

## Summary

# Regional Incident Survey Team (RIST) Summary

Central-0901-Fixed

## Regional Incident Survey Teams (RIST)

RISTs gather information for the National Hazardous Materials Fusion Center. RISTs are composed of individuals from around the country who are skilled and experienced in hazardous materials (hazmat) response or experienced in the hazmat industry. RIST members are part of a team invited by a local jurisdiction or state authority to conduct a survey of an incident response of interest and record information from the responder's perspective. In no case is the data intended to be used to criticize or condemn response actions, but rather to share lessons learned and smart practices with other emergency responders who may face a similar response.

## Incident Type

Structure fire (industrial/mixed contents)

## Container

Mixed

## Hazardous Material

Acetylene/Miscellaneous

## Overview

This response was to a structure fire that involved some hazardous materials. The fire department responded and initiated a defensive fire attack with resources from several agencies. The fire building was a 4,000-square foot metal building housing a trucking firm. There were no injuries to civilians or response personnel. Units deployed on scene included representatives from the fire service, police department, and county health agency. This incident occurred in a commercial area immediately adjacent to a residential neighborhood in a community of about 7,800 residents. The fire produced a thick plume of dense smoke and also caused the failure of a pressure container (acetylene) that was propelled out of the building through the roof while responders were on scene.



Fire units were able to successfully extinguish the fire after a period of time while maintaining situational awareness of the hazardous materials involved. Fire department cooperation with local law enforcement and public health agencies allowed for continuous monitoring of the smoke plume and water runoff conditions. Community impact from both of these was minimal. Police units were able to advise residents to stay out of the smoke. Natural conditions to an area around the fire building contained runoff and posed no threat to natural resources.

## Lessons Learned

The following lessons were gleaned from responders at this incident and may be applicable to structure fires involving hazardous materials:

- Preplan: know your district, know the businesses, and know the hazards by using inspections, site visits, or preplans
- Inter-agency cooperation: train with all mutual aid departments; include all response agencies such as health, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), law enforcement, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and others to ensure knowledge of equipment and capabilities
- Do not rush in: give consideration to hazardous materials involvement
- Ensure adequate resources are on hand or en route: early considerations include water supply, special equipment needs, decontamination, rehabilitation, and relief
- Consideration of environmental impact: smoke plume and runoff
- Ensure use of proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Be prepared for pressurized cylinder rupture: pressurized cylinder rupture will likely yield a temporary significant increase in volume of fire and pose a projectile hazard
- Good communications are vital to a successful incident

For more information on this and other incidents visit the National Hazardous Materials Fusion Center at <http://www.hazmatfc.com/>