

Control Devices

303.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the use and maintenance of control devices that are described in this policy.

303.2 POLICY

In order to control subjects who are violent or who demonstrate the intent to be violent, the Oakdale Police Department authorizes officers to use control devices in accordance with the guidelines in this policy and the Use of Force Policy.

303.3 ISSUING, CARRYING AND USING CONTROL DEVICES

Control devices described in this policy may be carried and used by members of this department only if the device has been issued by the Department or approved by the Chief of Police or the authorized designee.

Only officers who have successfully completed department-approved training in the use of any control device are authorized to carry and use the device.

Control devices may be used when a decision has been made to control, restrain or arrest a subject who is violent or who demonstrates the intent to be violent, and the use of the device appears reasonable under the circumstances. When reasonable, a verbal warning and advanced display along with an opportunity to comply should precede the use of these devices.

When using control devices, officers should carefully consider potential impact areas in order to minimize injuries and unintentional targets.

In the absence of an approved impact weapon, members of this department are permitted to protect themselves or another person from bodily harm through the use of other department-issued equipment that is not designed or intended to be used routinely as an impact weapon, such as a flashlight or a radio. This decision should be the last alternative available, and members are strongly encouraged to have their issued impact weapon readily available while on-duty.

303.4 RESPONSIBILITIES

303.4.1 SHIFT SERGEANT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Shift Sergeant may authorize the use of a control device by selected personnel or members of specialized units who have successfully completed the required training.

303.4.2 LEAD FIREARMS INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Lead Firearms Instructor shall control the inventory and issuance of all control devices and shall ensure that all damaged, inoperative, outdated or expended control devices or munitions are properly disposed of, repaired or replaced.

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Every control device will be periodically inspected by the Lead Firearms Instructor or the designated instructor for a particular control device. The inspection shall be documented.

303.4.3 USER RESPONSIBILITIES

All normal maintenance, charging or cleaning shall remain the responsibility of personnel using the various devices.

Any damaged, inoperative, outdated or expended control devices or munitions, along with documentation explaining the cause of the damage, shall be returned to the Lead Firearms Instructor for disposition. Damage to City property forms shall also be prepared and forwarded through the chain of command, when appropriate, explaining the cause of damage.

303.5 BATON GUIDELINES

ASP expandable/collapsible baton is approved for use by department members. The need to immediately control a suspect must be weighed against the risk of causing serious injury. The head, neck, solar plexus, throat, spine, heart, kidneys, tailbone, and groin should not be intentionally targeted except when the officer reasonably believes the use of deadly force is appropriate. See the Use of Force Policy for additional guidance.

When carrying a baton, uniformed personnel should carry the baton in its authorized holder on the equipment belt or load bearing vest. Plainclothes and non-field personnel may carry the baton as authorized and in accordance with the needs of their assignment or at the direction of their supervisor. The decision should be the last alternative available, and members are strongly encouraged to have their issued impact weapon readily available while on-duty.

303.6 TEAR GAS GUIDELINES

Tear gas may be used for crowd control, crowd dispersal or against barricaded suspects based on the circumstances. Only the Shift Sergeant, Incident Commander or SWAT Commander may authorize the delivery and use of tear gas, and only after evaluating all conditions known at the time and determining that such force reasonably appears justified and necessary.

When practicable, fire personnel should be alerted or summoned to the scene prior to the deployment of tear gas to control any fires and to assist in providing medical aid or gas evacuation if needed.

303.7 OLEORESIN CAPSICUM (OC) GUIDELINES

As with other control devices, oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray and pepper projectiles may be considered for use to bring under control an individual or groups of individuals who are engaging in, or are about to engage in violent behavior. Pepper projectiles and OC spray should not be used against individuals or groups who merely fail to disperse or do not reasonably appear to present a risk to the safety of officers or the public.

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303.7.1 OC SPRAY

Uniformed personnel carrying OC spray shall carry the device in its holster on the equipment belt or load-bearing vest. Plainclothes and non-field personnel may carry OC spray as authorized, or have one canister in their assigned unmarked vehicle or in some other location that provides reasonable accessibility in the field. A supervisor may also provide additional direction in accordance with the needs of their assignment.

303.7.2 PEPPER PROJECTILE SYSTEMS

Pepper projectiles are plastic spheres that are filled with a derivative of OC powder. Because the compressed gas launcher delivers the projectiles with enough force to burst the projectiles on impact and release the OC powder, the potential exists for the projectiles to inflict injury if they strike the head, neck, spine, or groin. Therefore, personnel deploying a pepper projectile system should not intentionally target those areas, except when the officer reasonably believes the use of deadly force is appropriate. See the Use of Force Policy for additional guidance.

Officers encountering a situation that warrants the use of a pepper projectile system shall notify a supervisor as soon as practicable. A supervisor shall respond to all pepper projectile system incidents where the suspect has been hit or exposed to the chemical agent. The supervisor shall ensure that all notifications and reports are completed as required by the Use of Force Policy.

Each deployment of a pepper projectile system shall be documented. This includes situations where the launcher was directed toward the suspect, whether or not the launcher was used. Unintentional discharges shall be promptly reported to a supervisor and documented on the appropriate report form. Only non-incident use of a pepper projectile system, such as training and product demonstrations, is exempt from the reporting requirement.

303.7.3 TREATMENT FOR OC SPRAY EXPOSURE

Persons who have been sprayed with or otherwise affected by the use of OC should be promptly provided with clean water to cleanse the affected areas. At minimum, persons shall be moved to an area to allow fresh air outside of the exposure zone. Those persons who complain of further severe effects shall be examined by appropriate medical personnel.

303.8 POST-APPLICATION NOTICE

Whenever tear gas or OC has been introduced into a residence, building interior, vehicle, or other enclosed area, officers should provide the owners or available occupants with notice of the possible presence of residue that could result in irritation or injury if the area is not properly cleaned. Such notice should include advisement that cleanup will be at the owner's expense. Information regarding the method of notice and the individuals notified should be included in related reports.

303.9 KINETIC ENERGY PROJECTILE GUIDELINES

This department is committed to reducing the potential for violent confrontations. Kinetic energy projectiles, when used properly, are less likely to result in death or serious physical injury and can be used in an attempt to de-escalate a potentially deadly situation.

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303.9.1 DEPLOYMENT AND USE

Only department-approved kinetic energy munitions shall be carried and deployed. Approved munitions may be used to compel an individual to cease his/her actions when such munitions present a reasonable option.

Officers are not required or compelled to use approved munitions in lieu of other reasonable tactics if the involved officer determines that deployment of these munitions cannot be done safely. The safety of hostages, innocent persons and officers takes priority over the safety of subjects engaged in criminal or suicidal behavior.

Circumstances appropriate for deployment include, but are not limited to, situations in which:

- (a) The suspect is armed with a weapon and the tactical circumstances allow for the safe application of approved munitions.
- (b) The suspect has made credible threats to harm him/herself or others.
- (c) The suspect is engaged in riotous behavior or is throwing rocks, bottles or other dangerous projectiles at people and/or officers.
- (d) There is probable cause to believe that the suspect has already committed a crime of violence and is refusing to comply with lawful orders.
- (e) To subdue a person actively resisting a lawful arrest.

303.9.2 DEPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Before discharging projectiles, the officer should consider such factors as:

- (a) Distance and angle to target.
- (b) Type of munitions employed.
- (c) Type and thickness of subject's clothing.
- (d) The subject's proximity to others.
- (e) The location of the subject.
- (f) Whether the subject's actions dictate the need for an immediate response and the use of control devices appears appropriate.
- (g) To subdue a person actively resisting a lawful arrest.

A verbal warning of the intended use of the device should precede its application, unless it would otherwise endanger the safety of officers or when it is not practicable due to the circumstances. The purpose of the warning is to give the individual a reasonable opportunity to voluntarily comply and to warn other officers and individuals that the device is being deployed.

Officers should keep in mind the manufacturer's recommendations and their training regarding effective distances and target areas. However, officers are not restricted solely to use according to manufacturer recommendations. Each situation must be evaluated on the totality of circumstances at the time of deployment.

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The need to immediately incapacitate the subject must be weighed against the risk of causing serious injury or death. The head, neck, face, groin, and spine areas should not be intentionally targeted, except when the officer reasonably believes the use of deadly force is appropriate. See the Use of Force Policy for additional guidance.

The use of kinetic energy projectiles by a member who is not in the presence of a cover officer is undesirable because the member deploying the less lethal device has limited their lethal force option and exposes the deploying member to a potential lethal attack. It is the responsibility of the cover officer to have lethal force available in the event it is needed to protect civilians and members from great bodily harm or death.

After deployment on a suspect, the member shall evaluate the suspect for injuries and summon EMS when appropriate.

303.10 TRAINING FOR CONTROL DEVICES

The designated training Sergeant shall ensure that all personnel who are authorized to carry a control device have been properly trained and certified to carry the specific control device and are retrained or recertified as necessary. Officers will receive training on the use of issued control devices and this policy, including the learning objectives as provided by POST, at least annually (Minn. Stat. § 626.8452, Subd. 3).

- (a) Proficiency training shall be monitored and documented by a certified, control-device weapons or tactics instructor.
- (b) All training and proficiency for control devices will be documented in the officer's training file.
- (c) Officers who fail to demonstrate proficiency with the control device or knowledge of this agency's Use of Force Policy will be provided remedial training. If an officer cannot demonstrate proficiency with a control device or knowledge of this agency's Use of Force Policy after remedial training, the officer will be restricted from carrying the control device and may be subject to discipline.

303.11 REPORTING USE OF CONTROL DEVICES AND TECHNIQUES

A supervisor shall be notified after the application of a control device or technique listed in this policy shall be documented in the related incident report and reported pursuant to the Use of Force Policy.