

I received the training on the PEAC WMDv5 Decision Support Tool on August 28, 2007, in Houston, TX. The PEAC arrived at my office on August 30, 2007. On Friday, September 7 (exactly a week and a day later), we had the first HAZMAT incident to which we deployed the PEAC.

The MABAS 52 Hazmat Team responded under mutual aid to the Grayville, IL Fire Department. A semi-tractor trailer hauling high-calcium lime caught fire when its load became wet in a rainstorm. The driver received treatment for first and second degree burns causing an endothermic reaction.

When I first responded, I found several members of our Team scouring hazardous materials references trying to identify the substance involved. When I advised the IC that I had the PEAC, the IC advised me to respond to the scene.

At the scene, there was a lot of confusion as to the exact nature of the material involved. The fact that one victim received burns caused us to have an over abundance of caution on how to proceed. When we finally received the correct information on the product carried on the truck, I was able to use the PEAC and advise the IC as to its properties, hazards, and appropriate level of PPE. The IC was initially skeptical of the information because the PEAC was new and untested. However, EPA and the product manufacturer verified the information by phone.

We were able to stand down from our full HAZMAT response and rescind the evacuation order for the surrounding community in Grayville. Needless to say, we have a new-found respect and confidence in the PEAC WMDv5. It is now a routine tool in our HAZMAT response. The MABAS 52 Hazmat Team is made up of volunteers from area fire departments. The Wabash County Health Department is also a member and fills the roles of Safety/Science Officer using the PEAC as our primary reference resource. We also have access to WISER, CAMEO,ALOHA, and MARPLOT on our laptop computer.

The Incident made front page news in "The Navigator and Journal Register," Volume 13-140, Number 5-37, Wednesday, September 12, 2007.

This grant was so beneficial, we applied for another CEDAP grant this year and were fortunate enough to win approval for another technological tool for our HAZMAT Team. In 2009, we should receive a Radiation Detection First Responder Kit.

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