WHAT IS HAZWOPER?

Executive Summary
HAZWOPER training is critical to protect workers who may be exposed to hazardous substances during emergency response or site cleanup operations. This simple, illustrated guide is designed to clarify OSHA’s HAZWOPER training Standards for emergency responders and site clean-up personnel in 29 CFR 1910.120. Safety professionals can use this guide as a quick reference to OSHA’s regulations for training hours, days of field experience, refresher training, and HAZWOPER regulatory references where more information is available. The guide also includes course recommendations for managers or personnel in need of OSHA-required HAZWOPER training.

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What is HAZWOPER?

Personnel who handle or work with hazardous substances need effective training to protect themselves, their co-workers, and the public. One major standard designed to protect these workers is OSHA’s Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) Standard, found in 29 CFR 1910.120.

The graphics in this guide cover two common types of HAZWOPER training, and who needs each:

Training for emergency responders or HAZMAT teams who take corrective actions during or immediately after a release of a hazardous substance (i.e., a spill or a fire); and

Training for site cleanup workers who perform voluntary or government-mandated cleanup at sites where hazardous substances are present on the land, in the air, or in the groundwater and/or soil.

Both situations can potentially expose employees to hazardous substances that can negatively affect their health and well-being. Both situations require HAZWOPER training.

How to Choose the Right HAZWOPER Course

To choose the right HAZWOPER training for your personnel, this guide will help you answer the following questions:

- What kind of materials or chemicals are regulated as “hazardous substances”?
- What job responsibilities are covered by HAZWOPER Standard?
- How many hours or days of training and field experience are required for each employee?
- Where are the HAZWOPER regulations that apply to these personnel?

There is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all HAZWOPER training. Because they face different situations and hazards, emergency responders and site clean-up workers each need HAZWOPER training that covers their specific responsibilities.
What is a hazardous substance?

In the HAZWOPER regulations, OSHA defines a “hazardous substance” as:


2. Any biologic agent and other disease-causing agent that, after release into the environment and upon exposure, ingestion, inhalation, or assimilation into any person, either directly from the environment or indirectly by ingestion through food chains, will or may reasonably be anticipated to cause death, disease, behavioral abnormalities, cancer, genetic mutation, physiological malfunctions (including malfunctions in reproduction), or physical deformations in such persons or their offspring.

3. Any substance listed by the US Department of Transportation as a hazardous material under 49 CFR 172.101 and appendices.

4. Hazardous wastes as defined under RCRA at 40 CFR 261.3 or any waste that requires use of the Hazardous Waste Manifest.

Workers who will respond to or encounter releases of these substances and workers involved in cleanup of contaminated sites must be trained to the appropriate level under OSHA’s HAZWOPER Standard.

Read on to see the “levels” of HAZWOPER training for responders and cleanup site workers.
Which **HAZWOPER** course is right for me?

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

Required for employees who respond to hazardous substance releases, wherever they happen. Emergency responders jump into action during a release to protect their co-workers and the environment from the hazards of the released material(s).

**IF YOU...**

### AWARENESS

**Level I**

...evacuate and alert appropriate personnel when a release occurs.

- **2 HOUR AWARENESS**
  - (OSH 308)
  - 29 CFR 1910.120(q)(6)(i)

### OPERATIONS

**Level II**

...cover drains, vents, or remotely shut down equipment, but do not try to stop the release.

- **8 HOUR INITIAL**
  - (OSH 309)
  - 29 CFR 1910.120(q)(6)(ii)

### TECHNICIAN

**Level III**

...take aggressive response actions to plug, patch, or otherwise stop the release.

- **24 HOUR INITIAL**
  - Not Offered by Lion
  - 29 CFR 1910.120(q)(6)(iii)

### SPECIALIST

**Level IV**

...respond with technicians to stop the release, coordinate with responders, and need to be the on-site material expert.

- **24 HOUR INITIAL**
  - Not Offered by Lion
  - 29 CFR 1910.120(q)(6)(iv)

- **4 HOUR REFRESHER**
  - (OSH 311)

**Plus, additional specialist competencies (not covered by Lion)**

### INCIDENT COMMANDER

**Level V**

...assume control of the incident scene, and oversee the entire response.

- **24 HOUR INITIAL**
  - Not Offered by Lion
  - 29 CFR 1910.120(q)(6)(v)

- **4 HOUR REFRESHER**
  - (OSH 317)
Which **HAZWOPER** course is right for me?

**SITE CLEANUP OPERATIONS**
Required for personnel who are involved in cleanup and remediation of contaminated sites, known as “uncontrolled hazardous waste sites.”

**IF YOU...**

**SITE WORKER**
...handle materials at a cleanup site that may expose you to hazardous substances.

- **40 HOUR INITIAL (OSH 307)**
  - Plus, 7 days field experience with a trained supervisor.

- **8 HOUR REFRESHER (OSH 305)**

**OCCASIONAL SITE WORKER**
...perform limited tasks at cleanup site (i.e. land surveyor) and only occasionally visit the site.

- **24 HOUR INITIAL (OSH 306)**
  - Plus, 1 day field experience with a trained supervisor.

- **8 HOUR REFRESHER (OSH 305)**

**MANAGER/SUPERVISOR**
...supervise site workers.

- **40 HOUR INITIAL (OSH 307)**
  - Plus, 3 days field experience.

- **8 HOUR REFRESHER (OSH 305)**

**ALREADY RECEIVED 24 HOUR TRAINING?**
Upgrade your occasional site worker training to the 40 hour certification now!

- **16 HOUR UPGRADE (OSH 304)**