



CONTRA COSTA  
HEALTH SERVICES

**INCIDENT REPORT**

**June 1, 2020**

**INCIDENT NO.** 200430-02

**INCIDENT DATE:** April 30, 2020

**LOCATION:** Household Residence  
113 Garretson Ave.  
Rodeo, CA 94572

**RESPONDING**

**TEAM MEMBER(S):** Xavier Bryant, Michael Duncan, Sara Dwight, Trisha A. Johnson (lead), John Pham, and Adam Springer

**INCIDENT SUMMARY**

On 21:00 hours, the Contra Costa Health Services Hazardous Materials Programs – Incident Response Team (Haz Mat Team) received a page from Con Fire dispatch and notification through Tablet Command that County HAZMAT would be activated to investigate a possible drug lab at a residence. The Battalion Chief/Incident Commander would be Darren Johnson from Rodeo-Hercules Fire District (RHFD) for Battalion 7. I made the decision to activate all on call team members that night. With exception of Dwight, who went straight to scene in her vehicle, the remaining team members went to the office to pick up response vehicles. Bryant, Duncan, and I were in HM1 (6824); and Springer and Pham were in HM3. HM1 and HM3 departed the Martinez office on 21:36. Dwight arrived on scene at 21:42; and HM1 and HM3 arrived on scene at 21:59. BC Darren Johnson, an engine company from RHFD and Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department (Sheriff) were already on scene.

Background

RHFD and Sheriff explained how the call came about. A male from the household was taken into the emergency department for a burn from a supposed electrical fire inside the house. When the first responders arrived, they noted strange observations:

- The electrical fire involved a burned Hudson sprayer in the home's bathroom. The wife of the injured male did not know exactly the contents of the container; yet, she assumed it may have been gasoline.
- The first responding officers from fire and Sheriff did notice a chemical odor similar to bleach.
- The firefighters noticed a narrow hole cut up on the porch that appeared to lead to the garage. The passageway was narrow, but what they could see from the porch were propane cylinders and containers of diesel.
- Additionally, Sheriff mentioned that the household had numerous drug-related contacts in the past; and that neighbors noticed individuals riding bicycles to the home in the middle of the night.

Given the above observations, RHFD and Sheriff concluded that there may be a possible drug lab in the home, specifically in the garage.



### Haz Mat Operations

When all team members were on scene, I made immediate contact with BC Johnson. The information conveyed to me was mentioned in the earlier section "Background." The Haz Mat Group consisted of the following personnel:

- Haz Mat Group Supervisor – Trisha Johnson
- Assistant Safety Officer Haz Mat – Sara Dwight
- Entry Team Leader – Xavier Bryant
- Entry Team – Adam Springer and Michael Duncan
- Backup Rescue Team – RHFD Firefighters Coleman and Cochnaver
- Technical Specialist HM Reference (Tech Ref) and Decon Leader – John Pham

Incident Commander was BC Johnson and Site Access Control was Sheriff.

*Objectives.* The Haz Mat Group and Entry objectives were to: (1) conduct reconnaissance and air monitoring inside the garage to determine if a drug lab exists; (2) seek for any residual from incident that originated in the bathroom; and (3) identify the substance that was in the Hudson sprayer.

*Highlights of Pre-Entry and Entry.* Based on the hazard assessment of the incident and the physical environment that the Entry Team would be in, the Entry Team would don Level B PPE with SCBA. RHFD did note to be wary of nails going through the porch to get to the garage. Springer would make entry through the narrow porch entry. The pre-entry briefing was conducted at approximately 22:20 and attended by BC Johnson, Haz Mat Group, the RHFD engine company, and Sheriff. Prior to entry, the Entry Team did air and radio checks.

Springer accessed the garaged through the porch portal. He was only in the garage for at least 5-6 minutes before he reported that no evidence of a drug lab was found. The Entry Team proceeded to the bathroom and only there for 5-6 minutes. pH of surfaces in the bathroom came out pH 6-7. The Entry Team retrieved a sample from the Hudson sprayer to be given to Tech Ref for analysis. The Tech Ref was unable to identify the unknown residual substance in the Hudson sprayer, but found that it had a very low pH of 0-1, making it highly acidic. This is in contradiction with the wife saying that the Hudson sprayer had gasoline.

Tactical communications through EBRCs radios did not work as anticipated that night. The Haz Mat Group had to use line-of-sight.

### **FINDINGS**

In conclusion, there was no evidence of a drug lab in the household. Given some observations, the burns sustained by the injured male may have been a combination of actual burn and a chemical burn (from a bleach solution). We could not determine what was the driver behind these chain of events; specifically, as to why the injured male had a Hudson sprayer of a chemical in the bathroom. In addition, the chemical in the sprayer was not gasoline.

The following are key observations made during the entry:

- The garage was nailed shut and sealed with foam from the inside.
- There were numerous containers of diesel, propane cylinders, Rockstar energy drinks, and a pile of dirt in the garage; nevertheless, there was no indication of drug manufacturing.
- Air monitoring did not indicate hazardous atmospheric conditions in the garage or bathroom.
- The Entry Team did not find any residual chemical from the Hudson sprayer in the bathroom.
- Using the Haz Cat system, Tech Ref was not able to identify what was originally in the Hudson sprayer. Reviewing the circumstances, including the observation of a bleach-like odor when the Sheriff arrived at the house, the Haz Mat Team came to the conclusion that the

Hudson sprayer had a strong bleach solution. pH paper did indicate a pH of 0-1. When the electrical fire occurred in or in the vicinity of the bathroom, the bleach solution was aflame and burned the male who eventually went to the hospital. Because of this, Tech Ref was unable to get residual chlorine or oxidizer, which may have burned off by the fire, to further implicate that a bleach-like solution was originally in the Hudson sprayer.

#### **LESSONS LEARNED**

The only lesson learned from this incident was to have more practice with the in-suit EBRC radios.

#### **ATTACHMENT(S)**

- A. Incident Report Form #200430-02
- B. ICS 308 HM – Site Safety and Control Plan
- C. Entry Briefing Notes/Summary
- D. Incident Invoice Form

#### **REPORT**

#### **PREPARED BY:**



Trisha A. Johnson, Hazardous Materials Specialist II  
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**COMPLAINT, INCIDENT, AND NOTIFICATION REPORT FORM**

Type (Circle One):  C  I  N

Received Date: 04/30/20 Received Time: 21:01 Received By: TAJ Lead: TAJ

Incident Date: 04/30/20 Incident Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Assigned to: \_\_\_\_\_ Assigned Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CASE NUMBER: 200430 - 02

**COMPLAINANT / REPORTING PARTY:**

Name: Battalion Chief Darren Johnson  RP is from Facility  Anonymous

Organization: Rodeo-Hercules Fire District/Battalion 7 Cal OES # (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**FACILITY / LOCATION OF INCIDENT:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ CUPA Facility I.D.: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: 113 Garretson Ave. Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

City: Rodeo State: CA Zip Code: 94572

Location Description: Household residence

**INITIAL INCIDENT DESCRIPTION:**

Possible drug lab in a house; unknown odor coming from basement

**INCIDENT TYPE / DESCRIPTION:**

Community Warning System Level (Circle Highest Level):  N/A  0  1  2  3

FACILITY	ISO / MCAR	TRANSPORTATION	MISCELLANEOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire or Explosion	<input type="checkbox"/> Fatality (one or more)	<input type="checkbox"/> Tank Truck	<input type="checkbox"/> Storm Drain/Creek
<input type="checkbox"/> Spill or Release	<input type="checkbox"/> > 24 hrs. Hospital, 3 or more people	<input type="checkbox"/> Railroad	<input type="checkbox"/> Drug Lab
<input type="checkbox"/> Startup or Shutdown	<input type="checkbox"/> Flammable Vapor Cloud > 5,000 lbs.	<input type="checkbox"/> On Water	<input type="checkbox"/> Disposal/Abandonment
<input type="checkbox"/> Flaring		<input type="checkbox"/> Pipeline	<input type="checkbox"/> Odor Complaint
<input type="checkbox"/> Upset		<input type="checkbox"/> Fuel Tank	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Time Enroute to Scene: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Arrived On Scene: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Departed From Scene: \_\_\_\_\_

**REFERRED TO OTHER AGENCY:**



• Contra Costa Behavioral Health Services • Contra Costa Emergency Medical Services • Contra Costa Environmental Health & Hazardous Materials Programs •  
 • Contra Costa Health, Housing & Homeless Services • Contra Costa Health Plan • Contra Costa Public Health • Contra Costa Regional Medical Center & Health Centers •

**DTSC STATE FUNDING (if applicable):**

CLU/ERER Number:

**STORMWATER STATUS (if applicable):** Actual Discharge Potential Discharge**AGENCIES ON SCENE OR NOTIFIED:**

<u>Agency Type</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>O/N</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Case Number</u>
Fire Department	Rodeo-Hercules Fire District	O	BC Darren Johnson		
Law Enforcement	Contra County Sheriff	O			
Air District					
State OES					

**REPORT:**

See attached.

**Additional Required Items: Bill of Lading, Request for Invoice, and Site Safety Plan**

Trisha A. Johnson 6/1/2020

Report Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_