

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

In the Matter of Adopting the Columbia)
County Oleoresin Capsicum Aerosol) Order No. 7-2024
Policy)

WHEREAS, in order to provide approved County employees with the option to carry Oleoresin Capsicum Aerosol ("O.C.") spray for the use as a defensive measure against aggressive individuals or animals while performing job duties in the field; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the County to adopt a policy setting forth the terms and conditions associated with the carrying and potential use of O.C. spray by approved County employees;

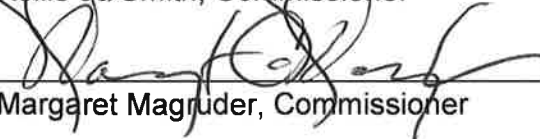
NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the Columbia County Oleoresin Capsicum Aerosol Policy, attached hereto and incorporated herein, is hereby adopted.

Dated this 21 day of February, 2024.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

By: 
Casey Garrett, Chair

By: 
Kellie Jo Smith, Commissioner

By: 
Margaret Magruder, Commissioner

Approved as to form

By: 
Office of County Counsel

COLUMBIA COUNTY OLEORESIN CAPSICUM AEROSOL ("OC") POLICY

EFFECTIVE DATE:

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy applies to all Departments except the Sheriff's Office and the Department of Community Justice. The purpose of this policy is to authorize the issuance of OC aerosol restraint spray ("OC") in order to provide County personnel with an additional option for defending themselves against aggressive individuals or animals while performing County job duties. It is the policy of Columbia County that employees authorized to use OC use it when warranted, in accordance with the guidelines and procedures set forth here.

AUTHORIZED USE OF AEROSOL

Only personnel who have completed the prescribed course of instruction on the use of OC, are authorized to carry or use OC in the course of performing job duties. Such personnel must have individual Department Head and HR approval. This authorization is solely for carrying and use of OC as a self-defense measure, to facilitate the withdrawal from a physical assault by a person or attack by an animal that occurs in the course of performing job duties.

USE CRITERIA

The use of OC is legally justified only when there is a direct threat of physical harm to the employee or others. Prior to using OC, if there is a reasonable opportunity to do so the employee shall consider alternatives such as verbal de-escalation, waiting, retreating or using other available resources and techniques if reasonable, safe and feasible to do so. The employee shall give a verbal warning to the person that OC may be used, and shall provide the person with a reasonable opportunity to comply. Once an attacking person or animal is incapacitated and no longer a threat to persons or property, the use of OC is no longer justified. OC will not be used punitively. OC should not be used as a means to disperse groups of people unless there is a risk of physical harm. OC may be used when reasonably necessary to defend persons. OC can be effective against animals, and it should be considered as an option when dealing with hostile animals.

PROCEDURES FOR USE

Use OC only in a manner consistent with the department approved training. Use of OC should be avoided, if possible, under conditions where it may affect innocent bystanders. OC should not be used in the vicinity of infants unless absolutely necessary, and then care should be taken to minimize exposure of the infant to the spray to the extent reasonable under the circumstances.

INDIVIDUAL AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED FOR OC USE

Employees in Departments subject to this policy may request to be considered for approval to carry OC in the course of performing job duties. Only employees who have previously received approval by the Department Head and HR to use and carry OC are authorized to carry OC. Prior to carrying OC, an approved employee shall complete the required training for doing so. Training will be provided by a

Columbia County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) approved instructor. Training will include review of this Policy and Procedures document, the instructions accompanying the OC container and all other pertinent information deemed necessary by the instructor. Employees must demonstrate a thorough understanding of these three items in order to carry OC. Only OC containers provided by Columbia County shall be carried and used in the course of performing job duties.

EFFECTS OF OC AND FOLLOW UP CARE

When OC Aerosols are used on individuals:

- a. Immediately after spraying a person or animal, employees should retreat to a safe distance from the assailant or attacking animal and call 9-1-1 to request law enforcement assistance.
- b. Employees should encourage bystanders to move to a safe location, as applicable.
- c. Employees should be alert to any indications that an individual needs medical care (e.g., breathing difficulties, gagging, profuse sweating and loss of consciousness). Upon observing these or other medical problems, or if the person requests medical assistance, immediately summon emergency medical aid if it is safe to do so.
- d. If it is safe to do so, continue to monitor targets who have been sprayed for indications of medical problems.
- e. Report all such incidents to your immediate supervisor immediately and provide written report by the end of the next business day.
- f. Employees are under no obligation to provide first aid to the sprayed individual. If it is safe to do so, employees may elect to offer optional first aid:
 1. Employees should wear rubber gloves while assisting an exposed individual.
 2. Indicate to the sprayed individual (or animal owner) that the effects are temporary and encourage them to relax.
 3. Suggest that the individual move to an uncontaminated area and face towards the wind. Air will normally begin reducing the effects of OC within 15 minutes of exposure.
 4. Encourage the individual to avoid rubbing the affected areas, and to rinse with cool water. Recommend that the individual wash affected areas with soap and water.
 5. The individual should remove contaminated clothing and contact lenses, and avoid entering a vehicle, tent, or other enclosure until cleaning is complete.

REPORTING USE OF OC

Use of OC in the performance of employee job duties must be reported. A supervisor must be notified as to its deployment immediately. Staff deploying OC must submit a written incident report no later than the next business day to the supervisor. The supervisor shall notify their Department Head and the Department Head shall notify HR and County Counsel.

In the case of an accidental discharge or equipment malfunction, employees must notify their supervisor as soon as reasonably possible.

REPLACEMENT AND INSPECTION

Employees are responsible to maintain all OC devices issued to them in an operational and charged state, and to request a replacement for a damaged, inoperable, expired, or empty device. OC devices shall be maintained in an operational and charged state by authorized employees or vendors. Employees are responsible for following the manufacturer's instructions for care and storage of the OC container. Employees are responsible for requesting replacement of a damaged, inoperable, or empty device.

Acknowledgment Form

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Columbia County Oleoresin Capsicum Aerosol ("OC") Policy, and that I have read and understand the Policy.

Signature

Printed Name

Date