



GECAP

Georgia Environmental Compliance Assistance Program

<http://www.gecap.org>

Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) Hazmat Training Requirements

GECAP of the Georgia Tech Research Institute is a voluntary, non-regulatory environmental compliance program funded by the Georgia Legislature through the University System of Georgia.

Any materials or wastes that consist of chemicals that are toxic, flammable, reactive or corrosive are hazardous. If these hazardous materials are improperly discarded or spilled, they can not only pollute the environment but also cause dangerous fires or explosions. Because of the potential harm these materials and wastes can cause, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued a standard called Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER). This standard was specifically developed to protect workers who deal with hazardous materials and help them respond to spills, handle, and dispose of hazardous materials and wastes safely and effectively. This standard can be found in Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1910.120(q) [(29 CFR 1910.120(q)]. The five levels of HAZWOPER hazmat emergency response training provide workers with the skills and knowledge to make them aware of the potential hazards they may encounter in the workplace and of the purpose and limitations of their safety equipment. The training also provides them with the ability to perform their tasks with minimal risk to their health and safety and ensures that workers can safely avoid or escape from emergencies. The level of training should correspond to the worker's job function and responsibilities.

What are the requirements for First Responder Awareness?

To obtain the First Responder Awareness competency level, you must have sufficient training or proven experience in specific competencies, amounting to approximately eight hours of training. You must also participate in annual refresher training to maintain competency. This competency level is similar to OSHA's Hazard Communication Level (29 CFR 1900.1200).

What does Awareness involve?

At the Awareness level, you should be able to identify or discover a release of hazardous materials.

You should also be able to:

- understand what hazardous materials are and the risks associated with them;
- understand the potential outcomes associated with hazmat emergencies;
- recognize hazardous materials in an emergency;
- identify hazardous materials, when possible;
- understand your role in an emergency;
- realize the need for additional resources and notify the appropriate people; and
- understand the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Emergency Response Guidebook

What are the requirements for First Responder Operations?

To obtain the First Responder Operations competency level, you must have at least eight hours of training or sufficient experience to demonstrate competence (amounting to 16 to 24 or more hours of training). You must also participate in an annual refresher course to maintain competency.

What does Operations involve?

Operations-level incidents are, by definition, defensive in nature and allow you to respond to the release of hazardous materials without attempting to stop the release. You should be able to:

- perform at the Awareness level;
- know basic hazard and risk assessment techniques;
- select and use proper personal protective equipment (PPE) (Level B maximum);
- understand basic hazmat terminology;
- perform basic confinement operations;
- implement basic decontamination procedures; and
- understand relevant standard operating procedures (SOPs) and termination actions.

What are the requirements for Hazmat Technician?

To obtain the Hazmat Technician competency level, you must have at least 24 hours of Operations-level training, and then supplement that with appropriate amounts of Technician-level skills training and proven experience in specific competencies. You must also participate in annual refresher training to maintain competency.

What does Hazmat Technician involve?

Hazmat Technicians are trained to be competent in offensive tactics and respond aggressively to stop the release of hazardous materials. You should be able to:

- perform at the Operations level;
- implement the company emergency response plan;
- classify, identify, and verify known and unknown materials using instrumentation;
- select and use proper advanced PPE (Level A);
- understand hazard and risk assessment techniques;
- perform advanced control, containment, and/or confinement operations;
- understand termination procedures;
- implement decontamination procedures; and
- understand basic chemical and toxicological terminology and behavior

What are the requirements for Hazmat Specialist?

To obtain the Hazmat Specialist competency level, you must have 24 or more hours of Technician-level training and proven experience in specific competencies, amounting to 8 or more hours of training. You must also participate in annual refresher training to maintain competency.

What does Hazmat Specialist involve?

A Specialist responds with and in support of Technicians and has detailed knowledge of various hazardous substances. You should be able to:

- perform at the Technician level;
- implement the local emergency response plan;
- classify, identify, and verify known and unknown materials using advanced instrumentation;
- know details of the state emergency response plan;
- select and use proper PPE;
- understand detailed hazard and risk assessment techniques;
- perform specialized control, containment, and/or confinement operations;
- determine and implement decontamination procedures;

- develop a site safety and control plan;
- understand chemical, toxicological, and radiological terminology and behavior; and
- act as liaison between the company or local emergency teams and an outside emergency team.

What are the requirements for Incident Commander?

To obtain the Incident Commander competency level, you must have at least 24 hours of *Operations Level* training and additional training and proven experience in specific competencies, amounting to eight or more hours of training. You must also participate in annual refresher training to maintain competency.

What does Incident Commander involve?

An Incident Commander assumes control of the incident beyond the Awareness level. You should be able to:

- implement the Incident Command System (ICS);
- implement the company emergency response plan;
- understand the hazards and risks associated with working in chemical PPE;
- implement the local emergency response plan;
- understand the state and federal emergency response capabilities; and
- understand the importance of decontamination procedures.

What are the 1910.20 Appendix E, "Training Curriculum Guidelines," suggested core criteria?

If you are looking for a training curriculum, or have one and are unsure about its capabilities, OSHA has recommended guidelines for the following topics:

- training facility
- training director
- instructors
- course materials
- students
- ratios
- proficiency assessment
- course certificate
- record keeping
- program quality control

You can find the exact requirements for HAZWOPER hazmat training in 29 CFR 1910.120(q) or in 40 CFR 311.

For More Information

Contact the GECAP Program at 404-407-8082 and ask to speak with someone in the Hazardous Materials Program or visit <http://www.osha.gov>.

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