



DEPARTMENT OF

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Promoting and protecting health, well-being, self-sufficiency, and safety of all in Marin County.



Benita McLarin, FACHE
DIRECTOR

CHRIS LE BAUDOUR
EMS ADMINISTRATOR

Emergency Medical Services
1600 Los Gamos Drive
Suite 220
San Rafael, CA 94903
415 473 6871 T
415 473 3747 F
415 473 3344 TTY
www.marinEMS.org

Marin County EMS Constituents

From: Dustin Ballard, MD; Medical Director
Marin County EMS Agency
Matt Willis, MD
Public Health Officer, Marin Health & Human Services

Date: May 1, 2021

Re: **Memorandum: Fentanyl and Analogs**

There has been a recent surge in opioid overdose deaths in Marin County that are partially attributable to fentanyl and its analogs (such as carfentanil). In California, fentanyl and its analogs have also been found in samples of other drugs including heroin, methamphetamine, cocaine, and counterfeit pills made to look like prescription medications such as alprazolam (Xanax).

Such illicit drugs may pose as a contact hazard to law enforcement and other first responders and while we are not aware of any symptomatic first responder exposures in this county, we are taking this opportunity to remind first responders of scene safety principles.

We are committed to ensuring the safety of our first responders and are addressing the fentanyl hazard in multiple ways -- including close monitoring of opioid overdoses in the county, educational programs to Emergency Medical Services and first responders as well as ongoing distribution of intranasal naloxone (Narcan) to law enforcement and other agencies.

There is limited data to guide personal protective equipment (PPE) recommendations as fentanyl and its analogs do not have established occupational exposure limits. First responder hazard is almost certainly greater with inhalation of powder rather than contact via the skin.

We continue to recommend that first responder agencies follow the CDC guidelines on PPE and, as they suggest, assess the need and level of PPE on a case by case basis: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/fentanyl/risk.html>

D w Ballard