

Hazardous Materials Incident Investigations

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) is the regulatory agency responsible for the safe transportation of hazardous materials by rail and commercial motor vehicles within Ohio. Compliance enforcement is accomplished through registration of hazardous material carriers, company on-site audits, vehicle roadside inspections, accident investigations and imposing penalties on violators of highway hazardous materials transportation rules.

The PUCO stations Hazardous Materials Specialists throughout the state of Ohio. This group of personnel includes professionals who are available to assist you with investigations of transportation and hazardous materials related issues and incidents.

How the PUCO Can Assist You

In cases of emergency, the PUCO maintains a 24-hour Hazardous Materials Incident Reporting Line to which incidents involving hazardous materials can be reported. Upon availability, the PUCO is able to provide assistance by:

- Conducting investigations at the scene of trucking and hazardous materials accidents.
- Providing technical assistance to emergency responders at the scene of trucking and hazardous materials accidents.
- Conducting investigations of railroad accidents and rail related hazardous material incidents.
- Identifying hazardous materials and ensuring proper compliance with regulations for transport.
- Conducting radiological surveys and contamination control surveys of radiological shipments.

You may reach the Hazardous Materials Incident Reporting Line message service by calling (800) 642-3443. Upon calling, PUCO personnel will inform you of the availability and estimated time of arrival of a PUCO Hazardous Materials Specialist.

In addition to emergency response assistance, PUCO duties also include:

- Providing grant-funding information to improve certification and training of your department.
- Providing education through presentations and training on transportation safety and hazardous materials regulations including package specifications, and safety awareness.
- Conducting internal examinations of trucking companies, hazardous materials shippers and hazardous waste generators and transfer storage sites.
- Inspecting trucks for motor carrier safety and hazardous materials compliance.
- Overseeing the routing of railroad and highway radioactive shipments.

How You Can Assist the PUCO

You can help the PUCO in its efforts to increase hazardous materials transportation safety in the state of Ohio by calling the Hazardous Materials Incident Reporting Line at (800) 642-3443 to report obvious violations of hazardous materials rules or spills of hazardous materials while in commercial or rail transport.

Further Assistance for Utility Emergencies

The PUCO can provide technical assistance for emergency response personnel investigating natural gas pipeline or electricity related mishaps. Contact (614) 466-8202 for assistance related to electricity incidents and (614) 644-8983 for assistance related to gas pipeline incidents. Please note that these telephone numbers are staffed Monday-Friday during normal business hours.

PUCO Qualifications

PUCO personnel are trained by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Federal Rail Administration, Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance, Ohio Emergency Management Agency, and other law enforcement and emergency response agencies. This training covers a wide range of specialty areas including hazardous materials regulations, hazardous materials response (Hazardous Materials Technician level 1910.120), accident investigation, radiation safety and monitoring, vehicle inspection, commercial vehicle regulatory compliance, and cargo tank safety.

How to Contact the PUCO for Emergency Response Assistance

- 24-Hour Hazardous Materials Incident Reporting Line: (800) 642-3443
- Educational grant information: (614) 752-7991

If you would like to know more about the PUCO or have utility-related questions or concerns,

contact the PUCO at:

(800) 686-PUCO (7826)

(800) 686-1570 (TDD/TTY)

In Columbus only:

(614) 466-3292

(614) 466-8180 (TDD/TTY)

www.PUCO.ohio.gov