

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

# NATIONAL URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSE SYSTEM

A Component of the National Response Framework  
Emergency Support Function # 9



June 2011

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SPECIALIST POSITION DESCRIPTION

**FEMA US&R Response System  
Task Force Position Description  
Hazardous Materials Specialist**

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**Position Specific Requirements:**

The Hazardous Materials Specialist is responsible for performing the various hazardous materials functions for the task force during incident operations. The Hazardous Materials Specialist reports directly to the Hazardous Materials Team Manager.

**Description of Duties:**

The Hazardous Materials Specialist is responsible for:

- Providing an initial and ongoing survey (detection, monitoring and sampling) for, and identification of, the presence of hazardous materials at search and rescue sites
- Proficiency with the set up and use of the decontamination system in the US&R cache
- Directing decontamination procedures for any task force member victim, canine, or equipment
- Performing minor mitigation operations within the scope of the Hazmat Concept of Operations (CONOPS)
- Assisting Team Managers in providing information to personnel regarding chemical data and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) compatibility and capability for tactical operations
- Document all related information regarding the incident
- Adhering to all safety procedures
- Properly utilizing the detection monitors and devices in the US&R cache
- Proficiency in donning and doffing all personnel protective equipment in the US&R cache
- Proficiency in building triage and US&R marking systems
- Working with Logistics Team personnel to establish and maintain a regular maintenance schedule for hazmat cache items as required, including calibration, battery charging, function tests and field repair
- Performing regular assessments of the base of operations for hazardous conditions, such as carbon monoxide from generators, or any other contaminants
- Establishing and maintaining a liaison with hazmat personnel from the Incident Support Team (IST) and other task forces

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- Performing additional tasks or duties as assigned during a mission

**Position Requirements and Criteria:**

Individuals who meet the following requirements and criteria will be eligible to become Hazardous Materials Specialists in the FEMA US&R Response System. The intent of these requirements is to select personnel fully capable of providing competent hazardous materials assessments and advice to Task Force personnel in the urban disaster environment.

**Required Training:**

The Hazardous Material Specialist shall:

1. Meet all Administrative and General Training requirements
2. Meet and maintain the requirements as a certified Hazardous Materials Technician as per OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.120 Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response
3. Meet and maintain the AHJ competencies in accordance with National Fire Protection Association standard 472 Standard for Professional Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials Incidents to the level of Hazardous Materials Technician
4. Complete the DHS/FEMA National US&R Response System WMD Considerations for Hazardous Materials Specialist course
5. Complete all Technical Rescue Skill Set as defined in Appendix A

**Recommended Training:**

The Hazardous Materials Specialist should:

1. Complete the Weapons of Mass Destruction Radiological/Nuclear for Hazardous Materials Technician (Course PER-241), U.S. Department of Energy National Security Administration Nevada Test Site.
2. Complete the WMD Hazardous Materials Technician Training (HT) (Course PER-261), Centers for Domestic Preparedness, Anniston Alabama.
3. Complete Task Force water purification system training
4. Complete Hazmat CONOP training

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**Appendix A**

**Technical Rescue Skill Sets:**

Minimum skill set recommendations for Task Force Personnel who enter the hazard zone, i.e. forward deployment:

- General Requirements of NFPA 1670
- Rope Rescue awareness per NFPA 1670\*
- Trench Rescue awareness per NFPA 1670
- Duties of the Entrant per 29 CFR 1910.146

\* Additional Required Rope Rescue skills:

- Safety considerations during rope rescue operations
- Characteristics of life safety rope and webbing
- Application of rope rescue hardware specific to a lowering operation
- Application of rope rescue hardware and software specific to a belay line
- Assemble and apply a Class III harness
- Assemble and apply a "Hasty Harness"
- Tie a Simple Figure eight knot
- Tie a Figure Eight follow-through knot
- Tie an overhand follow-through with webbing
- Attach a prusik loop to a rope
- Be familiar with anchor systems
- Be familiar with raising and lowering systems
- Proficiency at attaching oneself to, and participating in a raising or lowering system
- Proficiency at descending and ascending a fixed line, low angle

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