

**CONTRA COSTA COUNTY OPERATIONAL AREA**

**POLICY #4**

<b>TOPIC: Life Safety Hazard Marking</b>			
<b>Revision Date</b> 10/28/08	<b>Replaces</b> NEW	<b>Approved By</b> County Chiefs	<b>Pages</b> 3

**INTRODUCTION:**

This policy will help ensure the safety of emergency personnel while operating at the scene of an emergency, by providing a means of life safety hazard marking and abatement.

**A. POLICY**

Red “DANGER, or LIFE SAFETY HAZARD” Tape shall be used to mark LIFE SAFETY HAZARDS. Emergency personnel **ARE NOT** to cross this Red tape barrier at emergency incidents.

Red “DANGER or LIFE SAFETY HAZARD” Tape is to be used **only** to identify LIFE SAFETY HAZARDS.



Both the Incident Commander and the Communications Center shall be notified when a LIFE SAFETY HAZARD is found.

Personnel shall not breach, alter, or remove any LIFE SAFETY HAZARD ZONE measures until the hazard has been abated and approval granted by the Incident Commander.

**B. PROCEDURE**

1. The difference between Yellow “CAUTION” Tape and Red “DANGER / LIFE SAFETY HAZARD” Tape:
  - a. Yellow “CAUTION” Tape shall be used to establish a “Public Exclusion Zone”
  - b. **Three (3) Horizontal Strands of Red “DANGER / LIFE SAFETY HAZARD” Tape** shall be used to establish a “LIFE SAFETY HAZARD Zone” where NO PERSONNEL may enter due to imminent hazard(s).

2. Items that are considered “LIFE SAFETY HAZARDS” found on emergency scenes can include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Ruptured gas lines
  - b. Downed power lines
  - c. Uncontrolled animals
  - d. Hazardous materials
  - e. Large holes (swimming pools, trenches, etc.)
  - f. Unstable / uneven terrain
  - g. Structural compromise
  - h. Overhaul refuse area
3. Information to include regarding the LIFE SAFETY HAZARD when relaying the “EMERGENCY TRAFFIC” broadcast to the IC:
  - a. Type / Nature of Life Safety Hazard
  - b. Specific Location (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Echo, etc. side of the incident.)
  - c. Additional resources needed (PGE, PD, Animal Control, etc.)
4. When a LIFE SAFETY HAZARD is present at an incident, contact the Incident Commander (IC) and advise of the situation.
  - a. The IC will inform the Communications Center of the life safety hazard.
  - b. Communications will announce the hazardous condition to the responding units.
  - c. Communications or the IC will obtain acknowledgement from the crews at the emergency scene.
5. Anyone finding a LIFE SAFETY HAZARD shall inform the IC and isolate and deny entry.
6. Red “DANGER / LIFE SAFETY HAZARD” Tape shall be used around the LIFE SAFETY HAZARD. The area around the hazard shall be of sufficient size to provide complete isolation, distance and protection from the hazard.
7. When staffing allows, place a sentry (i.e. Safety Officer, Firefighter, PD, PGE, etc.) at the hazard.
8. Red “DANGER / LIFE SAFETY HAZARD” Tape Removal
  - a. Maintain the Life Safety Hazard Tape for the duration of the incident or hazard. Approval from the IC is required prior to the removal of the Life Safety Hazard Tape.

**Notes:**

1. General Tape Placement Guidelines:
  - a. When possible, tape should be fastened securely at a height of 36 – 48 inches above ground level surrounding the hazard area.

- b. Three (3) Stripes of tape should be placed at 18 to 24 inch intervals for complete exclusion from hazard area per FIRESCOPE ICS 420 (July 2007)
- c. Where possible (especially in low light situations) place cones, chemical lights, and / or flashing strobe lights on the ground near the hazard area.

## 2. Examples of Possible Uses:

- a. Ruptured gas line
  - Consider wind direction and low-lying areas
- b. Downed power line
  - Keep vehicles, equipment, and people at a safe distance with consideration given to the potential of live wires recoiling and whipping.
- c. Uncontrolled animal
  - Place on fences or doors leading to animal location
- d. Large hole (swimming pool, trench, etc.)
  - Consider loose dirt or edge compromise
- e. Unstable / uneven terrain
  - Use to divert vehicles from traveling in particular areas
- f. Structure Compromise
  - 1 ½ times the height of the structure
- g. Overhaul refuse area
  - Consider what will be thrown from elevation

Reference: ICS 420-1 Chapter 21 – Procedures for the Identification and Management of Life Hazard Zones