



California Association of Licensed Security
Agencies, Guards and Associates

Module III.L

Chemical Agents

8 Hours - Elective

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Edited by CALSAGA



CALSAGA Security Officer Training Program

Module III.L - Chemical Agents

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Notes

New California Security Officers with Registrations (guard cards) dated on or after July 1, 2004 must receive 40 hours of training as follows:

- 8 hours “Powers to Arrest” prior to an Officer standing post.
- 16 hours of training within 30 days of issuance of registration, 8 of which must consist of two four-hour courses from the mandatory modules and 8 of which must consist of elective courses.
- 16 hours of training within 6 months of issuance of registration, 8 of which must consist of the remaining two four-hour courses from the mandatory modules, and 8 of which must consist of elective courses.

This course module, titled “**Chemical Agents**” is part of the CALSAGA Security Officer Training Program. It complies with requirements of AB 2880 and Bureau of Security & Investigative Services (BSIS) training directives as in compliance with Business and Professions Code Sections 7583.6 and 7583.7 and Title 16, Division 7, Article 9, Section 643 of the California Code of Regulations.

This course corresponds to module III.L of the BSIS Course Outline. This is an elective course under the Course Outline and satisfies the requirement for 8 hours of training under the elective section of the Security Officer Training Laws and Regulations.

The purchaser of this module is licensed for unlimited use of this material at their own facility. The purchaser may print or otherwise reproduce the module as he sees fit for use at this facility only. It may not be transferred to or shared with any other facility. A facility is considered to be one Private Patrol Operator, one Private Security Training Facility, or any other one facility authorized by the BSIS to provide training under the Security Officer Training Law.



III.L Chemical Agents – 8 hours

Course Outline & Syllabus

Learning Goals

As a result of successfully completing this course, each officer will have received instruction in:

1. The legislative intent, criminal and civil liabilities, moral principles regulating citizen possession and use of hand-held aerosol tear gas weapons
2. The chemical and mechanical properties of hand-held aerosol tear gas weapons
3. The psychological and physiological effects of tear gas on humans
4. The principles of tear gas first aid and decontamination procedures
5. The principles and techniques for maintaining storing, and disposing of hand-held aerosol tear gas weapons
6. The principles and limitations of using hand-held aerosol tear gas weapons for personal protection

Outline

- I. Chemical Sprays
 1. Three types of Chemical Agents
 2. Historical Points
 3. Why Use Pepper Spray?
 4. When to Use Pepper Spray
- II. Legal Aspects
 1. The California Tear Gas Act (1969)
 2. Misuse
 3. Liability Issues
 4. Regulation
- III. Chemical Properties
 1. Mace
 2. Tear Gas
 3. Pepper Spray
 4. Effects
 5. Psychological and Physiological Effects
 6. First-Aid



- 7. Risks
- 8. Mechanical Failure

- IV. Maintaining, Storing, and Disposal
 - 1. Safety
 - 2. Care and Maintenance
 - 3. Disposal

- V. Deploying the Agent
 - 1. Carrying the Device
 - 2. Use Strategy

- VI. Proper Reasons to Want Pepper Spray/Chemical Agents



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CHEMICAL SPRAYS

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Self-defense chemical sprays come in three general categories of active ingredients: CN, CS, and OC.

CN, which is an abbreviation for chloroacetophenone, was used by the military and police departments in the 1960s and 1970s but is not used much anymore. These products are not really gasses but rather a vapor which is formed by crystals that are suspended in a liquid placed under pressure. The tear gas products such as MACE have proven to be less effective against violent attackers, especially those under the influence of narcotics and alcohol. Additionally, the tear gas products have a fairly long reaction time of three to thirty seconds.

CS is short for orthochlorobenzalmalononitrile. It is a micro-pulverized irritant. It irritates the mucous membrane of the skin, nose, throat, and eyes in high concentrations. It works better than CN, but is not readily available to the public. Both of these ingredients can be toxic and cause serious choking and vomiting. CN and CS are not all that effective against animals.

OC is oleoresin capsicum, which is extracted from chili peppers and is commonly called Pepper Spray. This product is the most widely sold today and the spray of choice for police since 1977. Pepper spray is generally regarded as the most distressing to experience. However, it must be sprayed directly in the eyes or inhaled to be effective. The product is an oily liquid and not very soluble in water. The strongest concentrations are 15% active ingredients and rated at 2 million scoville heat units. The high scoville heat rating is more important than the percentage of ingredients. Direct facial contact and inhalation of the spray will induce coughing, choking, and nausea, as well as dilating of the eye capillaries, resulting in temporary blindness. The mucous membranes will cause enough swelling for the assailant to



become temporarily incapacitated. Skin contact will cause a burning sensation, which can be further aggravated by rubbing the area. A one second burst can affect an attacker for up to 45 minutes without causing permanent damage.

Historical Points

There are two important historical facts which should be understood regarding tear gas: (1) Tear gas is not like the deadly gasses which were used in World War I. (2) Tear gas is uncomfortably painful and may be temporarily blinding. When studying the use of tear gas by law enforcement in California, there has never been a proven cause of death by chemical agents (tear gas).

Why Use Pepper Spray?

For security officers, the use of pepper spray will be governed by company policy and post orders and relate to whether the client and job site warrant it.

If company policy or post orders allow for the security officer to decide on the use of chemical agents, then the officer should consult with their supervisor and give some thought to their reasons for wanting to carry pepper spray.

The majority of civilian, non security officers who inquire about carrying a self-defense device don't have a specific need or purpose in mind. Their basis for wanting such a device stems from a general fear of crime. These people will carry the canister for a week or two until the novelty wears off and then it will find its way to the bottom of a purse, a glove compartment, or dresser drawer. Many casual users end up discarding the device once they accidentally spray themselves or once their children find it and get into it.

A security officer who wants to carry a self-defense device should have a more detailed and specific purpose in mind.

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Prior to carrying a chemical agent on duty, security officers must first pass a course. The course will generally be administered by their employer, and have been approved by POST and the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services (BSIS).

Tear gas ideally should always be carried in the same place. Post orders and company policy may dictate where the device is to be carried. A belt holster or loose outer coat pocket is best. A purse or key chain is a poor location because the canister is not always easily accessible. Company policy will likely also dictate the circumstances in which you should have the device in your hand and therefore have it more readily available.

The effective range of most spray canisters is approximately 10 feet. Most people realize that they will never need the spray because of their heightened awareness of their surroundings. When alert, it is difficult for an assailant to surprise you.

When to Use Pepper Spray

Tear gases are to be used for personal self-defense only when fighting off an attacker. It is not to be used offensively to protect property or on someone you merely dislike. When used by surprise, pepper spray is an excellent distraction, allowing time to get away. Contrary to media advertising, pepper spray does not have reliable stopping power or cause paralysis. An assailant can still grab, punch, stab, or shoot you and will definitely be angrier after being sprayed. Also, tear gas may not be as effective on those who are drug addicts, intoxicated, hysterical, or clinically insane.

Pepper spray should be directed at the assailants face at close range either in a stream, spray, or mist and never sprayed wildly at a crowd in congested areas. Most pepper spray victims will fall immediately to their knees and start rubbing their eyes (which makes it worse). The pain has been described as two red-hot pieces of steel being pushed

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into your eyes and a blow-torch applied to your face. Be aware that pepper spray has a blinding effect and make sure a victim does not accidentally fall down stairs, walk into the street, or operate a motor vehicle. Pepper spray causes the eyes to shut very quickly and you sometimes have to use your fingers to pry them open. Be cautious when windy conditions are present, as spray blowback may occur and carry the spray in your direction. Try to avoid contact with the assailant as the spray can transfer to you and also cause you distress. Once you use the spray, you should have a plan to vacate the immediate area and contact law enforcement. If pepper spray gets on you, rinse the affected area immediately and repeatedly with cold water. Wash your hands several times and wash your clothes separately from other items.

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LEGAL ASPECTS

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On January 1, 1969 the California Tear Gas Act went into effect. It addressed the sales, transportation, and use of chemical agents and established training standards. In 1982 Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) was introduced into law enforcement. In 1994 Pepper Spray was allowed to be used by the public upon completion of required training. On January 1, 1996 the training requirement for the general public was rescinded. Penal Code section 12403.5 still requires training for security officers and peace officers.

Penal Code section 12403 designated the CA Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) the authority to establish training standards.

Penal Code section 12403.5 states that security officers must complete a course of instruction approved by (POST) in order to carry chemical agents on duty.

Penal Code section 12403.7 states that chemical agents are only to be used in self defense. Self defense means in the defense of yourself or another person.

Chemical agents cannot be possessed by the following under penal code sections 12403.7 and 12403.8:

- a. A convicted felon
- b. A person convicted of assault and battery
- c. A person convicted of misuse of chemical agents
- d. A person addicted to any drug/narcotic
- e. A minor -- "a person under age 18"



Penal Code section 12403.7b designates the CA Department of Justice (DOJ) responsibility as to which types and sizes of chemical agents may lawfully be possessed.

Products authorized for possession must contain a label that states “WARNING- the use of this substance or device for any purpose other than self defense is a felony under the law. The contents are dangerous--use with care.”

Chemical agent containers or devices approved for civilian possession must have a label that discloses the date on which the useful life of the product expires. The average life of the chemical agents is 2 to 4 years. Each container or device must bear the name of the manufacturer and a serial number.

Any person who changes, alters, removes or obliterates the name of the manufacturer, serial number or any identification mark on any chemical agent product is guilty of a felony. Possession of any such device shall be presumptive evidence that the felonious action was done by the possessor.

OC devices which have not been approved by DOJ and are sold as animal repellents are considered economic poison and are illegal to possess.

Federal law prohibits carrying or placing any chemical agent device on an aircraft. To do so is a felony.

Misuse

Misuse of tear gas is punishable by law. The use of a tear gas weapon except in self-defense can be considered a felony. Use of tear gas against a peace officer engaged in official duties is considered a felony. also note that a tear gas certificate is good for life, unless revoked for misuse. The local District Attorney has discretion to file a misdemeanor or felony charge (PC 12403.7 (a) (8)). Be aware that this may result in any of the following:

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1. Up to three years in state prison
2. Up to one year in county jail
3. Fine of to \$1,000
4. Both fine and imprisonment

Purchase, possession, or use (in self-defense) of a certified tear gas weapon by a person who does not have a tear gas instruction card is an infraction punishable by a fine of up to \$100 (PC 12403.7 (b))

Purchase, possession, or use (in self-defense) of a non-certified tear gas weapon is a misdemeanor (PC 12403.7 (a) (5) (A)) and is punishable in the following ways:

1. Up to one year in county jail
2. Fine up to \$2,000
3. Both fine and imprisonment

A person misusing a tear gas weapon could be charged with multiple offenses: (1) charged with each category above (2) each incident (multiple uses).

There are severe penalties under federal law for carrying a tear gas weapon aboard an airplane. An individual could receive (1) a jail or civil penalty of up to \$10,000 and, in addition (2) the individual could receive a criminal fine up to \$25,000.

Liability Issues

Using pepper spray irresponsibly can incur criminal or civil liability. Spraying an innocent victim in the face can be considered a crime. Much like a punch in the face, it would be charged as assault or battery in most jurisdictions. The justification for using chemical sprays must either be self-defense from personal injury or an arrest situation, and the force must be reasonable under the circumstances. For

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example, you can't lawfully spray someone in the face for using obscene language or because you are simply afraid of their appearance.

Regulation

Some states regulate or forbid tear gas, or some may allow cities to make their own assorted laws regarding tear gas. Many countries, including Canada, also forbid tear gas. For this reason, it's a good idea to call the law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction over your destination before you bring tear gas somewhere to find out about its tear gas laws. Misuse of tear gas in California comes with state penalties of up to a \$1000 fine and/or up to three years in prison, not to mention a possible felony conviction on record.

Examples of tear gas misuse include: using tear gas on people out of anger, spraying it as a joke, or possession of tear gas by prohibited persons. Minors, drug addicts or persons convicted of felonies, assault or misuse of tear gas are legally prohibited from possessing tear gas, although there are few barriers to procurement of tear gas by these people. To be legally purchased, possessed or used in California, any canister must have a label that says "WARNING: The use of this substance or device for any purpose other than self-defense is a crime under the law. The contents are dangerous--use with care." The maximum legal net weight for a canister is 2.5 ounces, or 70 grams of OC, CS or CN. CR is not legal for civilian use.

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CHEMICAL PROPERTIES

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Chemical Mace has specific mechanical properties:

1. Each canister has an expiration date. Three to six years is considered the maximum shelf life for canisters.
2. The maximum effective distance is ten feet.
3. Tear gas is not actually a gas:
 - a. It consists of small solid particles in a carrier which is projected by a propellant
 - b. CN and CS are small crystals which do their work by vaporizing on the skin – works best if sprayed on the upper body
 - c. OC is a pepper-based resin in powder form – works only if sprayed into the eyes and face of an assailant
4. OC can be sprayed by canisters either as a mist or stream
5. OC is most effective when sprayed within 3 to 10 feet.

Tear Gas, Pepper Spray, etc.

There are four major chemicals used as tear gasses. The first two are CS and CN, short for orthochlorobenzalmononitrile and chloroacetophenone, respectively. They are the most common by far.

A third chemical, code named CR (dibenz (b, f)-1,



4-oxazepin), has yet not come into civilian use. At standard temperature and pressure, these are actually white crystals with fairly low vapor pressures, not gasses, and they're not very soluble in water. In order to disperse them, they are suspended in a liquid carrier and aerosolized. You have probably heard of Mace, which is one of many brands of CN tear gas and is a well recognized trade name by both civilian and law enforcement tear gas users.

The fourth is pepper spray, which is the oleoresin capsicum, extracted from chili peppers. It's the chemical that gives them their hot quality. OC is a reddish-orange, oily liquid, insoluble in water. This agent is also dispersed by aerosol. Tear gas has been credited with saving lives when police are faced with barricade situations and combative suspects. Its use is a standard tactic which usually facilitates an arrest without the need for lethal force. It has also been used by the military in Vietnam, amid international controversy. Many considered its use in warfare to be a violation of the Geneva Protocols. One infamous use of tear gas occurred at Kent State University in Ohio in 1970. While the killing of four students by National Guard troops was at the heart of the tragedy, tear gas deployment is also well remembered.

Pepper spray is generally regarded to be the most distressing to experience, but it must be sprayed in the eyes or inhaled directly to be effective. CS and CN, on the other hand, vaporize to some extent despite their low vapor pressures and may have some effect on a person who is hit less accurately due to the vapors being inhaled or drifting into the eyes. CS and CN may also have some effect on a person sprayed in the groin area. Because of the different advantages of each, some formulations are being manufactured which contain blends of OC and either CS or CN. Also, despite the absence of vapors from oleoresin capsicum, aerosolized particles can remain airborne for a long time, especially indoors. Their concentrations can be high enough to irritate many people who were not even sprayed directly. One type of OC product attempts to eliminate aerosolized pepper spray entirely by propelling the agent in thick foam. While pepper spray is

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legal for use against bears in most states, the use of mace and tear gas is not.

Effects

The effects of exposure to tear gas can include tearing and involuntary closure of the eyes, with severe burning sensations on the nerve endings of the skin. Coughing, inflammation, mucous secretion, headache, dizziness, a tight feeling in the chest and/or excessive salivation may also result. Pepper spray may cause enough significant inflammatory response in the eyes to severely degrade the vision of even a PCP- intoxicated person who can not feel pain.

If you are using tear gas defensively, target the assailant's face. A person properly sprayed with tear gas may experience panic, especially if you achieve an element of surprise. Pepper spray's effects may last up to 40 minutes after the agent has been completely irrigated from skin surfaces, with some minor irritation persisting up to a few hours after exposure. CS, CN and CR, on the other hand, irritate when there is a sufficient concentration of contact with the skin and the 15-30 minutes of residual irritation degrades rapidly. CS is hydrolyzed in water, especially in basic solution; at pH 9, its half-life is about 1 minute. Your tear gas should come with a package insert that includes first-aid instructions. If you accidentally spray yourself with tear gas, you will probably not be able to find these instructions, let alone read them--so read them before you need them. If you become exposed to any of these types of tear gasses, copious amounts of cool water should begin to provide relief and rinse away the tear gas contamination. Warm water may intensify the burning and inflammation. Fresh air helps, and washing twice with soap is recommended. Try not to rub! Don't use a soap that contains a lot of oils, and don't apply oily lotions--they will carry tear gas particles deeper into your skin and prolong your discomfort. Remove any contact lenses if you get tear gas into your eyes--but not with fingers that have additional tear gas contamination. Don't touch

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your face before washing your hands after coming into contact with tear gas. Remove any contaminated clothing, as you may recontaminate yourself by touching them, and CN or CS- soaked clothing will continue to give off noxious vapors. Pain may be reduced by taking an over-the-counter anti-inflammatory drug, like ibuprofen. In addition, an over-the-counter antihistamine may alleviate some of the effects of pepper spray.

Unfortunately, the time it takes for your body to deliver the drug in a pill to the sites of irritation make them of little use until the effects are already wearing off. They will be most effective if taken before exposure, like the antidotes to some chemical warfare agents, making them rarely useful. Infants are very sensitive to tear gas and should be taken to a doctor immediately if exposed to it.

Tear gas as a weapon of self defense can be an excellent distraction, allowing the victim time to get away. However, unlike a firearm, it has little ability to actually stop an attacker from causing you injury, or little “stopping power”. Tear gas does not paralyze. A person sprayed with it may still grab, hit, stab, or shoot you. Also, tear gas may not affect those who are drug addicts, intoxicated, hysterical, or insane. A person threatening you with a lethal weapon can injure you mortally in less time than it takes you to draw and aim a tear gas weapon. An assailant may be able to take your canister away from you and use it against you. If this happens, try to throw the spray away and out of reach. Your spray could backfire at you in wind. Both wind and rain may reduce its range and effectiveness.

CS, CN and CR tear gasses are usually not very effective against animals. In fact, law enforcement uses horses and dogs in areas they have deployed tear gas. OC has been proven effective against many animals, and has been available to the California public in an aerosol form for this purpose even before its use against humans became legalized.

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Most canisters sold for self-defense against humans, however, are marked “Not tested on animals.” If you are attacked, use plenty of spray in the assailant’s face. You should then have a plan to vacate the immediate area and contact law enforcement before the effects of the agent wear off. Law enforcement and your supervisors must be notified right away. Remember a description of the assailant and the location of the incident.

Psychological and Physiological Effects

Tear gas has both psychological and physiological effects on humans. However, tear gas may not necessarily be effective on:

1. Persons under the influence of alcohol
2. Persons under the influence of narcotics
3. Persons experiencing hysteria or mental illness
4. Persons whose nerves have been impaired and are unable to control pain level

CS & CN have six physiological effects:

1. Central nervous system: causing headache, dizziness, extreme general discomfort
2. Chest: causing tight feeling in the upper respiratory area; coughing, sense of panic
3. Eyes: causing tearing and burning
4. Note: causing discharge, burning, irritation
5. Skin: causing burning and stinging feeling

OC has four physiological effects:

1. Eyes: causing tearing, involuntary closing

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2. Respiratory System: causing immediate inflammation, swelling of throat lining
3. Skin: causing inflammation of the skin--burning sensation and discoloration
4. Muscle Coordination: effected person may lose balance due to temporary loss of vision.

First-Aid

Principles of tear gas first-aid include:

1. Do not rub face
2. Best immediate treatment is to expose the person to fresh air
3. Flush area with cool water, if available
4. Cleaning area with soap and water is recommended by hospitals and will expedite recovery
5. Clothing which is contaminated should be removed
6. OC is biodegradable and requires no special decontamination
7. User is under no legal obligation to assist an attacker he/she has sprayed--notify law enforcement authorities as soon as possible by calling "911"
8. Do not leave in the reach of children.

Risks

Although the Materials Safety Data Sheet for OC does not list any known specific lethal dose or lethal concentration, pepper spray has been implicated in the

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deaths of some people who were sprayed with it. However, these cases have never been proven.

These people suffered anaphylaxis, a violent allergic reaction that can be life threatening. Symptoms can include obstructed airways caused by swelling, fainting, and shock. Asthmatics are at higher risk of having an adverse reaction to pepper spray.

Another bizarre risk factor that was recently reported involved persons with a history of violent behavior and confrontations with law enforcement. This statistic may be an artifact of these people having a higher probability of exposure in the first place, or having a higher probability to multiple exposures which might cause allergic sensitization in some individuals. For the reason of additional risk to asthmatics, such people who wish to carry tear gas for self defense but worry about possible wind-blowback may wish to consider a formulation which does not contain oleoresin capsicum, or at least a foam type pepper spray which reduces the risk from airborne particles of the OC agent.

This risk of a bad reaction, however, is not going to be reduced for the user of foam in a situation where an assailant takes the weapon away and uses it against the victim. Also, the possibility of this reaction emphasizes the importance of using pepper spray only in defense of people, not property. It also adds potential liability in these litigious times.

Mechanical Failure

Tear gas weapons may be subject to mechanical failure. Therefore, these suggestions are prudent to follow:

1. The weapon should be tested outside after purchase by firing a short burst. The purchaser should make sure that the wind does not blow the spray back into his/her face.
2. The canister should be checked occasionally to make certain that dust, lint, dirt, etc., have

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not clogged the weapon

3. The weapons should be handled with caution and care.

MAINTAINING, STORING AND DISPOSAL

Canisters may have a shelf life of three to six years. They are usually conservatively dated to expire in one year. Shake the canister about once a month to keep the ingredients mixed. Canisters have the active ingredient mixed in a liquid, and a pressurized gas propellant. The inside of a tear gas canister is like a squirt bottle under pressure. An intake straw dips to the bottom of the canister into the liquid mixture. For this reason, the canister must remain fairly upright. If it's held upside down while spraying, only the propellant may escape. If the canister is sprayed upside down, it will lose pressure and may not be able to spray when you need it, even though you may be able to hear and feel the liquid sloshing around and you believe the can is full. Other canister failures are possible. For example, the nozzle may become clogged with lint or dirt, or the trigger may break off. If left in a car on a hot day, a canister may be exposed to temperatures over 140 degrees F. Even if it doesn't explode (which it might), this adverse condition may cause a leak or a loss of the pressure needed to fire the device. It could also shorten the life of the active ingredients.

If you wish to test your canister for pressure, make your spray burst only a fraction of a second and don't do this often, as there may be as little as four seconds or less worth of spray in some models. The label or instructions of a good brand should tell you how many seconds of spray it has. Although floating the device in water to determine the quantity of ingredients left has been recommended in the past, be aware that this may cause the label to fall off or dissolve, and the device will no longer comply with the law once unlabeled. Also, be sure to keep it away from children! You are responsible for the use of your canister.

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Safety

The following principles should be observed when maintaining, storing, and/or disposing of hand-held tear gas canisters:

1. Odor around the weapon may suggest leakage
2. Weapon should not be stored where temperatures may exceed 120 degrees F.
3. Hold weapon top up and with the bottom down
4. Weapon should be checked frequently – every four to six months for possible leakage

Care and Maintenance

Devices should be stored in areas that do not exceed 120 degrees F. Temperatures exceeding 120 degrees will cause the canister to expand and it may explode.

Periodic inspections of the canisters should be made to:

- a. Check the exterior for leaks
- b. Inspect the trigger/activation mechanism
- c. Check all seams and seals for leaks
- d. Check expiration date, serial number, name of manufacturer and warning labels to be sure they have not worn off.
- e. Inspect the nozzle for any “oozing”



of the chemical

- f. Make sure there is sufficient quantity remaining
- g. Maintain device in accordance with manufacturer's instructions

Disposal

All canisters should be emptied in a safe place. The trigger mechanism should be broken along with the discharge nozzle. Wrap the canisters in newspapers and dispose of them safely. Empty devices should not be left in areas accessible to children or untrained individuals.

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DEPLOYING THE AGENT

It may be tactically advantageous to conceal the device from the subject until it is used. The device needs to be right-side up in order to discharge properly and prevent loss of propellant. The device should be used at a short range of 3 to 5 feet. Some device ranges are considerably less than 10 feet. All devices are affected by weather (i.e. rain, wind, temperatures, etc.). Take these factors into consideration before using. The target for all devices is the face of the subject.

Be prepared to dodge the subject after application, as they may attack the last location where you stood. Remember: no device is 100% effective. A determined assailant may be able to overcome the physical effects of the agent.

Be prepared to take tactical advantage by engaging the subject (controlling and/or handcuffing) while they are effectively impaired. Each person may react differently to chemical agent exposure. Some will flee or be unaffected. Effects may vary as to the subject's psychological makeup, physical conditioning, level of intoxication, degree of exposure, etc.

Officers must be prepared in the case that some of the chemical agents also affect them. It is important to know what to do. CN and CS products are unlikely to work on animals.

Carrying the Device

It is vital that you give some thought in advance to how you will carry your tear gas canister. The location should be easily accessible. Consider carrying the device in the same place whenever possible. That way, you won't have to think, "Where is it today?" in the heat of the moment. Try various carrying methods and practice drawing the weapon.

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Make sure you can draw it quickly from wherever you're keeping it. If an officer is carrying a chemical agent on duty, the carrying of the device should be covered by policy and part of the uniform, such as in a holster on a utility belt.

The element of surprise adds to the effectiveness of tear gas. Most clip models have the clip on the left side of the canister, which conceals the majority of the canister if kept in the left pocket and with the clip out. If you are comfortable drawing the weapon with your left hand, this is a good configuration. If this type of canister were kept in the right pocket, it would be backwards when it is pulled out. Another good location may be a loose outer pocket of a jacket. Belt holsters are available for some models. Although these are visible, the canister may be less recognizable to an attacker in a holster than it would be bare.

The importance of accessibility can not be stressed enough. How much warning might you have in a typical assault? How long does it take you to draw your weapon? Does the way you carry your canister allow you to draw it in time to hinder an assault? Keep in mind that most canisters are effective up to about a ten foot range. You should have your tear gas with you whenever possible. Hopefully, you will never need it. But if you do, you are unlikely to know when until the very moment you need to grab for it.

In some security companies, policy allows for you to draw your device in advance if you believe circumstances warrant it or if you know you are entering a dangerous situation.

Always remember that you assume all risk and liability for owning and using tear gas, including pepper spray. Even if you use it correctly, there is no guarantee that it will always be effective at hindering an attack, and there is always the possibility that it may be used against you instead. I hope this document has given you a better understanding of tear gas as a weapon for self defense. Please be careful and safe!

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The device may be carried on a strong or weak hand side depending on the circumstances. Carrying the device on the weak hand side allows for access to other equipment you carry. Carrying the device on the strong hand side allows for concealment from a subject when standing in a position to interview them.

When working in street clothes, the device should be carried in a position that is easily accessible, while minimizing the potential for accidental discharge. You should make certain that the canister fits in the holster properly and is easily removable. It is recommended that you practice developing the skill of reholstering and securing the device.

Use Strategy

The following are “use strategies” that should be observed when the need to use a chemical weapon occurs:

1. The manuals state that ten feet is the maximum distance when using a canister.
2. At ten feet, the spray stream expands in width to about 6-10 inches.
3. The best area to hit is in the eyes and the next best area would be the face.
4. The officer should begin spraying when the assailant comes within a 10-foot range. This will allow the user to focus the stream on the assailant’s face.
5. The officer should move a few feet to one side as he/she applies the spray.
6. The officer should not use the spray conservatively – the spray needs to be on the assailant.
7. If attacked from the rear, the officer will

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sense that the assailant's face is over his/her shoulder. The user should cover his/her eyes and spray at where he/she thinks the assailant's face might be.

8. If the officer thinks it likely that the assailant might take away the tear gas canister – he/she should throw it in a direction away from reach.
9. The officer should have the tear gas canister in his/her hand when out walking and not in the bottom of a pocket, briefcase or handbag.
10. The officer should always walk with one hand free – he/she should never carry packages in both hands.
11. The officer should always be ready to move the safety off the canister.
12. The officer should make sure he/she is fully familiar with the mechanics of the tear gas weapon.

Notes



EXAMINE YOUR REASONS FOR WANTING PEPPER SPRAY

- Take a training course from a professional (likely your employer) before buying
- Use pepper spray for self-defense or during an arrest
- Don't let children get access to pepper spray
- Don't ever use tear gas in a moving vehicle
- Try to avoid isolated or dangerous areas unless your job requires it
- Tear gas canister must be readily accessible
- Use only in an emergency.
- Spray directly into the assailant's face
- Avoid contact with the person sprayed
- Vacate area after use and call the police
- Rinse your eyes repeatedly with cold water if affected
- Use tearless baby shampoo to cut the oil resin

References

What is Pepper Spray?

Johnson Enterprises
2401 A Waterman Blvd. Suite 4-232
Fairfield, CA 94533

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The California Association of Licensed Security Agencies, Guards and Associates (CALSAGA) has contracted with nationally recognized security officer training expert Ralph Brislin to produce most of the training materials for compliance with the AB 2880 Security Officer Training Law. The law took effect on July 1, 2004.

Ralph Brislin has been active in the security industry for nearly 30 years. He earned a BS degree in Law Enforcement from Eastern Kentucky University and a Master's in Public Affairs from Indiana University. He has taught college courses at Indiana University, The University of Akron, Lakeland Community College and Eastern Kentucky University. He has been a Certified Protection Professional (CPP) since 1982.

Prior to being engaged by CALSAGA, Brislin authored *The Effective Report Writing for the Security Officer*, *The Effective Security Officer Training Manual* and *The Effective Security Supervision Manual*.

