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10.05

**Hazardous Materials & Other Waste Handling Responsibilities**

The Fire Department has scene management authority at all incidents involving hazardous materials/wastes, industrial wastes, biohazards, sharps waste, sewage, and unidentified materials/wastes in the City of Torrance. Fire Department personnel will respond to any report of such incidents in which materials/wastes have been spilled, dumped, leaked, or abandoned. Fire Department personnel will also secure the area until the materials/wastes have been identified and properly removed or command passed to a qualified agency. Other City departments will provide support as needed to allow the Fire Department to clean up and remove the materials/wastes safely and quickly. In the event of an Emergency Operation Center activation, unified command may assign these responsibilities to other City departments or divisions.

10.10

**Definitions**

- A. Animals: Injured, ill or dead animals.
- B. Biohazards: Blood, body fluids, body parts, human tissue, etc. Which may or may not be from a crime scene or other trauma.
- C. City Contracted Cleanup Companies: Those firms with which the City has prior arrangement for the cleanup of subject wastes. The list is grouped by the type of materials they are allowed to cleanup. **(See Appendix III)**
- D. Crime Scene Waste: Residue from incidents such as shootings, stabbings, and other trauma-type scenes which require a police investigation
- E. Hazardous Material/Waste: Materials or wastes which exhibit at least one of the following characteristics:
  - 1. Toxicity
  - 2. Corrosivity (a pH of 12.5 or higher, or a pH of 2 or less)
  - 3. Reactivity to air or water

- 4. Flammability
- 5. Explosivity
- 6. Some other characteristic that makes it a serious hazard to human health or the environment
- F. Individual Parcel: A contiguous quantity of land in the possession of individual(s) other than the City of Torrance and to which there is no Public Right-of-Way. Examples include private residences, businesses, and parking lots.
- G. Industrial Wastes: Materials or wastes that do not meet any of the above descriptions. These include violations of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and/or Clean Water Act.
- H. Motor Vehicle Fluid Spills: Motor oil, gasoline (max. 50 gals.), diesel fuel (max. 100 gals.), brake fluid, antifreeze, transmission fluid, hydraulic fluid, etc. which have leaked from vehicles.
- I. Public Right-of-Way: Property within the City of Torrance over which the public has the right to pass. Examples include streets, alleys, sidewalks, and City parks.
- J. Sewage: Raw sewage resulting from blocked and/or broken sewage lines, dumping from RV's, portable toilets, etc.
- K. Sharps: Medical items such as needles, syringes or lancets.
- L. Universal and E-Wastes: Used fluorescent lights, ballasts, small batteries (including Alkaline, Nickel-Cadmium, Nickel Metal Hydride, Lithium, and Lead Acid), television sets, computer CPUs, monitors, etc.

10.15

**Expenses**

The City of Torrance will address payment for the cleanup and removal of hazardous materials/wastes, industrial wastes, biohazards, sewage, and unidentified materials/wastes in the City of Torrance by a private, licensed waste hauler when the incident is beyond the capabilities of the Fire Department or other City departments cleanup crews and no County or responsible party funding is appropriate.

10.20

**Authorizations**

Code Enforcement - Hazardous Materials/Wastes

LA County Health Haz Mat Unit has the authority to:

Respond to hazardous material/waste incidents when the quantity, concentration, or physical/chemical characteristics pose a significant present or potential hazard to human health/safety or to the environment.

Enforce both the County and State hazardous material/waste codes that may carry more severe penalties than the Torrance Municipal Code.

Code Enforcement - Industrial Waste

LA County Health Haz Mat and City personnel shall coordinate their enforcement actions. In the event LA County Health Haz Mat does not respond to the scene or decides against taking any enforcement action against the responsible party, City personnel will determine whether the situation calls for enforcement of applicable laws.

**(Reference: City of Torrance Ordinance No. 3452)**

110.05

**Hazardous Materials & Other Waste Handling Responsibilities**

All City employees are responsible for reporting suspected hazardous materials, hazardous wastes, industrial wastes, biohazards, sewage, or any unidentified material or waste incidents to the Fire Department by calling (310) 781-7042 and reporting the incident.

If the Fire Department determines there is a possibility that enforcement action may be taken against the responsible party, then all information and samples shall be documented in writing and treated as evidence.

Each City department involved in supporting material/waste cleanup operations shall follow these written procedures concerning the safe handling of such materials/wastes.

110.10

**Situations**

The Fire Department shall evaluate the situation at any incident involving suspected hazardous material/waste, industrial waste, biohazard, sewage, or unidentified material/waste to determine into which group the material/waste falls:

- A. Hazardous material/waste
- B. Motor vehicle fluid spill
- C. Sewage
- D. Crime scene waste
- E. Biohazards and sharps waste
- F. Animal
- G. Universal and E-waste
- H. Industrial waste

After identifying the appropriate group, the Fire Department shall refer to the procedures section outlining the actions to be taken. Fire Department personnel shall also attempt to identify the party responsible for the incident.

110.15

**Hazardous Material/Waste**

The Fire Department must always be the initial contact, by calling (310)781-7042 for any known hazardous material/waste or unknown material; they will evaluate and mitigate the incident.

Note: Unless the City employee has certain knowledge of the contents of any found container, the Fire Department must be called as the container may not be properly labeled as to its current contents.

- A. If the material/waste is in the Public Right-of-Way and not traceable to an Individual Parcel or Responsible Party:
  - 1. The Fire Department may contact LA County Health Haz Mat who will determine the appropriate response; options include handling it themselves or directing the Fire Department to do so.
  - 2. In the latter circumstance, the material/waste will be taken to the Hazardous Waste Storage Area and notification made to Fire Prevention Specialist assigned to Hazardous Waste for disposal or the Fire Department will contact one of the appropriate City contracted cleanup companies.
  - 3. Waste Oil: If testing excludes the presence of contaminants, waste oil may be taken by the Fire Department to Fleet Services for disposal in a waste oil tank; the Haz Cat sheet is to be sent to the Fire Prevention Specialist assigned to Hazardous Waste.
  - 4. Car Batteries
    - a) Undamaged (i.e. not leaking) vehicle batteries discarded in the public right of way may be collected by any city employee and taken to Fleet Services for proper disposal.
    - b) Leaking vehicle batteries may be collected by fire personnel for placement into a larger poly drum in the Hazardous Waste Storage Area at the City Yard.

- 5. Aerosols Containers: City employees may pick up small quantities (less than 5 gallons) of waste aerosols and aerosol containers still bearing their original labels for storage in the Hazardous Waste Storage Area. The Fire Prevention Specialist assigned to Hazardous Waste must be advised of the particulars (types, quantities) and the waste placed in the Hazardous Waste Storage Area.
- B. If the material/waste is in the Public Right-of-Way and is traceable to an Individual Parcel or Responsible Party, or is found on an Individual Parcel:
  - 1. The Fire Department may contact LA County Health Haz Mat, who will determine the appropriate response; options include ordering the responsible party to clean up the waste or handling it themselves. The Fire Department may be directed to do the cleanup. In this circumstance, the waste will be taken to the Hazardous Waste Storage Area and the Fire Prevention Specialist assigned to Hazardous Waste will be notified. The Fire Department may contact one of the appropriate City contracted cleanup companies for disposal.
    - a) The Community Risk Reduction Division may be contacted for assist in the coordination of the clean-up and follow up as needed.

110.20

**Motor Vehicle Fluid Spill**

The Fire Department is responsible for the cleanup of vehicle fluids in the Public Right-of-Way, even if they originate on private property.

- A. If the fluids are spread over a large area and cleanup by the Fire Department is not practicable, the Fire Department will contact one of the appropriate City contracted cleanup companies.
- B. Any spill of over 50 gallons of gasoline or 100 gallons of diesel fuel, or any amount which has gone into a waterway, storm drain, sewer, etc. will be treated as hazardous material/waste.
  - 1. The Community Risk Reduction Division may be contacted for assist in the coordination of the clean-up and follow up as needed.

110.25

**Sewage**

- A. If the sewage is in the Public Right-of-Way and can be traced to an Individual Parcel:
  - 1. The Fire Department will respond and advise the responsible party to call a private cleanup company. The list of cleanup firms prepared by LA County Health Haz Mat may be provided upon request.
    - a) If the responsible party fails to promptly contact a private cleanup company, the Fire Department will:
      - (i) Contact one of the qualified City approved clean-up contractors to remediate the sewage both on the private property and in the public right-of-way with the responsible party to be billed for the cost of the service
      - (ii) The Fire Department may contact the City’s Public Works Department to assist in the containment of the sewage until the contacted clean up contractor arrives; with the responsible party being billed for cost of service.
  - 2. The Community Risk Reduction Division may be contacted for assist in the coordination of the clean-up and follow up as needed.
- B. If the sewage derives from a City source, Public Works personnel will clean up any material in the Public Right-of-Way and advise the property owner to contact a private contractor for the remainder. In the absence of the property owner or other responsible party, the City may contact a private contractor to complete the cleanup. Public Works will incur the cost of the clean-up.
- C. If it is determined by the Building & Safety of Community Development that a damaging spill was caused by the failure of a private backwater valve, the responsible party may be liable for associated costs and damages.

*NOTE: In cases of single family residential or duplex residential, Environmental may assume the responsibilities of the Fire Department after the initial assessment has been made by the Fire Department.*



110.30

**Crime Scene Waste**

- A. If the crime has occurred on an Individual Parcel, the Police Department will advise the responsible party to contact a private cleanup company. The list of cleanup firms prepared by LA County Health Haz Mat may be provided upon request.
- B. If a police incident has occurred on a Public Right-of-Way and involves hazardous or waste materials; the Police Department will secure the scene subject to the note below and conduct their investigation. The crime scene investigation, if able to proceed prior to the removal of the hazardous or waste materials, shall be conducted with awareness and caution. Once the investigation is concluded, the Fire Department will assume control of the site ensuring final mitigation with the Health Department including clean up either by Fire or by contracted clean up.

Note: Fire Department responds immediately to such incidents to make an initial assessment of hazardous waste materials. If identified dangers exist, those specific dangers shall be mitigated prior to the investigation continuing.

110.35

**Biohazards and Sharps Waste**

- A. If it appears that the biohazard may have been generated as the result of a crime (e.g., the presence of large quantities of blood), the Police Department is to be contacted before any clean up begins. However, if the source cannot be identified, the Police Department may choose not to respond.
- B. If the Police Department does not respond or the volume/type of biohazard is such that it does not infer that a crime occurred:
  - 1. If the responsible staff can reasonably do the clean-up they will, using proper and approved procedures to ensure there is no risk of exposure to blood-borne pathogens.
  - 2. All biohazard materials must be packaged in accordance with Health Department requirements.

- a) All items contaminated with blood or body fluids must be placed in a properly labeled (with biohazard symbol), double red biohazard liner (double bagged). NO LIQUIDS or LEAKING PRODUCTS; all liquids must be absorbed.
- 3. Biohazards should be taken to Little Company of Mary Hospital for disposal packaged according to the below procedures. **(See Appendix II)**
- 4. Chemical waste, tissue waste, pharmaceutical waste, chemotherapeutic waste or radioactive waste will not be accepted under any circumstances.
- 5. If the responsible staff cannot do the clean up, they will contact one of the appropriate City contracted clean up companies.
- C. The Fire Department is to be contacted immediately if large quantities of sharps are discovered; ultimate disposal of the sharps may be at the discretion of LA County Health Haz Mat.
- D. Sharps are to be handled only by those with blood-borne pathogens training and as per the City's website at <http://www.torranceca.gov/9134.htm>. "Place in a rigid, hard plastic or metal container with a screw-on or tight-fitting lid, such as a plastic laundry detergent container or coffee can. The container should be puncture-resistant and leak proof. Milk containers are not puncture resistant. Once the container is full, close the lid tightly and seal it with duct tape." They are then to be given to the City's Hazardous Waste Program Coordinator for proper disposal. Sharps shall be disposed of by following the Fire Department Sharps Disposal Procedure.

110.40

**Animals**

- A. Animal Control will respond to dead/injured/ill animals on public or private property and live marine wildlife on the beaches; they will contact a private contractor for the handling of dead marine mammals.

- B. Dead birds may be properly handled (e.g., using proper blood-borne pathogens procedures), placed into plastic bags and disposed of as regular trash.
- C. In cases of traffic collisions or crimes involving an animal, the Police Department and/or Fire Department will call Animal Control. The Police Department may make related arrests if deemed appropriate.
- D. If an animal is injured in a traffic, collision, crime or fire, Animal Control may be contacted to take the animal to a pet hospital.
- E. During non-business hours, Animal Control may not respond to dead animals unless the animal is large and/or causing a problem (e.g., traffic hazard, health & safety concern). In such instances, LA County Animal Care and Control may respond if requested to do so. **(See Contact Numbers on page 15)**

110.45

**Universal and E-Wastes**

- A. Small volumes of universal and e-wastes may be picked up by any City personnel and brought to the Hazardous Waste Storage Area.
- B. The Fire Prevention Specialist assigned to Hazardous Waste must be advised of the particulars (types, quantities) of waste placed in the Hazardous waste storage area.
- C. For larger volumes, (e.g., loads from trucks, abandoned materials on public property), the responding department shall contact one of the appropriate City contracted cleanup companies.

110.50

**Industrial Wastes**

- A. If liquid or solid waste can be traced to an individual parcel:
  - 1. The Fire Department will respond and evaluate the scene. The Fire Department will advise the responsible party to initiate cleanup and of the property owner's responsibilities. The list of cleanup firms may be provided upon request.

2. If the responsible party fails to promptly perform or arrange for the cleanup, the Fire Department will contact one of the appropriate City-contracted cleanup companies and bill the responsible party.
- B. If the waste is in the Public Right-of-Way and not traceable to an Individual Parcel or Responsible Party:
  1. Solid waste items such as drywall, glass, concrete and lumber, etc., will be picked up and properly disposed of by Public Works personnel.
  2. If liquid waste is found;
    - a) The Fire Department may handle small volumes of waste or to direct the responsible party when located to initiate clean-up when located.
    - b) Wastes which are deemed by the Torrance Fire Department or LA County Health Haz Mat to be appropriate for disposal into the sewer may be transported by Public Works personnel.
    - c) If the type or quantity of waste is beyond the capabilities of Public Works, Public Works will contact one of the appropriate City contracted cleanup companies.
    - d) If requested, the Environmental Section of Community Development can assist with issuance of citations, however, the Fire Department will maintain responsibility for the scene and mitigation.

110.55

**Responsibilities**

- A. The Fire Department is first responder to all NPDES related spills and incidents and assumes primary responsibility for all such incidents.
- B. The Police Department shall provide support at material/waste incident sites and shall assist the Fire Department with perimeter control, establishing access routes for emergency equipment, evacuation of potentially affected areas and criminal investigation when necessary.

- C. The Public Works Department shall assist at material/waste incident sites and provide any equipment and materials needed. Every attempt shall be made to ensure that City equipment remains uncontaminated, and no Public Works employees will directly participate in the cleanup of hazardous wastes. The Traffic and Lighting section shall assist by providing traffic control barricades, markers, or equipment at incident sites as necessary.
- D. The Finance Department's Purchasing Division shall assist the Fire Department in obtaining any materials, equipment, and/or services needed for the proper handling of material/waste.
- E. The General Services Department's City Services Warehouse shall store material/waste cleanup and containment supplies (absorbents, DOT: approved drums, etc.), and will issue them to City personnel on an as-needed basis.
- F. Fire Prevention Specialist assigned to Hazardous Waste shall:
  - 1. Operate and maintain the Hazardous Waste Storage Area. All materials/wastes placed in this area shall be inventoried and stored for a period not to exceed the CA Department of Toxic Substances Control's (DTSC) 90-day limit.
  - 2. Coordinate with other City departments to contract with a DTSC-registered hazardous waste hauler(s) for periodic transport of wastes.
  - 3. Maintain records of all wastes generated and disposed of from City sites.
  - 4. Remain current on existing and proposed hazardous material/ waste legislation at the Federal, State and Local levels which may affect City operations.
- G. The Environmental Section of Community Development shall respond to call-outs pertaining to oil well spills, as requested, and shall expedite spill cleanup by the well owners.

110.60

**Reports and Billings**

Responding crew leaders from assisting departments of a material/waste incident shall complete incident reports on forms approved by their respective departments. Each department's report shall include, at a minimum:

- A. A brief description of the incident;
- B. The Fire Department's "Incident Number" assigned to the incident;
- C. The job number assigned by the Finance Department for the tracking of City expenses and reimbursements related to the cleanup of material/waste spilled, dumped, leaked, or abandoned by non-City personnel;
- D. A listing of all department personnel called out to the incident scene: at what time, by whom, etc.;
- E. An itemization of the department man hours, materials, supplies, and equipment hours devoted to dealing with the incident.

The Fire Department's Incident Report shall also include a listing of work crews and equipment from other departments/agencies which responded to and provided services at the incident scene.

110.65

**Request for Billing**

The following guidelines must be followed for a department to claim their expenses:

- A. If the responsible party is identified and more than \$100 was expended in labor costs, materials, equipment fees, etc. each responding department shall prepare a Request for Billing (**Finance Form #443-10**) to recover costs from the responsible party.
- B. Within 10 days of the incident, a legible copy of the Request for Billing and the Incident Report shall be forwarded to the Finance Department.
- C. If reimbursement from the responsible party is received, each responding department's operating budget shall be reimbursed as appropriate.

**Appendix I – Contact Numbers**

Animal Control	(310) 618-3850
After hours and on weekends:	
LA County Animal Care and Control	(562) 940-6898
Emergency (Police and Fire):	911
Non-Emergency Situations:	
Police	(310) 328-3456
Fire Department Dispatch	(310) 781-7042
Environmental Section of Community Development	(310) 618-5929
Fire Prevention/NPDES Inspection	(310) 618-2973
Fire Prevention Specialist assigned to Hazardous Waste	(310) 618-2973
After hours and on weekends:	
Fire Prevention/NPDES Inspection	(310) 781-7042
Fire Prevention Specialist /Hazardous Waste	(310) 781-7042
Los Angeles County Animal Control Carson/Gardena	(310) 523-9566
Park Services Division of Community Services	(310) 781-6901
Police Department Dispatch	(310) 618-5641
Public Works	(310) 781-6900

## Appendix II – Providence LCM Letter

4101 Torrance Boulevard  
Torrance, CA 9053  
T: 310.540.7676  
[www.providence.org](http://www.providence.org)



January 19, 2016

Dear Local Emergency Medical Providers:

Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Center – Torrance has recently noted medical waste being disposed of from outside entities.

We are respectfully asking all outside entities to dispose of their Medical Waste based on their agency's Medical Waste Management Plan. Sharps Waste should not be deposited in the Emergency Department for disposal by the hospital. If you have any questions concerning this communication, please direct them to Yvonne Nugent, ED Clinical Director at 310-303-5602 or email [yvonne.nugent@providence.org](mailto:yvonne.nugent@providence.org).

Please share with all of your personnel.

Respectfully,

*Yvonne Nugent*

**Yvonne Nugent, BSN, RN, TNCC, CEN, CPEN** | Director, Emergency Services |  
Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Center Torrance |  
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*Lindy Galloway-Riley*

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4101 Torrance Boulevard, Torrance, CA 90503 |  
<http://providence.org/torrance>



Creating healthier communities, together



**Appendix III - Approved Contractors for Emergency Cleanup**  
Biohazards, Crime Scene Residue and Sewage

Crime Scene Steri-Clean (888) 577-7206

Ocean Blue (562) 624-4120

Hazardous Waste, Industrial Waste and Universal Waste

Enviroserv (800) 368-4778

Ocean Blue (562) 624-4120

**City of Torrance Guide to Policies, Procedures, Protocols, and Events**

Chapter 10 - Policy - Hazardous Material (Hazmat)

Chapter 110 - Procedure - Hazardous Material (Hazmat)

**Historical Record**

Original Publication

7/2000

Revision

7/2001 Reformat

3/2002

5/2002 Reformat

10/2009

2/2013 Reformat

7/2013

7/2017 Reviewed and Updated