Chemical Agents
University of Miami Emergency Response to Terrorism

Cyanide DECON

- For victims of a cyanide vapor exposure, decontamination should focus on clothing removal and aeration of the victim. In vapor form, cyanide is a non-persistent gas.
- If liquid exposure is possible or the route of exposure is unknown, one should perform whole-body water decontamination.
- If internal contamination is suspected due to ingestion, the victim should undergo gastric lavage as part of the decontamination process. It is important to stress that any returned fluids are highly hazardous and pose a lethal threat to caregivers.

**Ambulatory victims of a cyanide vapor need to remove their clothes to release trapped vapors and further DECON may not be required.**

Cyanide Additional Considerations

- Although cyanide is a potential weapon of mass destruction, it is more likely that first responders will be called to treat a victim from conventional sources. Common situations in which cyanide may be found include (but are not limited to): jewelry stores, where metal plating or etching may occur; mining and ore extraction facilities; autobody (chrome) shops; fabrication shops; and scientific laboratories.
- Responders should be familiar with potential stores of cyanide in their response area and with the appropriate decontamination and treatment protocols for their department.

Riot-control Agents Overview

- Riot-control agents are a group of non-lethal contact or dermal irritants intended to deter individuals from a particular behavior. Many different commercial and non-commercial agents are in this category and vary from “pepper spray” (over-the-counter) to Mace (used by the military and civilian law enforcement).
- These agents are available in a liquid form which is aerosolized or in foams which coat and adhere to the victim.
- We discuss Mace as an example of many different agents available.