PESTICIDE DRIFT PROTOCOLS IN AREA PLANS

A GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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June 2007 Draft

INTRODUCTION

Pesticides are unique among toxic substances. They are not an unwanted byproduct of another process, but are instead industrial chemicals produced specifically for their toxicity to a target pest. In order to do this job, these toxins must be purposely introduced into the environment. This means that the regulation of these substances cannot focus solely on assessing their toxicity, but also on managing the risk of exposure associated with their application to the environment.

The California Food and Agriculture Code § 12972 requires users of any pesticide to apply it in such a manner as to prevent substantial drift to nontarget areas. However, due to unintentional overspray, unexpected winds, accidental release or negligence, pesticide drift into unintended areas is a common occurrence.

The pesticide drift bill (SB 391) came about in response to a number of pesticide drift incidents affecting residential communities, resulting in illness and hospitalization, at great expense to both local and state governments. SB 391 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency (in consultation with other state, county and local agencies, and the public) to develop protocols to help the first responder to a pesticide drift incident better identify the chemical of concern and respond to the health and safety needs of the affected population. These protocols must be included in the area plan for each administering agency, where applicable. SB 391 establishes a mechanism for fee reimbursement to help with the cost of responding to pesticide drift incidents, and requires medical treatment of the exposed population, if requested.

The Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) is charged with enforcing pesticide laws and regulations, violation of which is subject to criminal and civil sanctions and penalties. Existing law establishes the Department of Pesticide Regulation Fund.

Existing law establishes reporting requirements relating to pesticide poisoning, and requires the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) to implement a program to alert physicians and others regarding symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment. SB 391, in addition to other penalties, makes any person found to have violated provisions relating to pesticide drift incidents, liable for certain costs related to any and all resulting illness or injury

This document is guidance for administering agency personnel charged with preparing area plans. It is not law, nor is it regulation, and is not intended to replace either. It **is** intended to be a reference document to clarify the intent of the Legislature for those who must implement the bill. SB 391 requires these protocols to be included in the next scheduled review and update of the area plan, which is every three years (Health & Safety Code (H&SC) § 25503(d)).

This is also a living document. It will be modified and updated as needed. To provide input, call OES' Hazmat Unit at (916) 845-8741.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective implementation of the mandates of SB 391 requires seamless cooperation and communication between different levels of government within the state. Among these players are:

The California Environmental Protection Agency

The California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) was created in 1991 by Governor's Executive Order. The six Boards, Departments and Office (BDO) were placed within the Cal/EPA "umbrella" to create a cabinet level voice for the protection of human health and the environment and to assure the coordinated deployment of State resources. These BDOs are: the Air Resources Board (ARB), State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) , the Integrated Waste Management Board (IWMB), the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR). The mission of Cal/EPA is to restore, protect and enhance the environment, to ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality.

The Legislature has given Cal/EPA several specific programmatic responsibilities, among which are overall responsibility for the Unified Program, and the lead for implementation of SB 391, including development of the pesticide drift protocols.

Cal/EPA and the BDOs shall accord the highest respect and value to every individual and community, by developing and conducting our public health and environmental protection programs, policies, and activities in a manner that promotes equity and affords fair treatment, accessibility, and protection for all Californians, regardless of race, age, culture, income, or geographic location.

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) protects human health and the environment by regulating pesticide sales and use and fostering reduced-risk pest management. DPR’s oversight duties include product evaluation and registration, environmental monitoring, residue testing of fresh produce and local use enforcement through the county agricultural commissioners. DPR protects public health and the environment with the nation’s most rigorous and comprehensive program to evaluate and control pesticide use.

The California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment

While OEHHA does not promulgate environmental regulations directly, it is responsible for developing and providing risk managers in state and local government agencies with toxicological and medical information relevant to decisions involving public health. State agency users of such information include all boards and departments within Cal/EPA, as well as the Department of Health Services, the Department of Food and Agriculture, the

Office of Emergency Services, the Department of Fish and Game, and the Department of Justice. OEHHA also works with Federal agencies, the scientific community, industry and the general public on issues of environmental as well as public health.

The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services

In 1970, the California Emergency Services Act was passed, renaming the California Disaster Office as the Office of Emergency Services (OES), and retaining that office in the Office of the Governor; the Director of the Office of Emergency Services reports directly to the Governor. Among the duties and responsibilities delegated to the Director by the Governor is the responsibility for reduction of all hazards. This includes directing departmental efforts relating to hazard identification, either natural or man-made, and identification of mechanisms for hazard reduction, including but not limited to promoting and negotiating changes in statewide land use policies and codes relating to public safety.

As a state agency partner in the Unified Program, OES is responsible for providing technical assistance and evaluation of the Hazardous Material Release Response Plan (Business Plan) Program, the California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) Program, spill reporting and each administering agency's area plan.

Administering Agencies (usually Certified Unified Program Agencies)

A CUPA, or Certified Unified Program Agency is a local agency that has been certified by the Secretary of Cal/EPA to implement state environmental programs within the local agency's jurisdiction. Most CUPAs have been established as a function of a local environmental health or fire department. Some CUPAs have contractual agreements with another local agency, a "participating agency" (PA), that implements one or more program elements in coordination with the CUPA. The Secretary has certified 86 CUPAs to date. These 86 CUPAs carry out the responsibilities previously handled by approximately 1,300 state and local agencies.

The administering agency for Chapter 6.95 programs (which include the area plan) is usually a CUPA or PA and is the agency tasked by the Health & Safety Code with developing the area plan (H&SC 25503(c)). The CUPA obviously cannot accomplish this in a vacuum. CUPA personnel must develop the plan in consultation with all of the appropriate agencies at the local, state and federal level. These players include: the fire chiefs, the local health officer, the hazmat team, police or sheriff's department, the County Agricultural Commissioner; state agencies such as California Department of Transportation, California Highway Patrol, California Department of Forestry and California Department of Fish and Game, and; federal agencies such as Department of Transportation, Interstate Commerce Commission, Department of Defense, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, US Bureau of Land Management, US Coast Guard, and others, as appropriate. On top of this coordination, the CUPA must also take into account the regulated community; the CUPA must be in communication with the factories, refrigeration plants, water treatment plants, packing sheds, chemical supply houses, and any other sources of hazardous materials located within the CUPA's

jurisdiction. Without this communication, it would be impossible to plan isolation, evacuations, sheltering, effective medical care, or any of the many other responses necessary to deal with a hazardous materials incident, which includes a pesticide drift incident.

County Agricultural Commissioners

The County Agricultural Commissioners promote and protect the agricultural industry, the environment and the public of the State of California. As employees of the County, they carry out the laws and regulations of the state and enforce local ordinances. Among a County Agricultural Commissioner's most important responsibilities is the investigation of pesticide-related illnesses and injuries. All reported pesticide-related illnesses and injuries are investigated by the commissioner in the county in which the illness occurred. County Agricultural Commissioner staff interview the victims and employer, if the illness occurred on the job. If violations of pesticide law or regulations are found to have contributed to an illness, the commissioner takes enforcement action.

County Health Officers

The responsibility for protection of the public health at the local level rests with the local governing body. This responsibility for enforcement of public health laws and regulations is delegated to the local health officer (county or city). The governing body may or may not also delegate the authority to proclaim a local emergency to the local health officer. Regardless of whether the local emergency is declared by the health officer or by the governing body, once an emergency has been proclaimed, the local health officer has the authority to take **any** preventative measure that may be necessary to protect and preserve the public health from any public health hazard for the duration of the state of emergency. Preventative measure is defined as abatement, correction, removal or other protective step that may be taken against any public health hazard that is caused by a disaster and affects the public health (H&SC § 101040 and 101475).

AREA PLAN PROTOCOLS

An area plan is a plan established pursuant to Health & Safety Code § 25503 by an administering agency for emergency response to a release or threatened release of a hazardous material within the city or county that constitutes the administering agency's jurisdiction. The elements that must be addressed within the area plan (minimum standards) are outlined in the California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Division 2, Chapter 4, Article 3, § 2720-2728 (appended as Attachment XX).

A review of these minimum standards makes it abundantly clear that among the most important elements of emergency response are pre-emergency planning, communication between responding agencies, and joint field or table-top exercises. The area plan is not supposed to be a filing cabinet document, but a useful guide to emergency response. Use it. Give it some exercise. It will be much healthier for the experience.

Since this is such a varied state, with each agricultural area having unique topography, infrastructure, political boundaries, response capabilities and interagency relationships, it would be counterproductive to try to impose a "one-size-fits-all" set of detailed regulations on the entire state. Actually, if hazardous materials response was rigidly defined in regulation, the area plan would be unnecessary. As it stands, the area plan constitutes the administering agency's performance standards – "this is how we do it here".

A pesticide drift exposure incident is the release of a specific hazardous material. The existing area plan standards are designed to be a superset of response activities for ALL releases or potential releases of a hazardous material. Therefore, the integration of the pesticide drift "protocols" from SB 391 has been done at a high level, allowing the administering agency the flexibility to use whatever locally available asset that works best for each protocol, as long as it meets the intent of the law. In many cases, existing area plans already address many, if not all, of the issues enumerated in the SB 391 protocols.

The actions required from the administering agency, the first responders, and everyone else required to successfully deal with a pesticide drift incident, as outlined in the six SB 392 protocols, fall roughly into three categories: pre-emergency planning and training, communication and fiscal reimbursement.

Pre-emergency planning includes activities such as writing plans, procedures and protocols and keeping them up to date. The plan needs to have current telephone numbers in it. The list of contractors needs to be current. Any emergency response and assistance coordination and agreements with adjacent jurisdictions need to be current and well understood by all involved. The best plans in the world are useless unless accompanied by training. ***Training*** allows the planners to evaluate their plans, and ensures that each participant in a hazardous materials incident knows what their role in the response is, and whether the equipment and supplies are sufficient and in good repair. The onset of an emergency is a very poor time to find out what you are supposed to do.

Communication is vital both in the planning stage and during the emergency itself. Responding agencies need to be in communication with first responders on the scene, current information being vital to proper response. In a similar manner, affected or potentially affected members of the public need to be told how to protect themselves, where to go or not to go in order to be safe, and what is happening to them in case of evacuation or decontamination efforts. Much of the responder's best information about the hazardous materials release comes from the "victims", so ideally the communication will be two-way. See below for some hints on effective communication.

Cost recovery or fiscal reimbursement. Unfortunately, responding to a hazardous materials incident, especially one involving numerous potential victims, is very expensive. While mechanisms exist to obtain state and federal funding aid for a hazardous material emergency, there is no reason that the individual or company responsible for the hazardous material release should not pay part or all of the expense of the response and recovery.

Following are the SB 391 protocols, with the corresponding new Title 19 language, and some suggestions, hints and miscellaneous observations the reader might find useful. As noted above, each of these protocols falls roughly within one or more of the 3 categories noted above, planning, communication and fiscal reimbursement. The entire text of Article 3, with the new language underlined, is included as Attachment 1.

The minimum standard protocols for the purposes of amending area plans outlined in SB 391 include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Protocols for requesting and providing immediate access to pesticide-specific information necessary to assist emergency medical services personnel in identifying pesticides that may be causing a pesticide drift exposure incident and appropriate treatments.

Under Title 19, § 2723 (Pre-Emergency Planning), a new subsection (g) has been added to existing regulation.

> *(g) procedures, established in consultation with the County Agricultural Commissioner and the Local Health Officer, with assistance from the Department of Pesticide Regulation, to provide immediate access to pesticide-specific information for responders to pesticide releases. This information will assist emergency response and emergency medical services personnel in identifying and characterizing any pesticides which have the potential to come into contact with one or more individuals as the result of a pesticide drift exposure incident within the jurisdiction.*

This issue is also addressed in § 2726 (g)(4) (Public Safety and Information), with regard to evacuation plans:

(4) properties of hazardous materials, such as quantity, concentration, vapor pressure, density, and potential health effects;

(2) Protocols to delineate specific agency responsibilities and the process for responding to calls, notifying residents, and coordinating evacuation, if needed.

This is also a pre-planning issue, for the most part. The majority of the area plan is already devoted to assigning specific agency responsibilities during a haz mat emergency (that's what it's for). § 2723 (f) (formerly subsection (e)) has been updated to ensure that the Ag Commissioner and Health Officer are involved in pesticide drift incidents:

(f) development of an integrated response management system providing standardized organizational structure, terminology, and procedures for use during any release or threatened release of hazardous materials *to include pesticide drift incidents. The administering agency shall incorporate into the area plan specific agency roles within the Incident Command System, and the Standardized Emergency Management System, including procedures for agency notification and responsibility for public safety and information pursuant to Section 2726 for all emergency responses, to include pesticide drift incidents. The administering agency shall consult with the County Agricultural Commissioner and the Local Health Officer when assigning specific agency responsibilities for pesticide drift incidents.*

§ 2726 concerns public safety and information. Existing subsection (b) concerns plans for informing members of the affected public about safety procedures to follow during a hazardous materials release. A new subsection (c) has been inserted, to clarify the need to notify residents and coordinate any necessary evacuation:

(c) a procedure, developed in consultation with the County Agricultural Commissioner, to notify residents of a pesticide drift incident and a procedure to assist in the coordination of an evacuation, if deemed necessary by emergency response personnel.

Notification is further addressed in existing former § 2726 (e)(3), which became (g)(3):

(g) provisions for evacuation plans. Evacuation planning shall provide for the following elements:

(3) timely notification of the affected public, including release of messages prepared pursuant to subsections (*e*) and (*f*) of this section;

(3) Protocols to establish emergency shelter procedures and locations to be used in the event evacuation is needed.

Existing former § 2726(e) (renumbered to subsection (g) due to the addition of new subsections (b) and (c)) provides for evacuation planning in a hazardous materials emergency.

> (g) provisions for evacuation plans. Evacuation planning shall provide for the following elements:
>
> (1) determination of the necessity for evacuation;
> (2) centralized coordination of information with local law, fire, public health, medical, and other emergency response agencies;
> (3) timely notification of the affected public, including release of messages prepared pursuant to subsections (e) and (f) of this section;
> (4) properties of hazardous materials, such as quantity, concentration, vapor pressure, density, and potential health effects;
> (5) possible release scenarios;
> (6) facility characteristics, topography, meteorology, and demography of potentially affected areas;
> (7) ingress and egress routes and alternatives;
> (8) location of medical resources trained and equipped for hazardous material response;
> (9) mass-care facilities, reception areas, and sheltering; and
> (10) procedures for post-emergency period population recovery.

Detailed information on decontamination and other issues are included in the "Multi-Casualty Mass Decontamination Guidance Document For First Responders", which may be downloaded from the OES Website.

(4) Protocols to access services in all languages known to be spoken in the affected area in accordance with Section 11135 of the Government Code.

§ 2726 (Public Safety and Information) had a new subsection (d) added:

> *(d) a procedure to identify all languages known to be spoken in the administering agency's county or city, as the case may be, and ensure that any individual is able to access services in their native language as required by Section 11135 of the Government Code. The area plan will outline how these services will be provided in the languages identified.*

The State of California is very culturally diverse, made up of many ethnic and social groups with many inter-group variations in values, beliefs and practices. In addition, individuals within the same social group have different life experiences that contribute to variations in the degree to which they adhere to the norms commonly attributed to their culture. Also, the individuals from these diverse cultures and varying ethnic and social groups may speak languages other than English as their primary language.

The information on the diversity within the communities of the United States of America is available from the Census Bureau by:

- Dialing 1-800-233-3308 (Seattle Regional Office of the U.S. Census Bureau).

- Accessing the website www.census.gov.

Additional resources to access are education centers, local colleges, English as a second language (ESL) programs, churches, and community groups. A good example of a 911 program that addresses these concerns is that of San Diego County Sheriff's Office. The url for their web page is included in the Attachments.

(5) Protocols to ensure access to health care within 24 hours of the exposure and up to a week after the exposure.

This is a notification and coordination issue. Subsection (e) was added to § 2724 (Notification and Coordination):

> *(e) procedures, developed in consultation with the Local Health Officer, to ensure access to health care within 24 hours of an exposure resulting from a pesticide drift emergency and up to a week after the incident.*

(6) Protocols to notify medical providers regarding eligibility for reimbursement pursuant to Section 12997.5.

Subsection (d) was added to § 2723 (Pre-Emergency Planning):

> *(d) procedures, developed in consultation with the Local Health Officer, to inform medical providers regarding eligibility for reimbursement pursuant to Section 12997.5 of the Food and Agriculture Code, where applicable.*

For further guidance from the California Department of Pesticide Regulation, please see the document "Reimbursing Medical Costs of Persons Injured in Pesticide Incidents", which has been appended as Attachment 2.

Some thoughts on communication.

Benefits of positive communication - how first responders communicate with the victims of a hazardous materials release, as they rescue, decontaminate, and medically treat them, can aid or delay the appropriate response. To lessen the victims' fears about the emergency process and ensure their cooperation throughout all the phases of the response, first responders need to communicate pertinent information that is simple and understandable.

The benefits of good communication include:

- Improve victims' understanding and acceptance of the HazMat emergency response and the associated health and safety risks;

- Improve first responder understanding of the victims' concerns regarding a HazMat emergency response;
- Improve ability for the victims to act on first responder requests (e.g., decontamination procedures, shelter-in-place, evacuation); and
- Decrease potential for legal action by the victims.

Objectives when Communicating with Victims:

Emergency service agencies need communication objectives as a guide to improve on and off-scene communication with civilians and victims. Communication objectives provide an excellent platform to insure that application of other procedures are more effective, incident handling is better focused, and desired outcomes are likely to be achieved.

Pre-Incident Planning: Educate the community on what your emergency service agency developed and designed for responding to hazardous materials incidents in general, and decontamination issue specifics.

The community deserves to be kept informed about the response capabilities that may affect them directly. Educating the community will allow the local emergency response service agencies to demonstrate that they are progressive and responsive to changing and demanding times. The positive trade-off to familiarizing the community on the response capabilities is that an informed community will be a more cooperative community during a time of local crisis.

Training: Train all first responders on inter-active communication skills with civilians, in order to improve how they explain situations in non-technical terms that the community-at-large can understand.

First responders need be ready to apply their communication skills in such a manner to efficiently convey important information. To gain their community's attention, confidence, and cooperation they need to be appreciative and sensitive to the wide diversity (ethnicity, values, beliefs, practices, and languages).

During the response phase, allow victims to express their concerns about the response to hazardous material incidents.

Victims will have why, what, where, when, and how questions about the first responders procedures and actions to be taken during a hazardous material incident. They will be expecting answers to these questions, and if not addressed they could become intolerant to responding to the life-saving requests of first responders. To avoid potential resistance from victims, first responders need to address their concerns.

Address victims' specific concerns in a calm and reassuring manner.

During an incident, victims will have fears and questions about the response. Fear is a natural response. And, in such situations victims desperately need answers. Responding to both by using non-threatening and respectful language will help alleviate these fears and address their concerns.

Keep in mind, when victims express their specific concerns, they, too, can provide valuable information to assist emergency responders in identifying the source of exposure such as chemical clouds, nearby pesticide or other chemical use or storage sites.

Convey vital and pertinent information to victims and civilians in a manner that contributes to improving incident efficiency and success.

Victims will need to know how to clean and protect themselves, what medical aid may be necessary, and where they can receive medical aid. The first responder must provide all of this information and more, quickly, efficiently, and correctly.

After the incident is over, have a mechanism in place for victims and civilians to access general information that corrects misconceptions and alleviates general anxiety.

Mechanisms for Effective Communication

Several vehicles for communication between the first responder, victims, and the community to utilize before, during, and/or after an incident include:

- Posters/cards/flyers.
- Video.
- Brochures.
- Community Group Meetings.
- Public forums.
- Mass media.

Posters/Cards/Flyers - Posters/cards/flyers are cost effective and appropriate for short-term, single message communication efforts that cover one subject, e.g. decontamination, and are most useful during an incident. Some general guidelines to follow when utilizing this type of communication are:

- Focus on one subject;
- Design to be picked up, carried away, and read quickly;
- Employ verbal, visual, and Braille communication. Sometimes pictures tell a thousand words. And, remember some people receiving the information may be blind, deaf or illiterate;
- Produce in the different languages spoken in your community; and
- Distribute where necessary.

Page 39 of the Multi-Casualty Mass Decontamination Guidance Document for First Responders shows an example of what first responders may hand out or post for

contaminated victims to lessen their fears of decontamination and address their common concerns.

On the opposite side of the handout, first responders could place universal pictures to depict:

- The removal of contaminants from a person or personal effects;
- The four major parts of the decontamination process (evaluation, removal of contaminated clothing, wash and rinse, and donning of clean garments and re-evaluation); and/or
- The handling of the victims' modesty.

Remember, the handouts, more than likely, will become contaminated as the victims handle them. Containing the handouts to a specific area (like at the decontamination entrance) is extremely important to prevent secondary contamination.

Video - An alternative to posters/cards/flyers is a short repeating video. At the entrance of the decontamination corridor, contaminated victims could watch an instructional video on how to decontaminate themselves as they proceed forward.

Brochures - Brochures are useful before or after an incident to communicate with the public. These avenues of communications take advantage of the mailing database of the agencies' utilities billing department. The agency designs and publishes the brochure in the required amount, and asks that the next cycle of a utility billing include an insert.

Brochures can contain information on the adoption of new programs that complement and expand that agencies' response capability in various areas, such as hazardous materials and terrorism. The intent is to educate the public, and keep them current on these issues of continued preparation. The public is very receptive to this form of communication, and the cost for production and distribution is relatively inexpensive. Brochures can also address the community's perceptions and concerns.

Some general guidelines to follow when instituting a brochure program are:

- Include graphics and pictures, as a "picture is worth a thousand words." Do not over use graphics.
- Avoid using technical words, keep sentences short and simple, and avoid using acronyms and abbreviations;
- Organize information in bullet or outline form for the user to more easily scan; and
- Produce an eye-catching, high quality product.

To address a multilingual region of a community, the reverse side of the pamphlet or brochure can be replicated in a second language.

Community Group Meetings - Community group meetings are a very effective communication mechanism to educate the community on what your emergency service agency developed and designed for addressing responses to hazardous material incidents in general, and decontamination issues in specifics. Be prepared to answer some general questions.

Public Forums - Public forums are a way to engage the community in promoting constructive dialogue. Public forums are rare, and are arranged only after an exceptionally complex and controversial issue. Good meticulous planning must go into the design and announcement of a public forum so that the process of the meeting is facilitated in such a way as to avoid posturing and injection of misinformation.

Some general guidelines to follow when planning a public forum are:

- Assemble and utilize members of an organization who are familiar with proper agenda design;
- Select a facility to accommodate the size and comfort of your participants and which is easy to find;
- Use a neutral facilitator or master of ceremonies;
- Identify the goals and purpose for the forum;
- Have in attendance appropriate specialists and experts, and introduce them;
- Keep announcements brief, concise, and accurate;.
- Present in a positive demeanor;
- Record points articulated by attendees; and
- Have a mechanism to research and provide responses to unanswered questions and additional issues raised.

Mass Media - Mass media, especially radio and television, is a communication mechanism:

Prior to an incident, educate the community on what your emergency service agency developed and designed for addressing responses to hazardous material incidents in general, and decontamination issues specifically.

During the incident:

1. Describe the incident and emergency response;
2. Tell the public how to protect themselves (i.e., shelter-in-place, self decontamination, etc.); describe signs and symptoms to determine if medical treatment is required to warn the public to avoid certain areas, and
3. Inform victims, who left the incident prior to decontamination, about what to do to prevent secondary contamination to vehicles, family members, or associates, and where to go for medical care; and

After the incident, provide to the public and the victims post incident information (i.e., what happened, follow-up medical care, long-term health effects, safe re-entry, legal actions, etc.). Remember communities are typically multilingual; so present your message on radio and television stations that cater to all the languages within your community.

Communication Factors and Actions To Build Trust and Credibility

The success of any communication effort is highly dependent on the history of the relationship between the first responders and the community. If the history consists of a trusting and interactive relationship, the communication effort has a good foundation for success. On the other hand, if the history consists of confrontation and distrust, the communication effort can be very difficult. Of course, acting trustworthy is no guarantee that people will trust you. But if the agency fails to impart efforts to improve its credibility within the community, resistance in the form of disagreement and resentment often will result.

When communicating to victims, first responders should emphasize the following factors that inspire trust and credibility:

- Competency/professionalism.
- Care.
- Empathy.
- Compassion.
- Respect.
- Understanding.
- Organization.
- Commitment.
- Knowledge.
- Encouragement of Involvement.
- Honesty.

To foster and help maintain trust and credibility, the following key actions need to occur:

Prior to the Incident:

Establish Communication - Members of agency make direct personal contact with community to foster trust/credibility.

Maintain Communication - Do not forget or dismiss those with whom the agency has established a contact. Establish a routine by which those contacted will receive repeated updates on reliable basis.

Educate - Educate the community on what your emergency service agency developed and designed for responding to hazardous materials incidents in general, and decontamination issues specifically.

Communicate Clearly & Concisely - Speak and convey information in strict lay terms. Avoid getting technical, or too detailed into specific departmental procedures, as this will often lose the listener. Speak clearly, concisely, deliberately, confidently, and be organized in the thought process.

Provide Updates - Provide updates on new or modified emergency programs that may affect them directly.

During the incident:

Establish Communication - Members of agency make direct personal contact and introduce self to those in need of information and help. Request to speak to a spokesperson that may represent a larger group, and establish a sustaining contact.

Maintain Communication - Do not forget or dismiss those with whom the agency has established a contact. Establish a routine by which those contacted will receive repeated updates on a reliable basis.

Communicate Vital and Pertinent Information - Victims and civilians will anxiously want to hear reassuring and guiding information. Members of the agency must provide vital and pertinent information regarding the situation, e.g., why are they here, what is going on, how bad is the "stuff," are we in harms way, what are you doing about it, when can we go back to work, are things contaminated, how do we clean and protect ourselves, what medical aid is necessary, where do we receive medical aid?

Communicate Clearly & Concisely - Speak and convey information in strict lay terms. Avoid getting technical, or too detailed into specific departmental procedures, as this will often lose the listener. Speak clearly, concisely, deliberately, confidently, and be organized in the thought process.

Provide Updates - The agency's liaison should announce and provide periodic progress reports with regard to what is being done. Progress reports aid substantially in continuing to calm the public.

Respect Privacy - On issues concerning one's privacy, conduct specific interviews with individuals in a private and separate location. Make arrangements to address privacy issues of any kind.

After the Incident is Over:

Provide Updates - Inform the civilians at the scene, and the public via news media reports, of the procedures that will be in place to provide follow up announcements and update information. Sometimes peripheral information handling will create demands exceeding that associated directly with an incident. "Hot Lines", "Rumor Control", and

other sources utilizing 800 numbers help significantly in disseminating general information, correcting misconceptions, and alleviating general anxiety.

Sometimes specific “one-on-one” follow up may be anticipated with identified individuals (those contaminated), thereby necessitating the creation of a name and telephone list of victims. There may be reasons for the responding agency, or the medical and health community, to locate and maintain a dialogue with specific individuals long after an incident.

Investigation - Insure the victims and others that the incident is under investigation, and that a report will be created. Inform those who wish to know how copies of various reports can be obtained. Explain the investigative system that is in place, and that such investigation is a matter of routine departmental policy.

CONTACT INFORMATION

California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA)

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P.O. Box 2815
Sacramento, CA 95812-2815
http://www.calepa.ca.gov/

California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR)

1001 I Street,
P.O. Box 4015
Sacramento, CA 95812-4015
(916) 445-4300
http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/

Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)

Sacramento Office

1001 I Street,
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 324-7572
Mailing address: Post Office Box 4010
Sacramento, CA 95812-4010.

Oakland Office

1515 Clay Street, 16th floor
Oakland, California 94612
(510) 622-3200

http://www.oehha.org/

Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES)

3650 Schriever Ave
Mather, CA 95655
(916) 845-8741
http://www.oes.ca.gov/

CUPA Forum Board (Contact information for individual administering agencies)

http://calcupa.net/

County Agricultural Commissioners Contact Information

http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/exec/cl/countyagmap.htm

California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association

http://www.cacasa.org/

County Health Officers Contact Information

http://www.dhs.ca.gov/hisp/chs/OVR/LocalRegistrar/CountyReg5.htm

Information on 911 systems

State 911 website

http://www.td.dgs.ca.gov/Services/911/default.htm

San Diego Sheriff Communication Center

http://www.sdsheriff.net/ccweb/911_info.htm

National Emergency Number Association

http://www.nena.org/

Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials

http://www.apco911.org/about/911/

OTHER AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

1. Area Plan Regulations, Including Pesticide Drift Exposure Incident Language

2. "Reimbursing Medical Costs of Persons Injured in Pesticide Incidents" – DPR

3. Example Pesticide Drift Protocols – City of "Brownell" and County of "Santa Luisa" – A working document to aid in area plan preparation

4. Example Area Plan – City of "Brownell"

5. Pesticide Drift Guidance – DPR