



DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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



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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 carfentanyl). 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>