

Use of Force – Chemical Agents

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Title: **CHEMICAL AGENTS** Detention Division Version: 10.04.08

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Chemical agents shall be used only when necessary and appropriate to the circumstances. Any chemical agents used shall be those approved by the Department and shall be used only by staff trained in their use by the Department and authorized to use them as noted in this and the Use of Force chapter.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Oleoresin	A mixture of an essential oil and a resin found in nature.
Capsicum	The common pepper of the garden, occurring in many varieties that range from mild to hot, having pungent seeds, also ranging from mild to hot, enclosed in a podded or bell shaped pericarp.
Oleoresin Capsicum Oil of Capsicum (O/C)	1. Powder form of O/C - Dispensed from a pepperball projectile launcher. 2. Liquid form of O/C - Dispensed in aerosol form from a hand held dispenser.
Hydraulic Needle Effect	The consequence of a substance (particulates) penetrating the first few layers of the soft tissue of the eye, due to the correlation of the distance and the amount of pressure in which it is delivered.

3.0 MANDATES

Title 15 Standards: None

4.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

4.1 MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

- A. The primary target when deploying O/C is the facial area assuring coverage of the eyes, forehead

and brow. Secondary target is the nose and mouth. In addition to an inmate's loss of vision, his/her respiratory system may be inflamed causing coughing gagging, hiccupping or a feeling they cannot catch their breath. At this point, the ability to resist should be reduced.

- B. Only Department members, who have completed Department certified training in the use of O/C are authorized to carry and use it while on duty.
- C. Correctional Deputies are only authorized to use O/C as a **DEFENSIVE** tool, to protect self, other staff members and/or inmates who are in imminent danger of bodily harm. Any use by Deputies outside these guidelines must be approved by a Sergeant or Lieutenant.
- D. Chemical agents do not work as well on people who have a very high threshold of pain, especially subjects who are emotionally disturbed or prone to substance and/or alcohol abuse. The failure rate for O/C is generally 14 percent.
- E. On-duty use of O/C:
 - 1. O/C can be used by individuals authorized by the Department any time it can be justified.
 - 2. As soon as practical, there is a requirement to decontaminate the individual sprayed with O/C.
 - a. Decontamination consists primarily of flushing the individual's eyes with water for an extended period of time.
- F. Because the subject's respiratory system may possibly become inflamed by an O/C application, it is important, once the subject is handcuffed, to sit him up, talk to him, and calm him down.
- G. Due to the possibility of hydraulic needle effect, every attempt should be made to avoid direct application of O/C to the eyes at distances less than three (3) feet. Officer safety should never be compromised by delaying the use of O/C in situations under 3 feet due to concerns of the hydraulic needle effect.
- H. Whenever possible, rubber gloves and eye protection should be worn when using O/C. "Particulate respirator and surgical masks" are also made available to staff who choose to wear them when involved in an incident in which O/C is used.
- I. Spare O/C canisters shall be stored in the SERT Armory.
- J. With the exception of training exercises, whenever O/C is used, the Staff Member using the O/C shall complete an incident report, and shall include the following information:
 - 1. A detailed description of the incident which led to the use of O/C.
 - 2. The type of O/C used.
 - 3. Any injuries suffered by the inmate and/or staff.
 - 4. The type of first aid and decontamination procedures used.
 - 5. Any known pre-existing medical conditions the inmate has.
 - 6. Whether or not the application of O/C was effective.
 - 7. The O/C canister serial number.
- K. Refer to: SERT - Pepperball Projectiles for information regarding the use of this type of O/C.

4.2 AREA DECONTAMINATION

- A. O/C is biodegradable and does not require special equipment for decontamination. With normal ventilation (opening doors and windows) or by using high speed fans, buildings, room, and vehicles can be decontaminated in approximately 1 hour. The ingredients may be washed down any drain and exposed surfaces may be cleaned with a damp rag and non oil based soap.
- B. Contaminated clothing may be laundered using normal procedures with other clothing.
- C. Exposed food products should be discarded.
- D. If the area is not decontaminated, O/C will degrade naturally within a few weeks.

5.0 PROCEDURES

5.1 DECONTAMINATION PROCEDURES

- A. If possible, before O/C is used, the Staff Member shall:
 - 1. Identify a water source and provide it in the area of the incident.
 - 2. Notify medical staff and ask that they stand by near the area to assist with decontamination procedures when the inmate is safely restrained.
- B. Once the O/C is used, and when the inmate has been appropriately restrained, decontamination procedures shall be administered by Correctional and Medical Staff.
 - 1. Remove subject from contaminated area and establish verbal rapport.
 - 2. Expose subject to fresh air. Fans and A/C units will work also.
 - 3. Have subject stay still, relax and breathe normally.
 - 4. With the assistance from Medical Staff, have the subject flush their eyes with copious amounts of cool water. Do not allow the subject to rub his/her eyes.
 - 5. Using a spray bottle, Medical Staff will apply water liberally to all areas of the body exposed to O/C. Wet paper towels pressed on the face followed by a dry paper towel has also proven to be an effective way to remove resin from the skin.
 - 6. Do not allow subjects wearing contact lenses to remove them. Damage to the cornea or sclera may occur.
 - 7. If necessary and practical, have the subject remove contaminated clothing.
 - 8. A non-oil based soap, shampoo or detergent will help remove the remainder of the resin from the skin. Do not use any creams, salves, or oils during the decontamination process.
- C. Usually an individual will recover within one (1) hour with vast improvements (e.g. eyes opening) occurring within 20 to 30 minutes. Anyone not exhibiting significant improvement should be closely monitored.
- D. Any person who exhibits sunburn like redness more than one hour after being sprayed and decontaminated or who shows signs of blistering should receive medical treatment. Subjects who have been decontaminated with O/C shall be monitored by Medical Staff every thirty minutes for two hours.

6.0 REVISION HISTORY

Version 8.05.02 – Revised 05/2002

Version 9.05.07 – Revised 05/03/07

(Title Change: Formerly Chemical Agents)

(Replaces Chemical Agents MADF Version 8.05.02 and Chemical Agents NCDF Version 8.05.02)

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