

# b • safe BULLETIN



FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE NIGHT SAFETY SHUTTLE AND OTHER CAMPUS SAFETY PROGRAMS, CALL OUR B-SAFE HOTLINE AT 510-642-7233 (510-64B-SAFE)

## **MACE & PEPPER SPRAY**

*Before purchasing your canister of Mace or Pepper Spray (hereafter referred to as tear gas), you should be aware of the laws concerning its use as well as other issues related to the physical effects of tear gas on human beings.*

### *Physical Effects - Mace*

Mace has six physiological effects that may be experienced:

- Central Nervous System: headache, dizziness, and extreme general discomfort.
- Chest: tight feeling in upper respiratory system, coughing.
- Eyes: tearing and burning.
- Mouth: accelerated secretion of saliva.
- Nose: discharge, burning, irritation.
- Skin: burning and stinging feeling on surface nerve endings on the face.

### *Physical Effects - Pepper Spray*

Pepper Spray has four physiological effects that may be experienced:

- Eyes: tearing, involuntary closing or complete closing due to dilation of the eye capillaries. Eyes will appear red/bloodshot for 30 to 60 minutes. People wearing eyeglasses or contact lenses will be equally affected.
- Respiratory System: immediate inflammation, including swelling of the throat lining which can restrict the airway size. Respiratory functions return to normal within 10 to 45 minutes.
- The airway will be open enough to allow for sufficient oxygen flow for survival.

- Due to the reduced airway flow, the person will probably not receive enough oxygen to continue fighting or other sustained physical exertion.
- Temporary paralysis of the larynx.
- Uncontrollable coughing, retching, and gasping for air with a gagging sensation in the throat.
- Effect on the skin: inflammation of the exposed skin with a burning sensation.
- Effects on muscle coordination: Pepper Spray exposure may cause a person to lose balance due to the effect of Pepper Spray on vision.

Because Pepper Spray causes a number of physiological effects on a person—even those with elevated pain tolerance due to prior use of alcohol and/or other drugs—it is different than Mace, which relies mainly on pain compliance. Individuals, such as the mentally disturbed or those under the influence of intoxicants, who have a high tolerance to pain, are still subject to the inflammatory effects of Pepper Spray. It is important to understand that tear gas does not paralyze. Your attacker may still be able to walk, run, or try to grab you.

### *What to Do IMMEDIATELY After Using Your Spray*

- Get out of the area! Run in the opposite direction of your attacker if possible.
- When you are safe, tell your local law enforcement agency (if on campus call UCPD at 911) about the attack.

This is very important because it may help police apprehend the attacker, and prevent attacks on others.



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INFORMATION!**

### *Legislative Issues*

The following persons may not purchase/carry/use tear gas products:

- Persons convicted of a felony or any crime involving an assault under the laws of the United States, of the State of California, or any other state, government, or country. Any person convicted of misuse of tear gas.
- Persons addicted to any narcotic drug.
- Persons under the age of 18 (persons 16 or older may carry tear gas with the written consent of their parent or guardian).

### *Misuse of Tear Gas*

Use of tear gas or a tear gas weapon, EXCEPT in self-defense, can be a felony. (California Penal Code Section 12403.7 (a) (8)) The local District Attorney has the discretion to file misdemeanor or felony charges. Use of tear gas against a peace officer engaged in official duties is a felony.

The following are possible sanctions for misuse:

- Up to three years in state prison; or
- Up to one year in county jail; or
- Fine up to \$1,000; or
- Both fine and imprisonment.

### *Carrying Tear Gas Aboard An Airplane*

Tear gas may not be carried on a plane, even for self-defense purposes. In addition to commercial aircraft, this applies to:

- Privately owned and operated aircraft
- To persons who attempt to ship tear gas in luggage
- To the area from the security gate to the air craft gate

Carrying Tear Gas aboard an airplane is a federal offense. The following are possible sanctions for this violation:

- A civil penalty of up to \$10,000
- An additional criminal fine of up to \$25,000

In addition to the civil penalty and criminal fine, you could also be sent to federal prison for up to five years.

### *First Aid and Decontamination Procedures*

If you are accidentally sprayed, or if someone else is sprayed accidentally, the following are some first aid procedures that may help:

- Avoid panic.
- Do not rub the face. This will aggravate the pain already being experienced.
- The best immediate treatment is to expose the person to fresh air, a breeze if possible. A fan can also be used.
- Flush the affected area with cool water either from the tap or a garden hose.
- Clean the affected area with non-oil or cold cream based soap. Do not use salves or greases on exposed area because it will trap tear gas particles or OC resin onto the skin.
- If eyes are exposed, flush copiously with cool, fresh water for 15 minutes.
- If you wear contact lenses, remove them carefully once hands are thoroughly clean.
- An ophthalmic examination should be performed by a physician if irritation or pain persists after 15 minutes of flushing with water.
- Clothing which is contaminated with tear gas should be removed immediately and, if indoors, placed in a sealed plastic bag or container.
- Persons assisting the subject should wear rubber gloves to avoid residual contamination.
- If any irritation or pain persists after decontamination procedures, a physician should examine the exposed area.

## **BSAFE TIP:**

**IF YOU PLAN TO USE  
MACE OR PEPPER  
SPRAY FOR  
SELF-DEFENSE, BE  
PREPARED TO USE IT.  
HAVE THE CANISTER  
OUT OF YOUR  
BACK-PACK AND IN  
HAND, WITH FINGER  
ON THE TRIGGER,  
WHILE WALKING.**