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Chemical Weapons
OC
Oleoresin Capsicum

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CHEMICAL WEAPONS

- I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to authorize the use of chemical agents to be used as necessary to subdue inmates or arrestees that are violent and pose an immediate threat to staff and/or other inmates.
- II. **POLICY**
 - A. Only Sheriff's Office approved chemical weapon shall be used.
 - B. Only personnel, who have completed the Corrections Division certified training in the use of Oleoresin Capsicum (OC), are authorized to use OC within the facilities and while transporting.
 - C. Unauthorized use of OC is strictly prohibited.
 1. OC should not be used where physical resistance can be overcome by lesser means without injury to deputies.
 2. OC shall never be used to intimidate, punish, or retaliate against an individual.
 - D. All inmates exposed to OC shall be given medical assistance as soon as possible after exposure.
 - E. All incidents involving the use of OC shall be documented on an "Incident Report Form."

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III. DEFINITIONS

- A. OC - Oleoresin Capsicum is a pepper-based substance, suspended in an inert liquid under pressure, and dispensed in aerosol form from a hand-held dispenser.
- B. OC Canister – OC spray in a canister, which projects a stream of OC, with an effective range of 3-12 feet.
- C. OC Holder – The OC canister will be carried in the department approved holder with a flap over the top that snaps to the holster, securing the canister.
 - 1. The approved holder will be worn on the Corrections Deputy duty belt.

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. OC is derived from processing selected hot peppers as the active ingredient in OC aerosols.
- B. OC requires direct contact with the mucous membranes to be effective.
- C. Use of OC may cause the inmate's/arrestee's respiratory system to be inflamed causing coughing, gagging, hiccupping, or a feeling of loss of breath. During these symptoms, the ability to resist should be reduced.
- D. OC will work 80% of the time on individuals under the influence of drugs or alcohol, mentally ill persons, or individuals that are hysterical.

V. PROCEDURE

- A. Authorized staff shall determine if a situation is appropriate for the use of OC.
 - 1. OC may be used on those inmates who become or attempt to become physically violent with staff or other inmates.
 - 2. Caution should be used prior to dispensing OC on resisting inmates who are engaged physically with other officers, or who are not isolated from bystanders.
 - 3. In a housing unit disturbance or riot, if the bystanders refuse to step back from the active individuals after a warning is given, then OC can be dispensed to gain control of the situation.

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- B. If appropriate, sworn staff shall dispense the OC onto the inmate or arrestee's face.
 - 1. Whenever possible, gloves and eye protection should be used.
- C. Once the inmate or arrestee is less resistant, Corrections Deputies will take control and place restraints on the person.
- D. Upon being restrained, the person needs to be sat up, talked to, and calmed down.
 - 1. OC shall not be used on restrained individuals unless the individual poses an immediate threat to himself or others.
- E. The Facility Supervisor will direct the Corrections Deputies where to place the individual.

VI. DECONTAMINATION

- A. As soon as practical, the Facility Supervisor shall direct the person to be decontaminated.
 - 1. Remove subject from contaminated area.
 - 2. The decontamination process primarily is flushing the person's eyes with water for an extended period of time and/or use decontamination wipes and place subject in an area of fresh air.
 - a. The source of water can either be the Booking shower, or a hose brought to a Safety Cell.
 - b. Cream or salves should not be used, as they will tend to seal in the substance, making it more difficult to alleviate the effects.
 - 3. Medical staff shall be notified and will assist in the decontamination process and monitor the person for medical complications.
 - 4. The recovery process could take up to 20 minutes after being sprayed by OC.
- B. A Corrections Deputy who becomes cross-contaminated shall be helped to the nearest shower or eye flush station to be decontaminated.

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1. Medical staff may be asked to assist in this process.

VII. DOCUMENTATION

- A. All involved personnel shall complete:

1. An incident report and shall include the following information:
 - a. A detailed description of the incident that lead to the use of OC.
 - b. Any injuries to staff or inmate/arrestee.
 - c. The type of first aid and decontamination process.
 - d. Whether or not the use of OC was effective.

- B. The Facility Supervisor will complete a "County of Mendocino Incident Report" if a Correction Deputy was contaminated.

VIII. MAINTENANCE

- A. Care should be taken as to the type of canister and it's mode of carry to avoid accidental activation.
- B. The OC canister should be shaken 4-5 times prior to a Corrections Deputy tour of duty.
- C. The OC canister should receive a periodic check of the expiration date, amount of contents, and pressure.

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