



## East Texas Police Academy Oleoresin Capsicum Exposure and Decontamination

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that safe and responsible procedures are adhered to for the required East Texas Police Academy Basic Peace Officer Course, Oleoresin Capsicum (“OC”) exposure training. This policy shall apply to all ETPA activities and training regarding the use of or exposure to OC, or any similar chemical agent. It should be noted that the regular and routine use of OC is not known to produce or cause any significant or permanent physical injuries or lasting effects upon the exposed person.

### Policy:

I. Students diagnosed with a relevant medical condition, including but not limited to eye injuries or disorders, shall furnish ETPA with written notification from a licensed and board certified doctor specializing in the treatment of eye injuries and disorders regarding whether or not the student is medically cleared to be exposed to OC. If the student is seeking medical exemption for a non-eye related condition, medical clearance from a board certified and licensed doctor who regularly treats the specific condition is required. It is the responsibility of the student to self-identify to ETPA staff if they have a concern regarding an eye or other medical issue, and to obtain the proper medical notification for inclusion or exclusion in OC exposure training, prior to the scheduled date of exposure.

II. ETPA staff will only use approved OC that has been purchased by and through the East Texas Police Academy. OC spray used by ETPA must be in line with current professionally acceptable standards in the law enforcement community.

III. Students are prohibited from wearing contact lenses during OC exposure training and decontamination.

IV. During their exposure to OC, students will be required to complete a series of law enforcement related objectives and tasks. The completion of these activities will only

occur under the direct supervision of ETPA staff. Following the satisfactory completion of the required activities, students will be led to a decontamination area.

V. Decontamination:

- a. Decontamination will only occur under the supervision of ETPA staff.
- b. The only authorized substances for use during decontamination are:
  - i. Water
  - ii. Baby Shampoo / Soap, specifically marked in packaging with “No Tears”, or other markings to indicate that it is safe for application to the eye.
  - iii. Saline solution, of a standard concentration regularly used to flush the eye of contaminants.
  - iv. Any other substances specifically authorized by ETPA instructors, or applied by trained medical staff acting in a professional capacity.
- c. Dishwashing liquid, hand soap, “degreasers”, or any other caustic chemicals are strictly prohibited. ***Students who bring such substances to the training area where OC exposure is being conducted will be immediately removed from training and expelled from the academy.***
- d. Decontamination will occur in accordance with recognized law enforcement training standards. However, it should be noted that capsaicin is not soluble in water, regardless of the volume of water used. A formal study noted that various treatment regimes resulted in no significant difference in pain relief, with time after exposure being the greatest indicator of reduced effects.<sup>1</sup>

VI. Following the completion of the decontamination procedures, all students will remain on the premises and under the direct observation of ETPA staff for no less than one hour. This one hour monitoring period will not begin until the last student exposed to OC has finished decontamination. Should a student require additional recovery time, ETPA staff will supervise the student until the student deems that they are recovered and capable of safely traveling from the training facility.

VII. Recontamination not required: students who have been contaminated with OC through East Texas Police Academy training will *not* be required to undergo exposure again. Students must be able to provide written documentation to the ETPA Office prior to the date of contamination showing completion/contamination with OC during ETPA training that was conducted after January 1, 2012.

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<sup>1</sup> “A Randomized Controlled Trial Comparing Treatment Regimens for Acute Pain for Topical Oleoresin Capsaicin (Pepper Spray) Exposure in Adult Volunteers - Prehospital Emergency Care”. Informaworld.com. 2004-09-08. Retrieved 09-22-2015 [www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10903120802290786](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10903120802290786)

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