cargo handling
 - c. Highway and rail accidents
 - d. Unknown material in the rivers, streams, creeks, and seasonal waterways
 - e. Intentional acts of terrorism of a chemical, biological, and radiological nature
2. Incidents are classified according to the level of risk as determined by the Emergency Management Coordinator's assessment or his/her designee.

- a. Level I (Potential Emergency Condition) is an incident that can be controlled by the first response agencies and does not require evacuation other than the involved structure or immediate outdoor area (as defined in the guide pages of the United States Department of Transportation Emergency Response Guidebook) and does not suggest that major environmental damage will occur.
 - b. Level II (Limited Emergency Condition) is an incident that involves a critical hazard with a potential threat to life or property, requires a limited evacuation of the surrounding area, or suggests that major environmental damage could occur. Initial response to the incident may not be adequately handled by the jurisdiction's resources. The response of a mutual aid hazardous materials team or a North Carolina Regional Response Team may be required. Resource assistance from the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management may be required. A limited activation (as defined in the EOG standard operating procedures) of the Alexander County Emergency Operations Center will be accomplished.
 - c. Level III (Full Emergency Condition) is an incident that involves a severe hazard or large area, poses an extreme threat to life and property, and will probably require a large-scale evacuation. Level III includes an incident requiring a combination of expertise and/or resources from local, state, federal, and private agencies/organizations. A full activation (as defined in the EOG standard operating procedures) of the Alexander County Emergency Operations Center will be accomplished.
3. Incident command will be implemented on an appropriate scale at the scene of every hazardous material event in the county.
 4. All response agency's standard operating procedures (SOPs) for each level of incident response will be according to local policies/procedures and in compliance with 29 CFR 1910.120(q).
 5. Training will be per local policies/procedures and in compliance with OSHA Guidelines 1910.120 (q).
 6. This plan recognizes that a hazardous material incident can change with time, and necessitate escalating the response to a higher level, or down-grading the response to lower levels as the situation is controlled.
 7. A Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) has been established at the County level to identify the magnitude of the local hazards, assess the vulnerability of the community to the hazards, and provide planning guidance for emergency response.
 8. Notification of a release of a hazardous material will be per Section 304 of SARA, 29 CFR 1910.120(q)(6)(i)(F), NFPA 471, and applicable agency standard operating procedures. General guidelines for notification/warning have been developed.
 9. Public Information Requests will go through Alexander County Emergency Management. Any such request shall be in writing and shall be with respect to a specific facility. Any public record requests should be fulfilled within 45 days.

IV. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. General: The head of each agency involved in hazardous material response is responsible for the safety of his/her personnel. Training, standard operating procedures, and medical surveillance shall comply with the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Hazardous

Waste Operations and Emergency Response Standard, 29 CFR 1910.120(q). In this regard, the head of each agency is, therefore, responsible for developing, maintaining, and updating training programs and standard operating procedures.

- B. Facility Owners and Operators
 - 1. Ensure that reportable information required by SARA, Title III is provided to the LEPC promptly. Per SERC policy and where required, Tier II report forms shall be submitted in place of Tier I forms.
 - 2. Ensure that the facility's emergency response procedures are current and effective for its property. Procedures shall specify actions for the immediate and follow-up notification of the affected jurisdiction(s), state, and federal authorities in the event of a hazardous material incident. Emergency procedures shall be submitted in writing to the LEPC.
 - 3. Ensure that facility personnel are trained in emergency response procedures, including but not limited to, determining that a release has occurred, notifying appropriate facility personnel and public officials, and initiating protective and/or hazard suppression activities.
 - 4. Ensure that the facility has a current inventory of equipment and resources available for response to a hazardous material emergency.
 - 5. Provide a technical representative to the Incident Commander and the EOC during an incident.
- C. Jurisdictional Responsibilities
 - 1. Chairman, County Commissioners: In addition to specific assignments of responsibility identified elsewhere in this plan, the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners will:
 - a. Nominate a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) as identified in Section 301 of SARA and per the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC). The LEPC will be appointed by the SERC.
 - b. Encourage cooperation between the LEPC, local government agencies, facilities, and other applicable organizations.
 - 2. County Manager:
 - a. Ensure, through the Chairperson of the LEPC, that County facilities with hazardous materials are properly identified, are reporting as required, and have appointed a Facility Emergency Coordinator to represent them to the LEPC.
 - b. Provide administrative support to the LEPC as required.
 - c. Ensure through the appropriate agency heads that each agency under the control of, or under contract to, the County is prepared to fulfill their agency's roles and responsibilities included in this plan.
 - 3. Emergency Management Coordinator: In addition to other duties and responsibilities identified in the plan, will:
 - a. Serve as the designated community emergency coordinator and shall make determinations necessary to implement this plan.
 - b. Coordinate exercises and tests of this plan per current federal and state requirements and in concurrence with the LEPC. Exercises and training will be published in the Integrated Preparedness Plan.
 - c. Ensure an After-Action Review/Improvement Plan of incident responses to assess and update procedures as needed.

- d. Coordinates notification procedures with adjoining counties that may be affected by a release of hazardous materials within Alexander County.
- e. Maintain resource tracker of needed personnel, equipment, and response capabilities internal and external to Alexander County.
4. Incident Commander:
 - a. Lead Agency - Fire Department having jurisdictional authority.
 - b. Implement the necessary steps (including decontamination of responders, victims, patients, and equipment) to safeguard human life, property, and the environment per standard operating guidelines.
 - c. Activate the Site-Specific Plan for a fixed facility incident.
 - d. Implement the Incident Command System per NIMS.
 - e. Develop strategic goals and tactical objectives and implement tactical methods concerning available resources and capability of personnel.
5. Emergency Medical Services Director: In addition to other responsibilities in this plan, the Emergency Medical Services Director shall develop procedures with assistance from facility owners and operators, per local protocols, for:
 - a. Treatment of contaminated patients.
 - b. Direction and control of mass casualty incidents as a result of the release of hazardous materials.
6. Public Information Officer:
 - a. Serve as the public information officer and ensure timely messaging is distributed per the Public Information Annex informing the public on the event and precautionary measures.
 - b. Serve in the EOC or Command Post to maintain constant communications.
 - c. Oversee the Joint Information Center.
7. Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) responsibilities:
 - a. Ensure fulfillment of responsibilities for local emergency planning according to Section 301 of SARA and the policies of the SERC.
 - b. Continually assess the current level of prevention, preparedness, and response capability within the County.
 - c. Review existing plans for overlap, useful information, and ideas.
 - d. Conduct an analysis of hazardous materials within the County to identify the hazards, vulnerability, and risk.
 - e. Develop procedures to ensure the perpetual chemical hazard identification and risk assessment program within the County.
 - f. Develop a plan and ensure the development of guidelines to protect the public during a hazardous material incident.
 - g. Ensure the development and distribution of public awareness programs.
 - h. Ensure public access to information and the emergency operations plan regarding hazardous materials within the County.
 - i. Ensure the development of procedures for notification and warning in the event of an incident involving hazardous materials.
 - j. Identify individuals and groups within risk areas who have special needs such as transportation, advanced medical care, and special warning (sight or hearing impaired).

- k. Ensure that training for all responders to a hazardous material incident (including management) is per the duties to be performed by each responder and is per applicable policies, procedures, and standards.
- l. Ensure that agencies develop and maintain Standard Operating Procedures for hazardous materials response operations.
- m. Identify resources needed for response to a hazardous materials incident from public and private sources and make recommendations to the County officials about emergency response matters.
- n. Ensure an ongoing program for plan implementation, maintenance, training, and exercising. (Training programs for emergency responders of the County will be through individual agency in-service training, community college courses, North Carolina Fire and Rescue Commission courses, and other offerings related to training). Exercise schedules for this plan are developed and maintained by the Emergency Management Coordinator.
- o. Ensure compliance with the provisions of Title III, Superfund Amendments, and Reauthorization Act of 1986.
- p. Assure coordination of planning efforts between jurisdictions (municipalities, counties, facilities, etc.) including the development of notification/warning, response, and remediation procedures for covered facilities.

V. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

- A. The overall direction and control of emergency activities in a disaster situation is vested with the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners. Onsite management will be established by the Incident Commander.
- B. The senior officer or most qualified person on the scene of the Fire Department having jurisdictional authority will be responsible for the direction and control (Incident Commander) of the hazardous materials response activities during emergencies. (A unified command structure will be utilized during large-scale incidents.)

VI. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT

- A. Lines of succession for agencies and officials involved in a hazardous materials incident are per established agency command structures, standard operating procedures, or any other established procedure of this plan.

VII. REVIEW AND UPDATE

- A. This annex will be reviewed at least annually and updated as needed after events, exercises, or changes. The Emergency Management Coordinator and Local Emergency Planning Committee will be responsible for the maintenance of this plan.

VIII. ATTACHMENTS

- A. List of TIER II Reporting Facilities