



# Central Zone Operations

Alpine - Barona - Bonita - El Cajon - Lakeside - La Mesa  
Lemon Grove - San Miguel - Santee - Sycuan - Viejas  
Heartland Communications

## B-6 TRAUMA SCENE CLEANUP

### PURPOSE

To provide guidance on trauma scene waste management that will minimize the risk of exposure to emergency response personnel, the public and environment in accordance with all pertinent federal and local standards.

### POLICY

#### **Background:**

Emergency response personnel are often tasked with the removal of human blood, body fluids, and other associated residues from the scene of a serious human injury, illness, or death. Trauma scene waste is biohazardous waste that may be infectious or potentially infectious. Biologic waste constitutes a public health hazard and is regulated by the San Diego County Department of Environmental Health (DEH) under the California Health and Safety Code. Any biohazardous waste that an emergency responder handles must be disposed of in accordance with local and state laws. This guideline is written in accordance with County standards for the handling of biohazardous incidents.

#### **Private property:**

If on private property, and assuming that the law enforcement agency involved has released jurisdiction, response personnel have the option of cleaning up trauma scene waste or arranging for the property owner or other responsible party to handle it. When response personnel elect to perform the trauma scene clean-up all personnel shall exercise universal precautions such as gloves and splash protection. If the cleanup is entrusted to the property owner or a responsible party HCFA has a list of registered trauma waste management practitioners for reference.

#### **Public property:**

If the biohazardous incident is on public property and there is no responsible party, the scene cleanup becomes the responsibility of the local fire agency. If on state highway property, the responsible party would be the CHP and/or Caltrans with the FD assisting. Response personnel have the option of cleaning up the trauma scene or arranging for a private contractor to conduct the cleanup. When response personnel elect to perform the trauma scene clean-up all personnel shall exercise universal precautions such as gloves and splash protection. Manageable amounts of biohazardous waste may be sealed in a red biohazard waste plastic bag and transported to the hospital with the patient. If that is not possible the biohazard bag can be transported back to quarters for disposal by the agency's contracted biohazardous waste company. If there is a large amount of biohazardous waste, contact County Health Hazardous Materials Division (HMD) at



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858-505-6673 and advise them of the situation and ask for disposal recommendations. Do not wash the biohazardous waste into a gutter or a storm drain, nor add any disinfectant solution (i.e., bleach, soap, etc.) and wash the mixture into a gutter or a storm drain. This is a violation of the State Regional Water Quality Control Board Standards.