



# Safety Matters

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## Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER)

HAZardous Waste OPerations and Emergency Response is an OSHA requirement for facilities that use and store hazardous chemicals. HAZWOPER was developed to ensure all employers develop and train responders and create emergency response plans.

Key elements to success include the levels of training and response.

### Levels of Training

There are various levels of training that can be offered. These range from First responders to Incident commanders. Below is a summary of the levels, as outline by OSHA standard 1920.120

#### First Responder: Awareness Level

“... individuals who are likely to witness or discover a hazardous substance release and who have been trained to initiate an emergency response sequence by notifying the proper authorities of the release.”

#### First Responder: Operations Level

“...individuals who respond to releases or potential releases of hazardous substances as part of the initial response to the site for the purpose of protecting nearby persons, property, or the environment from the effects of the release.”

#### Hazardous Materials Technician

“...individuals who respond to releases or potential releases for the purpose of stopping the release.”

#### Hazardous Materials Specialist

“...individuals who respond with and provide support to hazardous materials technicians.”

#### On Scene Incident Commander

“...assume control of the incident scene beyond the first responder awareness level...”

These various levels require specific training, so it is important to understand where you fall in these categories. Employees of NSTAR will more than likely be “First Responders: Awareness Level”. This means that you should be able to recognize an incident and know who to contact.



### -- HAZWOPER Related Definitions --

**Buddy system** - a system of organizing employees into work groups so that each employee is designated to be observed by at least one other employee in the work group. The purpose of the buddy system is to provide rapid assistance to employees in the event of an emergency.

**Clean-up operation** - an operation where hazardous substances are removed, contained, incinerated, neutralized, stabilized, cleared-up, or in any other manner processed or handled with the ultimate goal of making the site safer for people or the environment.

**Hazardous materials response (HAZMAT) team** - an organized group of employees, designated by the employer, who are expected to perform work to handle and control actual or potential leaks or spills of hazardous substances requiring possible close approach to the substance.

**Health hazard** - The term "health hazard" refers to chemicals which are carcinogens, toxic or highly toxic agents, reproductive toxins, irritants, corrosives, sensitizers, hepatotoxins, nephrotoxins, neurotoxins, agents which act on the hematopoietic system, and agents which damage the lungs, skin, eyes, or mucous membranes.

**Site safety and health supervisor (or official)** - the individual located on a hazardous waste site who is responsible to the employer and has the authority and knowledge necessary to implement the site safety and health plan and verify compliance with applicable safety and health requirements.



## Remember... Safety Matters.