



Kern County Sheriff's Office Policies And Procedures

TITLE: GAS MASK, TRAINING, USE, RECORDS, AND STORAGE	NO: M-0600		
APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner			
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POLICY

The Kern County Sheriff's Office recognizes that Deputies may have occasions that require the use of an **Air-purifying respirator (APR)**, or Gas Mask in the performance of their duties. This policy on the use, training, storage, and records keeping is intended to comply with Cal/OSHA guidelines for **Air-purifying respirators**, POST, and Penal Code section 12403 requirements for use and training.

SCOPE

This program covers equipment selection, medical screening, fit testing, training, use and:

1. Officers who are issued respirators to be used for escape from hazardous atmospheres.
2. Officers who are issued respirators to be used while maintaining perimeters at hazardous materials incidents. These are officers who will be stationed in the support ("cold" or "green") zone, where contaminants are not expected to exceed levels deemed safe for unprotected persons, as determined by the Incident Commander.
3. Officers who are issued respirators for use in maintaining the perimeter at crowd-control incidents where chemical agents (e.g., CS or CN tear gas) are used.
4. Officers who are issued respirators due to sustained contact with, or transport of, persons who are suspected of carrying an active infection with a serious airborne respiratory disease (such as tuberculosis).
5. Officers who, in exigent or emergency situations, are required to enter an area where CS, CN, smoke, or other tearing agents have been expelled.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Kern County Sheriff's Office designates the Lieutenant in charge of the Training Section as the respiratory protection program administrator to oversee this program. The Program Administrator shall be knowledgeable about the requirements of Section 5144 of Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations and all elements of the respiratory protection program. The Administrator will be responsible for assuring implementation of all elements of this program.

The program administrator is responsible for ensuring that all general duty personnel designated to use respirators are included in this program, and that the program is implemented in a consistent manner throughout the Kern County Sheriff's Office.

APPROVED EQUIPMENT

All respiratory protective equipment shall be approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) for the environment in which it is going to be used. The following definitions apply to equipment that will be issued to officers under this program:

Air-purifying respirator (APR) means a respirator that works by removing gas, vapor, or particulate, or combinations of gas, vapor, and/or particulate from the air through the use of filters, cartridges, or canisters that have been tested and approved for use in specific types of contaminated atmospheres. This respirator does not supply oxygen and therefore cannot be used to enter an atmosphere that is oxygen deficient.

Note: Cartridges, canisters and filters are approved for use against specific hazards where the concentration is known or can be reasonably estimated. Some combination organic vapor/particulate cartridges and canisters are approved for use against CS and CN tear gas.

NIOSH is currently in the process of testing air-purifying respirators for protection against chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear agents including sarin (nerve agent), cyanide, phosgene, tear gas, and sulfur mustard (blister agents). When those respirators are approved, the notation CBRN will follow the NIOSH approval number, and equipment will bear a label so indicating. As of September 2003, only some self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), which are beyond the scope of this program, have been tested and approved for this use.

MEDICAL EVALUATION

Personnel are considered medically qualified to use respiratory protective equipment after completing the POST Medical History Statement (POST 2-252) or its equivalent and successfully passing a physical examination that occurs as a condition of employment. The pre-employment physical must meet or exceed the standards described in the POST Medical Screening Manual for California Law Enforcement.

Employees who were hired prior to the implementation of the POST Medical History Statement (POST 2-252) or equivalent shall complete the Cal/OSHA medical questionnaire and County approved medical vendor shall review it.

Medical evaluations are required for any officer when:

1. An officer reports medical signs or symptoms that are related to the ability to use a respirator,

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2. A physician or other licensed health care professional (PLHCP), a supervisor, or the Program Administrator informs the Department that an officer needs to be reevaluated,
3. Observations made during fit testing and program evaluation indicate a need for re-evaluation, or;
4. A change occurs in workplace conditions (e.g., physical work effort, protective clothing, and temperature) that may result in a substantial increase in the physiological burden placed on an officer.
5. An employee reports a medical condition that would prohibit them from using an APR, or that exposure to chemical agents would pose a risk of medical complications.

FIT TESTING

Fit test procedures shall be in accordance with Appendix A of Section 5144 of Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations.

1. Before an officer is required to use any respirator with a tight-fitting face piece (APR/PAPR), the officer must be fit tested with the same make, model, style, and size of respirator to be used. Officers shall be provided with a sufficient number of respirator models and sizes so that he/she may select an acceptable face piece.
2. Fit tests shall be provided at the time of initial assignment and at least annually thereafter. Additional fit tests shall be provided whenever the officer, employer, PLHCP, supervisor, or program administrator makes visual observations of changes in the officer's physical condition that could affect respirator fit. These conditions include, but are not limited to, facial scarring, dental changes, cosmetic surgery, or an obvious change in body weight.
3. The person who administers the fit test shall complete fit test training. The Kern County Sheriff's Office may accomplish this training through their fire agency, OSHA, or the manufacturer of the equipment. Documentation of all training must be maintained in the Department's training records. All personnel qualified to fit-test must keep up to date on their training.
4. Prior to the fit test, the officer shall be shown the proper procedures for donning a respirator. The officer shall demonstrate donning the respirator, adjust the straps, and perform positive and negative pressure fit checks.
5. Respirators with tight-fitting face pieces do not seal properly when facial hair comes between the sealing surface of the face piece and the face, or when it interferes with valve function. Therefore, any officer who has facial hair that interferes with sealing surfaces, or who cannot be successfully fit tested with a tight-fitting face piece respirator shall not be placed in a work related situation that requires them to use a respirator.

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6. Officers who wear corrective glasses or other personal protective equipment must be sure that such equipment is worn in a manner that does not interfere with the face piece seal. The glasses or personal protective equipment that must be worn with the respirator shall be taken to the fit-test assessment and worn during the test.

7. Officers who are issued tight-fitting face piece gas/vapor air purifying respirators (gas masks) shall be provided with either a qualitative (employee response to test agent) or quantitative (numerical measurement of leakage) method fit test. The Kern County Sheriff's Office will conduct quantitative fit tests, annually.

RESPIRATOR USE

Nothing in this policy shall change a response to a HAZ-MAT/WMD Law Enforcement First Response, as specified in section H-120 of the Kern County Sheriff's Office policy and procedure manual.

Escape: For escape from the release of hazardous materials, officers will be provided with

- :Combination cartridge air-purifying respirator
- :CBRN approved air-purifying respirator

Entry: Respirators issued under this program shall not be used to enter any area that is designated as the exclusion ("hot" or "red") zone, or the contaminant reduction ("warm" or "yellow") zone of a hazardous materials incident. They also should not be used to enter any areas that are known or suspected to be oxygen deficient, or that contain concentrations of hazardous substances that are unknown or are immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH). Respirator use shall not conflict with the agency's emergency response plan. See H-120 DPPM.

Continuous duty: For continuous duty in maintaining the perimeter of hazardous materials or crowd control incidents, approved gas masks and other air-purifying respirators shall be used. Respirators shall be selected that are approved for the contaminants that are believed to be present, and wearers shall not be located in atmospheres in which concentrations exceed the protection factor of the respirator. The program administrator or incident commander shall determine a cartridge change schedule.

Breakthrough: If an officer detects breakthrough, the officer shall exit the area immediately, or as soon as safety conditions permit, remove the respirator and perform decontamination procedures. Breakthrough shall be reported to the incident commander or officer in charge. The incident commander or officer in charge shall re-evaluate potential exposures and determine whether it is necessary to redefine the incident perimeter.

Note: Some contaminants are detectable at levels that are below Cal/OSHA permissible exposure limits. Therefore detection of contaminants by a respirator user does not necessarily mean that officers are being exposed above the concentrations permitted under this program.

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TRAINING

Cal/OSHA requires agencies to conduct training for all personnel designated to use respirators.

1. The training shall include at least the following:
 - a. The specific circumstances under which respirators are to be used, including illustrative scenarios that identify the proper use by general-duty officers.
 - b. Why the respirator is necessary and how proper fit, usage, or maintenance can ensure the protective effect of the respirator.
 - c. What the respirator's limitations and capabilities are in terms of protecting against chemical agents and other respiratory hazards.
 - d. How to effectively use the respirators in emergency situations, including situations when the respirator malfunctions.
 - e. How to inspect, put on, remove, use, and check the seals of the respirator.
 - f. How to maintain and store the respirator.
 - g. How to recognize medical signs and symptoms that may limit or prevent the effective use of respirators.
 - h. How to decontaminate (or safely dispose of) a respirator that has been contaminated with chemicals or hazardous biological materials.
2. Training shall be provided at the time of initial assignment to respirator use, and at least annually thereafter.
3. Additional training shall be provided when there is a change in the type of respiratory protection used, or when inadequacies in the officer's knowledge or use of the respirator indicate that he/she has not retained the requisite understanding or skill.
4. This training can be accomplished by in-house instruction, or by viewing the POST video on respiratory protective equipment in combination with instruction. The training should be conducted prior to the fit-test procedures.
5. The Training Section Lieutenant will direct all personnel annually, using an APR (Gas Mask) to complete annual training and fit test at a date and location identified by the Training Section.

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Kern County Sheriff's Office Chemical Agents and Gas Mask training:

Shall minimally include compliance to Penal Code 12403, the POST, and Cal/OSHA guidelines listed above and the POST approved 6 hour Chemical Agents training conducted by the Kern County Sheriff's Office. Employees who have received chemical agents training not instructed by Kern County Sheriff's Office, POST approved training must meet the minimum standard set forth in Penal Code 12403 to use a gas mask. Any employee that has not met the minimum training requirement set forth in PC 12403 may not use a gas mask until the training has been completed.

Chemical Agents for Peace Officers

Chemical Agents - Module A - 4 Hours (Penal Code section 12403)

- (1) Evolution of Chemical Agents
- (2) Legal Aspects of Chemical Agents
- (3) Types of Chemical Agents
- (4) Orientation to Chemical Agent Delivery Methods
- (5) Aerosol Chemical Agent Deployment Tactics
- (6) Care and Maintenance of Aerosol Chemical Agent Devices
- (7) Disposal of Aerosol Chemical Agent Devices
- (8) Practical Application

Chemical Agents - Module B - 2 Hours

- (1) Use of Gas Masks
- (2) Practical Application

Chemical Agents - Module C - 4 Hours

- (1) Deployment of Tactical Chemical Agent Munitions
- (2) Scene Decontamination
- (3) Practical Application

Module A satisfies the training requirements of Penal Code 12403 for any peace officer whose training need is limited to carrying aerosol chemical agent devices. Modules A and B, included

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in the Regular Basic Course, satisfy the training requirements of Penal Code 12403 for all peace officers who will be using aerosol chemical agents and who are expected to use a gas mask in a chemical agent environment. The addition of Module C satisfies the training requirements for peace officers who are responsible for the deployment of tactical chemical agent munitions.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Each respirator user shall be provided with a respirator that is clean, sanitary, and in good working order. The agency will ensure that respirators are cleaned and disinfected at the following intervals:

1. Respirators issued for the exclusive use of an officer shall be cleaned and disinfected as often as necessary to maintain a sanitary condition.
2. Respirators issued to more than one officer shall be cleaned and disinfected before being issued to any officer.
3. Respirators maintained for emergency use shall be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
4. Respirators used in fit testing and training shall be cleaned and disinfected after each use (before being used by another person).
5. Respirators that have been contaminated with certain chemical, biological, or radioactive (CBRN) agents require special decontamination procedures to reduce the likelihood of secondary exposures to the user or assisting personnel. The HAZMAT incident commander or officer in charge will inform users of any special decontamination procedures that are required.

Storage

All respirators shall be stored to protect them from damage, contamination, dust, sunlight, extreme temperatures, excessive moisture, and damaging chemicals.

They shall be packed or stored to prevent deformation of the face piece and exhalation valve.

To protect the integrity of the equipment, all personnel must follow the manufacturer's recommendation for storage. The Kern County Sheriff's Office must also maintain records of where all equipment is stored. A personally issued gas mask must be maintained by the employee to whom it is issued, and tracked by the property room. Gas Masks that are pre-positioned or stored at a facility will be tracked by the facility manager or his designee. It shall be the manager/designee's responsibility to conduct annual inspections for inventory, storage conditions, expiration date, mask function, and mask cleanliness. A record of the inspection that includes date, person conducting the inspection, inventory, and mask condition should be kept with the gas masks.

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Repairs

Any defective respirators shall be removed from service, and shall be adjusted, repaired or discarded as appropriate. Defective equipment must be evaluated by range staff and turned into the property room for replacement equipment to be issued.

Only persons who have been trained to perform such operations shall make repairs or adjustments to respirators. All repairs shall be made according to the manufacturer's recommendations and specifications for the type and extent of repairs to be performed, using only the manufacturer's NIOSH-approved parts.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The Training Section Lieutenant will conduct a periodic review of the agency's program to ensure the agency adheres to all subsections of this program. This review will include at a minimum:

1. Respirator fit
2. Appropriate respirator selection
3. Proper use of respirators
4. Proper inspection and maintenance procedures

RECORD KEEPING

The Training Section Lieutenant is responsible for ensuring that proper records are kept for this program. This includes:

1. Personnel medical records shall be retained and as it relates to exposure made available in, accordance with the California Code of Regulations, Section 3204, Title 8, for a minimum of thirty (30) years after an employee's separation or termination.

The Kern County Sheriff's Office shall follow Departmental Policies for the maintenance of confidential medical records. Deputies reporting work related injuries related to an inhalation exposure shall follow the Sheriff's Office policy on reporting work related injuries. If an exposure occurs while a Sheriff's Office employee is wearing personal protective equipment (PPE), a respirator, and a Workers' Compensation claim is filed, that information is kept by the Sheriff's Office for 30 years per the Cal/OSHA regulation. It shall be the responsibility of the Kern County Sheriff's Human Resources Section to maintain the Workers' Compensation claim and medical records. These records will be stored in the Human Resources Section and the Division Commander will be responsible for storage and is the point of contact for access.

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2. Documentation of training, inspection and maintenance.
3. Documentation of fit testing, including:
 - a. Type of test (qualitative or quantitative)
 - b. Name or ID of employee
 - c. Make, model, style and size of respirator tested
 - d. Date of test
 - e. Results of the fit test
4. A copy of this program and the above records shall be made available to all affected employees, their representatives, and representatives of the Chief of the Division of Occupational Safety and Health. The Kern County Sheriff's Office will retain records for training, inspection, maintenance and fit-test.

At a minimum the most recent record of each test type for each employee and piece of equipment shall be retained for one year or until it is replaced with new training or records. These records shall be maintained by the Training Section with each employee's training record. The current fit testing will be conducted annually using the Quantifit testing machine.

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