

**WHAT IS CHIT- THE
CHEMICAL HAZARD
INFORMATION TEAM?**

The Chemical Hazard Information Team, or CHIT, was created in 1989 by Environmental Emergency Services, Inc., (EES) to further the organization's goal of assisting counties in responding to all types of environmental emergencies.

CHIT is a voluntary response team that serves as a resource for fire departments in Chemung, Steuben, and Schuyler Counties during a hazardous materials event. CHIT may help the local fire chief and/or a Hazardous Materials Response Team to determine the identity of an unknown substance, help determine the level of personal protective equipment needed to enter a hazardous atmosphere, help to determine the potential reactions should two or more chemical substances mix during a release, or help determine how a chemical might react when involved in a fire.

Chit Volunteers are recruited from local industries, colleges and universities, and all possess some type of expertise in science or the hazardous materials handling/response field. Team members generally have worked in the areas of chemistry, environmental engineering, biology, toxicology, industrial safety and other related fields.

CHIT members are indemnified by EES, Inc. and generally work in groups.

*For More Information on CHIT,
Please Contact any of the
Following Offices:*

**CHEMUNG COUNTY
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:
103 WASHINGTON STREET
ELMIRA, NY 14901
PH: 607-737-2096
FAX: 607-737-2098**

**STEBEN COUNTY
EMERGENCY SERVICES:
6979 RUMSEY ST EXT
BATH, NY 14810
PH: 607-664-2700
FAX: 607-776-3334**

**SCHUYLER COUNTY
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:
106 TENTH STREET
WATKINS GLEN, NY 14891
PH: 607-535-8200
FAX: 607-535-8201**



CHIT
Chemical Hazard Information Team
A Division of
**ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCY
SERVICES**
OF
**STEBEN, CHEMUNG AND
SCHUYLER COUNTIES**



**To Provide Technical
Advice During Chemical
Incidents, such as
Hazardous Materials Spills
Caused by Transportation
Accidents, Industrial
Releases or
Laboratory Spills.**



WHAT CAN I EXPECT IF I JOIN THE CHEMICAL HAZARD INFORMATION TEAM?

After a Team member is recruited, s/he has an interview with team members, and is accepted to join the Team. Team members are then trained by the corporation, and are added to the CHIT Contact List when they are ready to become active members.

Once a team member is active, he or she may be contacted whenever the CHIT is requested by a fire chief. This is a voluntary service, based on the members' availability when the need arises. The goal is to have a team of three members respond to a call.

Team members are also invited to attend meetings, lectures and training opportunities. Some of the opportunities that have been offered in the past include:

-Instrumentation demonstrations- members train with the latest technologies employed by area fire departments.

-Regional Consortium meetings- members keep informed on haz-mat activities in Western NY, and what equipment is being purchased and utilized by other counties in our region.

-Training Exercises- members put their skills to the test by responding to a simulated haz-mat release. Some exercises are small, discussion based trainings, while others are large "full scale/full deployment" events.



When CHIT has been requested by a fire chief or Hazardous Materials Response Team, the members will be called by the local 911 Communications Center. The 911 operator will ask if the member is available to respond. If the member is willing and able, the operator will give the member some specific information regarding response location, including directions, and a synopsis of the incident. Every effort is made to continue contacting members until at least three members confirm that they will respond. Members will also be asked to estimate their time of arrival to the response location. Members will never be asked to expose themselves to any hazardous material or use any equipment with which they are not familiar. Member safety is paramount.

CHIT OBJECTIVES

1. To recruit experts in chemistry, fire science, safety, toxicology, hazardous waste management, and other disciplines, offering a comprehensive knowledge base to assist our area fire departments during a hazardous materials incident, and to keep member contact information up to date.
2. To supply information and guidance to any incident commander at a hazardous materials scene. The team will respond to requests for assistance in a timely manner, and will give assistance as best as they are able, understanding that every incident is different and can change rapidly as new information is gathered at the scene. Members will strive to take new information and reassess the situation at hand when necessary.
3. To establish and maintain access to printed and on-line resources in order to provide the most accurate, up to date information for our members and the departments we serve.
4. To assist, when requested, in educating the public on the safe handling and storage of chemicals, and to speak about emergencies involving hazardous materials in which CHIT is consulted.