

Georgia Department of Public Safety

Policy Manual

SUBJECT OLEORESIN CAPSICUM (O.C.) SPRAY	POLICY NUMBER 10.02
DISTRIBUTION ALL EMPLOYEES	DATE REVISED 8/1/2006

10.02.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to sworn personnel in the use of O.C. Spray. Use of O.C. Spray is a form of non-deadly force and, when practical, should be used in place of hard empty hand control or weapons in order to avoid injury to the subject and the officer.

10.02.2 Policy

It shall be the policy of the Georgia Department of Public Safety to utilize the least amount of force necessary to accomplish the lawful objectives of this department. As such, when officers have been trained in its use, O.C. spray shall be used, when appropriate, before resorting to a higher degree of force. Within the measures available to sworn personnel, O.C. spray shall be considered less lethal, and its use preferable to, the issued baton. However, nothing in this policy shall require the officer to utilize O.C. spray prior to, or in lieu of, hard empty hand control, the baton or other more lethal force, if such force is warranted under the circumstances.

10.02.3 Procedures

- A. After spraying a subject, the member must monitor the subject's physical condition for up to 45 minutes or until the subject is turned over to jail personnel.
- B. After handcuffing and searching the subject, the member should instruct the subject to stay still, not to rub their eyes, breathe normally, and relax as much as possible.
- C. When circumstances permit, a member should wait a period of 15 minutes before transporting the subject to allow natural evaporation to reduce the effects of the O.C. Spray in the Patrol car.
- D. A member must decontaminate the subject at the scene of the arrest when the member or subject's safety is not jeopardized. Decontamination includes:
 1. Moving the subject into an uncontaminated area as soon as possible;
 2. Facing the subject into the wind;
 3. Spraying the subject's face and eyes utilizing the issued spray bottle and water, and
 4. Patting the subject's face dry with paper towels.

- E. The officer should determine if the subject has any medical condition that may be aggravated by the O.C. Spray. If the subject suffers from any such condition, then the procedures outlined in paragraph H(3), below, shall apply.
- F. While transporting the subject, the member shall provide ventilation to the subject by opening the window and/or directing the air-conditioning vent toward the subject's face.
- G. Upon arrival at the detention facility or chemical analysis site, the member shall allow the subject to flush their face and eyes with cool water. A non oil-based soap or detergent can be used and will help remove the resin from the skin.
 - 1. Do not use any commercial eyewash during the decontamination process.
 - 2. Personnel at the jail must be informed that a prisoner has been sprayed with O.C. Spray.
- H. Medical Attention to Prisoners
 - 1. Unless a detention facility requires a subject who has been sprayed with O.C. Spray to be checked by medical personnel, a prisoner who has been sprayed will not usually require medical attention.
 - 2. Prisoners who meet any of the following criteria must be taken for immediate medical attention:
 - a. Gagging or breathing difficulties persist beyond 2-4 minutes;
 - b. Loses consciousness, sweats profusely without reason, appears very sick, or
 - c. Suffers from the effects of O.C. Spray more than 45 minutes after use.
 - 3. Prisoners who are known to meet the following criteria must be closely monitored for at least 45 minutes or until turned over to jail personnel. "Closely monitored" means the prisoner should not be left alone for any significant periods of time, and the physical and mental condition of the prisoner should be observed. This treatment applies to all prisoners who:
 - a. Are elderly or frail persons, diabetics, asthmatics;
 - b. Have known history of heart or lung problems, seizure disorders;
 - c. Are substantially impaired by drugs or alcohol;
 - d. Have run or fought with officer or violently resisted arrest;
 - e. Are breathing very rapidly, sweating heavily, or exhibiting pale skin;
 - f. Engage in deranged or irrational conduct or speech;
 - g. Are very obese, or
 - h. Complain of dizziness or being lightheaded.

I. Replacement of O.C. Spray

1. A canister of O.C. Spray shall be replaced after any use. The canister shall be turned in to a supervisor for replacement.
2. Troop/Region Commanders shall inspect canisters to insure that the canister carried on the officer's belt has not expired and is full.

J. Reporting

1. Any officer who uses O.C. Spray against any person shall complete a Use of Force Report (DPS-620) as outlined in the Use of Force Policy #10.01.
2. Supervisors shall review all Use of Force Reports for accuracy and completeness, and forward them to the appropriate adjutant through the chain of command.