17th Annual 2026 Regional Hazmat Conference

Cold Zone

May 6th - 8th 2026

Minneapolis Marriott Northwest

Cold Zone 2026 - Regional Hazmat Conference

The 17th Annual 2026 Cold Zone Conference will offer a variety of Hazardous Material courses for first responders of all skill levels. This conference will provide the most recent information available, hands-on workshops and a variety of topics relating to many aspects of today's hazards. Cold Zone will also provide an opportunity to meet other responders from around the region and neighboring states.
Who should attend: Police/Fire/EMS personnel/ First responders and industry leaders who have the desire to work together towards a common goal of protecting our communities from hazardous material incidents through learning and networking.

Registration

Registration can be done on-line at www.coldzone.org. Payment types accepted are credit card or check. Individuals wishing to pay by check are to make the check payable to CEF Safety Services and mail to Cold Zone Conference 13137 Crooked Lake Blvd NW Coon Rapids, MN 55448.

$650 for participants, that includes classes, breakfast Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and lunch on Wednesday and Thursday. Paid by March 20st 2026

$725 for participants, that includes classes, breakfast Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and lunch on Wednesday and Thursday. Paid by April 30st 2026

$850 for participants, that includes classes, breakfast Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and lunch on Wednesday and Thursday. Paid after April 30th 2026

1 Day cost $500, use code 1 Day at payment screen, paid by May 1st 2026

2 Day cost $700, use code 2 Day at payment screen, paid by May 1st 2026

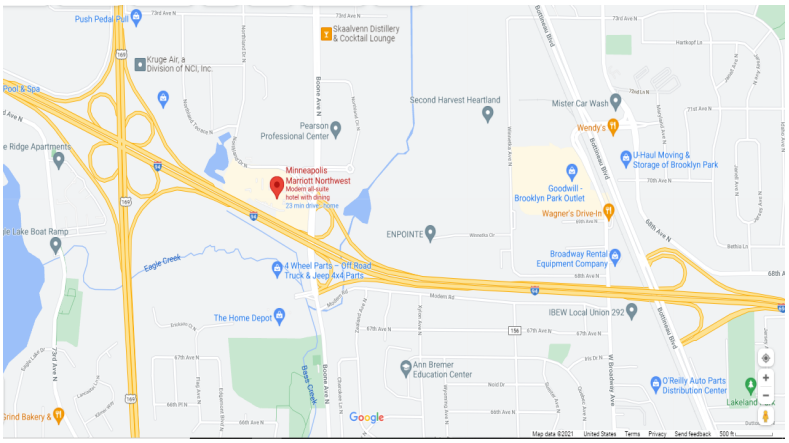
Refund Policy: **Cancelation will result in a refund of the registration fee minus a $100.00 administrative fee.**

Hotel Reservations

The 17th Annual Cold Zone conference will be at the **Minneapolis Marriott Northwest in Brooklyn Park, MN**. Registrants are responsible for making their own hotel reservations. Reservations can be made online at www.marriott.com to reserve your room. Please use the group code "Cold Zone" or ask for the Cold Zone room block. You will need to hold your room with a credit card and for any incidental charges that you may incur.

Rooms are $205.21 including taxes and breakfast.

Hotel reservations must be made no later than April 22nd, 2026. We strongly encourage you to reserve a room as soon as possible as the Cold Zone block of rooms may sell out this year.



Minneapolis Marriott Northwest
7025 Northland Dr N
Brooklyn Park, MN 55428
Phone: (763) 536-8300

Transportation to and from Hotel

Minneapolis/St. Paul International (MSP)

- Distance: 28.9 MI Drive Time ~ 30 minutes

Minneapolis–Saint Paul International Airport (MSP), follow signs for State Hwy 5 W/I-494/Bloomington and merge onto MN-5 W/State Hwy 5 W. Merge onto I-494 W/MN-5 W/State Hwy 5 W. Take exit 10 A to merge onto US-169 N. Take the exit onto I-694 E/I-94 E. Take exit 30 for Boone Ave. Keep right at the fork and merge onto Boone Ave N. Turn left onto Northland Dr N. Turn left at the 1st cross street to stay on Northland Dr N. Turn right Destination will be on the left.

Welcome to the 17th Annual Cold Zone Conference 2026

Tuesday - May 5th

4:00 - 8:00 pm
Early registration

Wednesday - May 6th

8:00 - 9:45 am
Day long classes begin

9:45 - 10:00 am
Morning Break

10:00 - 11:45 am
Classes continue

11:45 - 1:00 pm
Lunch Provided.

1:00 - 2:45 pm
Classes continue

2:45 – 3:00 pm
Afternoon Break

3:00 – 4:45 pm
Classes continue

4:45 pm

Classes concluded - Dinner on your own.

Thursday - May 7th

8:00 - 11:45 am
General Session

11:45 - 1:00 pm
Lunch Provided

1:00 - 2:45 pm
Workshops 1

2:45 - 3:00 pm
Afternoon Break

3:00 - 4:45 pm
Workshops 2

5:00 – 7:00 pm
Exhibitor Social Hour - Food and Beverages Provided.

Friday - May 8th

8:00 - 9:45 am
Workshops 3

9:45 - 10:00 am
Morning Break

10:00 - 11:45 am
Workshops 4

Conference Concludes, see you next year at the 2027 Cold Zone

Thank you to our Sponsors:

OAI Opportunity Advancement Innovation in Workforce Development

NIH National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

PEAC Aristatek WMD

Minnesota Board of Firefighter Education and Training MBFTE

Minnesota Public Safety State Emergency Response Teams MNTF-1 55th CST CAT/ERT MART BOMB SQUAD

BNSF Railway

Thermo Scientific

WCEC Hazmat Response

In Conjunction with: Minnesota Regional Chemical Assessment & Emergency Response

Full Day Classes - 8:00 am Wednesday

Block A - Griffin G510 and Thermo Gemini Basic User for Hazmat Techs (Vacco)

In this class we will talk about how the FLIR Griffin G510 and Thermo Scientific Gemini Operate and how to get the most out of these instruments and where they belong on the hierarchy chart for tools to be used on a Hazmat scene.

Block B - Chemical Industry Outreach Workshop (CIOW) - FBI

Chemical Industry Outreach Workshop (CIOW), a one- day FBI led familiarization of improvised explosives production. The workshop will have a morning "classroom" session of WMD topics, improvised explosives, and explosive precursor chemicals. The afternoon session will demonstrate explosives with an emphasis on illustrating the teaching points from the morning session.

Block C - Oxidizers and Swimming Pool Chemicals/Corrosives (Murdock)

Oxidizers are highly energetic chemicals that react violently with many other materials and may be involved in fires that are extremely difficult to extinguish. Swimming pool and spa chemicals are a class of inorganic oxidizers (DOT Hazard Class 5.1) that are commonly used in private, municipal, hotel and school pools and water treatment facilities. Swimming pool chemistry is discussed in terms of recognizing what chemicals and equipment you may expect to see and what has gone wrong when your hazardous materials response team has been summoned to an evacuation at a local pool. Several videos have been prepared that show violent reactions when incompatible materials are mixed with common pool chemicals. Organic peroxides, including hydrogen peroxide, (DOT Hazard Class 5.2) are widely used in pulp and paper manufacture, sanitizing surfaces in food processing plants, a variety of polymerization processes and synthetic organic reactions. Physical and chemical properties (The HazMat Dirty Dozen) and reactivity of organic peroxides are discussed and observed with video demonstrations. Students will learn to assess chemical hazards and risks using the APIE risk assessment model (Analyze, Plan, Implement and Evaluate) and develop the appropriate tactical response to those hazards during spills and fires involving inorganic and organic oxidizers in compliance with the advanced chemical risk assessment and analysis competency outlined in Chapter 38 of NFPA 470 (2022). This knowledge will allow students to provide their IC with recommendations for PPE, Zones and Perimeters Delineation, Monitoring, Decontamination, Respiratory Protection, Site Safety Plan, Evacuation vs Shelter-in-Place, etc.

The topic of corrosives includes a large category of compounds used in industrial applications, including inorganic acids and bases, organic acids and bases and acidic and basic gases. According to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Administration, in 2024 there were approximately 12,000 DOT incidents involving spills of corrosive chemicals in transportation. This class will briefly review common terminology describing corrosives, including the definition of acid and base, concentration, acid and base strength, pH, and hands on demonstrations of Heat of Solution, Heat of Dilution and neutralization. The risk-based response process (APIE) will be used to analyze hazards of corrosives, which include corrosivity, toxicity, oxidizer, flammability and reactivity. Incidents involving spills of corrosives will be reviewed to provide students with an opportunity to develop strategy and tactics

(plan) to mitigate corrosives incidents. There will be emphasis on the unique toxicity of hydrofluoric acid and emergency medical treatment for exposure to HF. Nitric acid is a strong acid and a powerful oxidizer and frequently reacts with metals and organic material to afford nitrogen dioxide. The delayed toxicity of nitrogen dioxide will be discussed. Some demonstrations will be conducted in class

Block D - Hazmat Start to Finish (55th CST)

Session 1: 0800-0945: Introduction, Modeling, and Reconnaissance.

Session 2: 1000-1145: Physical Properties and HAZMAT Risk Assessment.

Session 3: 1300-1445: Biological Agents Overview, Bio Labs, Bio Detection

Session 4: 1500-1645: Casualty Extraction

General Session - 8:00 am - 11:45 Thursday

Mind the Gap

During this 4-hour presentation, learn how to talk to the different generations in your organization. Learn how language has changed and will continue to evolve. Learn how the words you use are different from other generations.

Workshop #1 - 1:00 pm Thursday

1A - First Due Monitoring and Detection (Baxter)
This course will prepare hazmat technicians and special operations personnel to employ a full suite of hazmat/CBRN detection devices and air monitoring instruments in an integrated manner. This course will focus on results interpretation and decision making using multiple technologies to help make command decisions.

1B - Pseudoscience and Myths of Haz Mat V3.0 (The HazMat Guys) Part 1 of 2
Abstract
This updated version of our popular myth-busting session explores persistent pseudoscience within the hazardous materials response world. Participants will dissect long-held beliefs, outdated "rules of thumb," and misunderstood safety protocols that continue to influence training and operations. Through historical analysis, scientific evaluation, and compelling demonstrations (live or video), we'll expose the roots of misinformation and separate fact from folklore. Attendees will leave better equipped to challenge unsupported claims and elevate the credibility of their response decisions.

Objectives
By the end of this session, participants will be able to:
Critically assess hazmat information for scientific validity and operational relevance.
Trace the historical origins of several prevalent hazmat myths.
Identify the factual basis (if any) behind each myth and understand its modern implications.

1C - Rad 101 – Understanding Radiation Operations and Safety (North)
This workshop will give the responders from Awareness to Technician the ability to work radiation safely and confidently, using the proper meter and understand what the monitor is telling you.

1D - Chemical Assisted Suicide: Rescue versus Body Recovery (Murdock).
Chemical assisted suicide (CAS) is one method used to terminate one's life. A toxic chemical may be ingested, injected or inhaled using a combination of chemicals to produce toxic gases such as carbon monoxide, phosphine, hydrogen sulfide, etc. In particular, there is a risk of exposure to emergency responders to the hazards posed by hydrogen sulfide and the corrosive chemicals used to produce hydrogen sulfide. In our previous work (T.O. Murdock and C. Weber, 04Sep2014) we reported data generated from a series of experiments involving the generation of hydrogen sulfide in vehicles. The experiments were predicated on the observation that most of the suicide incidents were successful and involved a body recovery. More recently, there have been reports of attempted chemical suicide where the victim is still viable, therefore, the objective for emergency responders is a rescue operation rather than a body recovery. As a result, emergency responders, paramedics, ambulance crews and emergency room personnel may be contaminated or cross-contaminated by hydrogen sulfide and/or the chemical used to prepare hydrogen sulfide.
Members of the NSHMRT and toxicologists from the Poison Control

CPKC

Center at HCMC have conducted a series of experiments to determine; (1) level of contamination to CPC and TO for firefighters making the rescue, (2) concentration versus time of hydrogen sulfide off gassing from the victim's clothing, and (3) the concentration of hydrogen off gassing from the surface of a Rescue Randy. This presentation will share the results of our experiments and provide guidelines for initial emergency medical treatment of the victim, treatment during transportation to the hospital and treatment in the emergency room. Based on the results of our experiments we will also share information to determine if decontamination of the victim and emergency responders is warranted.

1E - Hybrid Decon Train-the-Trainer Part 1 of 2 (Dahlgren Decon)
This decontamination training blends classroom instruction with hands-on learning and practical exercises, including demonstrations with a variety of potential chemical threats and simulants. Return to your team an expert in Hybrid Decon and be ready to train. Students will also learn how to mix Dahlgren Decon.

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Workshop #2 - 3:00 pm Thursday

2A - Emergency Response Decision Support System (ERDSS) Updates (Baxter)

This course will prepare personnel to efficiently utilize the Emergency Response Decision Support System (ERDSS) in hazardous materials, explosives, and fire incidents. The Emergency Response Decision Support System (ERDSS), designed in partnership with the Hazard3 team, is a free computer program designed for emergency response and military personnel. This course includes modules on setting-up ERDSS; theory behind ERDSS look-up tables, calculators, and decision support tools; using ERDSS in planning, training, and operations; and scenario-based exercises.

2B - Pseudoscience and Myths of Haz Mat V3.0 (The HazMat Guys) Part 2 of 2

Abstract

This updated version of our popular myth-busting session explores persistent pseudoscience within the hazardous materials response world. Participants will dissect long-held beliefs, outdated "rules of thumb," and misunderstood safety protocols that continue to influence training and operations. Through historical analysis, scientific evaluation, and compelling demonstrations (live or video), we'll expose the roots of misinformation and separate fact from folklore. Attendees will leave better equipped to challenge unsupported claims and elevate the credibility of their response decisions.

Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

Critically assess hazmat information for scientific validity and operational relevance.

Trace the historical origins of several prevalent hazmat myths.

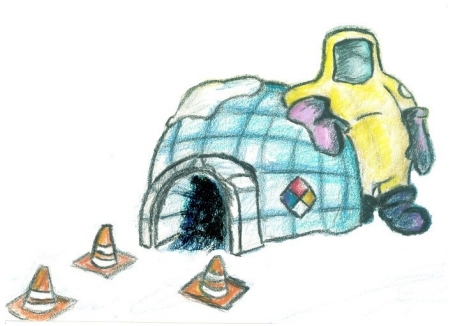
Identify the factual basis (if any) behind each myth and understand its modern implications.

2C - AP4C – Understanding the Operation and Use (Sloan)

This workshop will give the responders the ability to work with the Proengn AP4C and what the instrument is telling you.

2D - Chemical Reactions for Beginners (Murdock).

Thousands of chemical reactions are conducted every day in industrial processes and academic and industrial laboratories to produce useful products for society. NFPA 470 (2022), Chapter 38.3.3 (Competencies for Hazardous Materials technicians with an Advanced Chemical Risk Assessment and Analysis Specialty) defines specific reaction types that are most frequently utilized to synthesize products. This class uses a hands-on approach to demonstrate and observe sensory evidence of a chemical reaction. Attendees will be provided with a variety of chemicals to conduct several small-scale chemical reactions, record their observations of a chemical reaction and share their observations with the class. Software and various references will be reviewed to predict and/or document potential reactions when two or more chemicals are mixed or spilled at a hazardous materials incident.



2E - Hybrid Decon Train-the-Trainer Part 2 of 2 (Dahlgren Decon)

This decontamination training blends classroom instruction with hands-on learning and practical exercises, including demonstrations with a variety of potential chemical threats and simulants. Return to your team an expert in Hybrid Decon and be ready to train. Students will also learn how to mix Dahlgren Decon.

Workshop #3 - 8:00 am Friday

3A - First Due Monitoring and Detection (Dr. Baxter)

This course will prepare hazmat technicians and special operations personnel to employ a full suite of hazmat/CBRN detection devices and air monitoring instruments in an integrated manner. This course will focus on results interpretation and decision making using multiple technologies to help make command decisions.

3B - Battery update: Where are we today? (The Hazmat Guys)

Abstract

This 90-minute program examines the rapidly evolving challenge of lithium-ion battery fires, with a focus on trends identified in New York City and nationwide. Participants will review incident data across e-mobility devices, consumer electronics, residential energy storage, and electric vehicles, highlighting both charging and non-charging fire scenarios. The session details the hazards of thermal runaway, contamination risks, explosive fire dynamics, and the unique operational challenges faced by responders. It explores advanced suppression tactics, specialized equipment, and emerging technologies while underscoring the importance of public outreach and targeted community engagement. Legislative, insurance, and logistical considerations are discussed to provide a comprehensive framework for prevention, suppression, and post-incident management in this high-risk hazard environment.

Learning Objectives

Recognize hazards, causes, and patterns of lithium-ion battery fires.
Apply best practices for suppression, overhaul, and contamination control.
Assess new technologies and regulations for fire risk mitigation.

3C - Cross Sensitivities (Ziegler / Vacco)

How to take advantage of cross sensitivities and get the most out of our monitors.
Learning Objectives:
Better understanding of an air monitoring, by explaining the how they work.
Understanding that a cross sensitivity is not just a wrong reading and how to take advantage of that.
How to get more definitive answers at call and not just tell our customers everything is good now.

3D - 4 Gas / PID Monitors: What and How (Ryks)

Sick and tired of walking around waiting for the monitor in your hand to beep and blink? In this 90 min course we will discuss the sensor technologies used in a standard 4 gas / PID and deep dive the gases they're hoping to detect. If all goes well, maybe those blinks and beeps will make more sense.

3E - PEAC Software Tutorial - Tech Ref, Modeling, Situational Awareness & ICS-NIMS (Scott Bunning)

PEAC software is the leading Hazmat technical reference and modeling software for emergency planners and first-responders in the world. The class will cover a variety of Hazmat incidents/topics and use PEAC's extensive and intuitive feature set to help address these situations. This course will illustrate how PEAC can provide technical reference and situational analysis as well as modeling and incident reporting. The instructor will review how to expedite the completion of NIMS ICS forms through automation and how to leverage integrated technologies such as Google Earth. Included is an in-depth look at some of the PEAC computation tools (i.e. Explosion Calculator, Fireball Calculator, PAD (Plume) Calculator). Upon completion students will know how to access, use, and distribute the data included in PEAC, and how to apply the calculation and situational analysis tools to their emergency planning and response operations. The course will include scenarios based on real incidents, and will include a review of PEAC's extensive self-training resources to reinforce this class long after the show

Workshop #4 - 10:00 am Friday

4A - Decon Strategies (Dr. Baxter)
There have been major changes on the way that decontamination is employed in hazmat/CBRN events over the past decade. Prior to these changes, the decontamination process had remained stagnant since WWI. With the advent of new science-based practices, confusion has often occurred when determining what approach to apply and when. This course focuses on an overarching decontamination strategy, with off-ramps along the way based upon a risk-based evaluation of the incident. Topics to be covered include: process selection (wet, dry, air-based, etc.) based upon chemical; dwell times based upon chemical-decontaminant/disinfectant; appropriate applications for skin, PPE, equipment, and area; hygiene; and, verification of decontamination effectiveness.

NIH National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

4B - Dynamic Hazmat Decision Making (The HazMat Guys)
Abstract:
This immersive 90-minute session moves beyond static lectures to engage responders in "The Digital Tabletop," utilizing the NERHD gaming engine. Rather than reviewing hypothetical case studies, participants will actively construct and manage hazardous materials responses in real-time. By drawing specific variables, Quantity, Chemical, Location, and Injects, teams will be challenged to assign roles, predict chemical behaviors, select appropriate metering strategies, and determine the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
The core of this training lies in adaptability. Once a strategy is set, instructors will modify a single variable, such as the location or a specific inject, forcing the team to re-evaluate their response. This dynamic approach highlights how minor changes in incident conditions can drastically alter safety requirements and operational outcomes.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this training, participants will be able to:
Analyze complex hazmat scenarios by correlating specific chemical properties with environmental locations and injects to predict likely incident outcomes.
Demonstrate the ability to select appropriate metering equipment and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) based on a randomly generated set of hazard variables.
Evaluate the impact of changing variables by identifying how a shift in location, quantity, or external conditions necessitates a change in response strategy.
Formulate an Incident Action Plan (IAP) framework within a team setting, effectively assigning jobs and performance roles based on the scenario provided.
Identify the limitations of a "one-size-fits-all" response by explicitly contrasting how PPE and metering needs change when a single scenario variable is altered.

4C - First Entry, is it Recon, Sampling, or Rescue (Ziegler / Vacco)
Do you have a plan for your first entry? Is the plan go in do everything and then go home? In this class we will talk about the first entry, whether it is a Recon only, getting samples, rescuing a victim or responder or is a combination (Hybrid) of one or more of these.

4D - Biological Health Monitoring Dr. Autrey / Quinn
The importance of biomonitoring of responders and key things to look for.

4E - Case Study (BNSF)
During this class you will learn about Intermodal train car accidents and issues, the resources required to solve the problem and the After Actions to help prevent and ease the next possible incident.

11:45 am

Conference Concludes

Have a safe trip home.

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Workshops

2026 COLDZONE HAZMAT CONFERENCE

Wednesday May 6th

	7:00 – 8:00 am	**Continental Breakfast**			
Workshop Number		**Block A**	**Block B**	**Block D**	**Block E**
Full Day Courses	8:00 – 9:45 am	Griffin G510 and Thermo Gemini Basic User for Hazmat Techs Vacco Part 1 of 4	Chemical Industry Outreach Workshop (CIOW) FBI Part 1 of 4	**Oxidizers and Swimming Pool Chemicals/Corrosives** Murdock Part 1 of 4	Hazmat – Start to Finish 55th CST Part 1 of 4
	9:45 – 10:00 am	**Morning Break**			
	10:00 – 11:45 am	Griffin G510 and Thermo Gemini Basic User for Hazmat Techs Vacco Part 2 of 4	Chemical Industry Outreach Workshop (CIOW) FBI Part 2 of 4	**Oxidizers and Swimming Pool Chemicals/Corrosives** Murdock Part 1 of 4	Hazmat – Start to Finish 55th CST Part 2 of 4
	11:45 – 1:00 pm	**Lunch Break – Lunch Provided**			
	1:00 – 2:45 pm	Griffin G510 and Thermo Gemini Basic User for Hazmat Techs Vacco Part 3 of 4	Chemical Industry Outreach Workshop (CIOW) FBI Part 3 of 4	**Oxidizers and Swimming Pool Chemicals/Corrosives** Murdock Part 3 of 4	Hazmat – Start to Finish 55th CST Part 3 of 4
	2:45 – 3:00 pm	**Afternoon Break**			
	3:00 – 4:45 pm	Griffin G510 and Thermo Gemini Basic User for Hazmat Techs Vacco Part 4 of 4	Chemical Industry Outreach Workshop (CIOW) FBI Part 4 of 4	**Oxidizers and Swimming Pool Chemicals/Corrosives** Murdock Part 4 of 4	Hazmat – Start to Finish 55th CST Part 4 of 4
	4:45	**End of first day - Dinner on your own**			

Thursday May 7th

	7:00 – 8:00 am	**Continental Breakfast**				
General Session #1	8:00 – 9:45 am	**Mind the Gap Part 1** John and John Makin				
	9:45 – 10:00 am	**Morning Break**				
General Session #2	10:00 – 11:45 am	**Mind the Gap Part 2** John and John Makin				
	11:45 – 1:00 pm	**Lunch Break – Lunch Provided**				
Workshop Number		**Block A**	**Block B**	**Block C**	**Block D**	**Block E**
#1	1:00 – 2:45 pm	: First Due Monitoring and Detection Dr. Baxtor	Pseudoscience and Myths of Haz Mat V3.0 The Hazmat Guys Part 1 of 2	Rad 101 North	Chemical Assisted Suicide: Rescue versus Body Recovery Dr. Murdock	Hybrid Decon First Line
	2:45 – 3:00 pm	**Afternoon Break**				
#2	3:00 – 4:45 pm	Emergency Response Decision Support System (ERDSS) Dr. Baxtor	Pseudoscience and Myths of Haz Mat V3.0 The Hazmat Guys Part 2 of 2	AP4C Proengin	Chemical Reactions for Beginners Dr. Murdock	Hybrid Decon First Line
	5:00 – 7:00 pm	**Exhibitor Social Hour – Food & Beverages Provided**				

****Multi-part courses are shaded****

Cold Zone 2026 - Regional Hazmat Conference

	2026 COLDZONE HAZMAT CONFERENCE					
	Friday May th					
	7:00 – 8:00 am	Continental Breakfast				
Workshop Number		**Block A**	**Block B**	**Block C**	**Block D**	**Block E**
#3	8:00 – 9:45 am	Decon Strategies Dr. Baxtor	Battery update: Where are we today? The Hazmat Guys	Cross Sensitivities – How to use them Ziegler / Vacco	4 Gas / PID Monitors: What and How Ryks	PEAC Bunning
	9:45 – 10:00 am	Morning Break				
#4	10:00 – 11:45 am	PPE Selection Dr. Baxtor	Dynamic Hazmat Decision Making The Hazmat Guys	First Entry, is it Recon, Sampling, or Rescue Ziegler / Vacco	Biological Health Monitoring Dr. Autrey / Quinn	Railroad ER Preparedness – Intermodal Hazards BNSF / CP
	11:45	Conference Concludes – Thank you for attending and have a safe trip home!!				

****Multi-part courses are shaded****

BNSF RAILWAY

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PEAC ARISTATEK WMD

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in WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

NIH National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

Instructors

Dr. Allen Autrey

Dr. Christina Baxter

Dr. Baxter is a partner in Hazard3, LLC and the CEO of Emergency Response TIPS, LLC which provide practical, evidence-based solutions for emergency response through the development of next generation tools for enhanced situational awareness and responder safety and instructional design materials for instructor-led and web-based programs in the areas of CBRNE, hazardous materials, and clandestine laboratory response. Prior to forming Emergency Response TIPS, LLC, Dr. Baxter was the program manager over the CBRNE program at the Department of Defense's Combating Terrorism Technical Support Office where she was responsible for managing domestic and international CBRNE research and development programs to combat terrorism on behalf of the U.S. Government, as well as overseeing the international CBRNE agreements with Australia, Canada, Israel, Singapore, and the United Kingdom. Dr. Baxter is the chairperson for the National Fire Protection Association standards for CBRNE personal protective equipment. She is also a committee member for several other standards in the protection and hazardous materials operations arenas. She has greater than 20 years experience in the CBRNE/hazardous materials emergency response community.

Scott Bunning

Toby Frost

Toby Frost retired from the Lafayette Fire Department in Indiana as a Battalion Chief. He was a Team Leader for their HazMat Team and the founder of their Illicit Lab Response Team. He was a department instructor for fire fighters, recruits, and local industry teaching fire science, technical rescue and hazardous materials. He is a continuing lecturer at Purdue University in the School of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences. He has presented across the country at hazmat conferences including the IAFC International Hazardous Materials Conference, The Hot Zone, and at the Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC). As a contract instructor Toby has helped train federal, state and local responders across the country and internationally. Toby serves as a HazMat Manager for FEMA -INTF-1. Toby is a principal member of the NFPA Hazardous Materials Committee. He is a current Board Member for the Indiana Alliance of Hazardous Materials Responders. BC Frost is a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University with a BS in Fire Science Engineering Technology and of the NFA Executive Fire Officer Program. In 2018, Toby was recognized by the IAFC Hazardous Materials Committee with their “Level A” Award and in 2019, by the Hot Zone Conference with the “In the Zone Award” and in 2024 as the “Dieter Heinz Instructor of the Year”.

Thomas Murdock, Ph.D.

Thomas O. Murdock obtained a BS degree in Chemistry from the University of Michigan (1973), a Ph.D. from the University of North Dakota (1977) and postdoctoral studies were completed at the Max Plank Institut fur Kohlenforschung (Mulheim, Germany) during 1978 and the University of Minnesota Chemistry Department (1979 - 1980). Industrial experience includes working as a Research Scientist at the H. B. Fuller Company in St. Paul, MN (1980 – 1991) and as a Research Chemist at ALZA Corporation (1991 - 2000). The research activities at Fuller involved the synthesis of monomers and polymers for adhesive, sealant and coating applications. The most recent experience is at Medtronic, Inc. (3 / 01 to 4/8/2011) where he was a Director of Environmental Health and Safety at the Medtronic World Headquarters Campus in Minneapolis, MN, a Research Chemist in the Polymer Laboratory and the Laboratory Manager. Retired volunteer firefighter (8 ½ years). Courses taught and developed over the past 15 years include the Chemistry of Hazardous Materials, Hazardous Materials Operations Class, Hazardous Materials Technician Class, Emergency Response to Terrorism Awareness Level Class, Incident Response to Terrorist Bombings, Public Protective Action Levels, Minnesota HazMat Regional Response Team Support Class and specialist classes in Anhydrous Ammonia and Chlorine, Water Treatment Chemicals and Air Monitoring. Was the Site Safety Coordinator at the ALZA Corporation and taught Hazard Communication Classes, Flammable and Combustible Liquid Classes, Compressed Gas Classes, Corrosives Classes, Decontamination Classes, and several classes on the safe handling of specific drugs. Thomas O. Murdock has been a speaker at American Chemical Society Meetings (Division of Chemical Health and Safety), the Midwest Hazardous Materials Emergency Responder Conference and the COLDZONE Conference.

Bobby Salvesen
I spent 13 years in Squad 288 in Special Operations of the New York City Fire Department. During that time I gained valuable experience and certification as at minimum a technician level of High angle rope rescue, collapse, confined space, rigging, extrication, diving, shoring, and firefighter removal. I also am a current member of the NY-TF1 FEMA resource as both a Rescue Technician and a Haz Mat Specialist. After my tenure in the Rescue branch of the Fire Department, I transferred to the Hazardous Materials Command. I attained my Hazardous Materials Specialist certification for the FDNY in 2015. I instruct for the Nassau County Fire Service Academy as a Deputy Chief Instructor for the last 9 years. I have taught Hazardous Materials and Confined Space, along with various firematic classes. My volunteer career is ongoing, and has been one of the most rewarding experiences in my life. I joined the East Meadow Volunteer Fire Department in 1994 gaining experience in ranks from Firefighter to Chief, going through the company level ranks 3 times, and recently went through the ranks as Chief of Department of a Department that has roughly 300 members. I am currently a member of the Training Committee, teaching both new members and Line Officers the ins and outs of the job.

Jake Ryks
Jake Ryks is a Firefighter / HazMat Specialist assigned to Squad 1 / HazMat 1 at the Saint Paul Fire Department and the owner of HAZARD CLASS: Training and Consulting. He is the social media and online learning manager of The HazMat Guys, the host of the HAZARD CLASS podcast and one of the co-hosts of The HazMat Guys podcast.

Luke Sloan
Luke entered the Fire Service in 1997 and the Hazmat World in 2005 with a focus on gas and vapor detection. He currently serves as the US Sales Director for Proengin and is the current Special Operations Chief for the Black Rock City Fire Department.

Mike Vacco
Mike has been with the Spring Lake Park Fire Dept. for over 20 years and is currently a Captain on the volunteer side, I have also held the ranks of Leiutenant and FAO. I have been a member of the North Metro Chemical Assessment Team for 18 years as a Technician and Monitors Specialist. Since September of 2023 I have been with Bay West an Environmental Cleanup company based in Minnesota were I do training, safety and hazmat spill response. I also instruct Hazmat for Anoka Hennepin Technical College, Century College, and the University of Minnesota. I am certified by the State of Minnesota as a Instructor II, Fire Officer II, Fire apparatus operator, Fire Fighter II, Hazmat Technician, and Master EVT Technician.

Kevin Ziegler
Capt. Kevin Ziegler, 23yr member of the Minneapolis Fire Department. Currently Captain of L9 - Hazmat Group Leader A-Shift Hazmat Coordinator for Minneapolis Fire Department State Hazmat Chemical Assessment Team 20 yr Member of Minnesota Task Force 1 USA&R, Rescue Squad Leader Hazmat Instructor and IMT Member for STARS. Emergency Response Tech Rescue instructor - Rope Rescue, Confined Space, Trench, and Structural Collapse.

2026 Regional Hazmat Conference

Cold Zone Conference
13137 Crooked Lake Blvd NW
Coon Rapids, MN 55448

May 6th - 8th 2026

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