



REQUEST FOR LEGISLATION

April 12, 2006

FROM: James D. Roberts, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: Hazardous Materials Response Authority Agreement

ACTION REQUESTED:

It is requested that Council approve an amendment to the Hazardous Materials Response Authority Agreement for Washtenaw County and Adjacent Communities ("Hazmat Agreement") by an additional ten years, expiring on May 10, 2016.

BACKGROUND:

In August 1992, Washtenaw County was faced with an ever-increasing number of chemical accidents occurring throughout the community. When presented with the response statistics, Washtenaw County's Local Emergency Planning Committee made a formal request to the Emergency Management Director to establish a Countywide hazardous materials response team. The Director quickly called a meeting that brought together all stakeholders and interested parties. Several work groups and committees were established, which led to the development of a tentative leadership structure including a draft inter-local agreement. The committees asked the County to assume the role of fiduciary agent and to support the effort administratively. The Emergency Management Division accepted this role, as it was clear that such a team was needed in the community.

Five governmental entities ultimately agreed to form Hazardous Materials Response Authority ("Hazmat Authority") under Michigan's Urban Cooperation Act, (MCLA 124.501 et. seq.). These entities were Washtenaw County, City of Ann Arbor, City of Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Charter Township and Pittsfield Charter Township. On August 7, 1996, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners approved Resolution #96-0157 authorizing the Chair of the Board to Sign the Inter-local Agreement creating the Hazmat Authority. This Resolution charged the Hazmat Authority Board with developing, implementing and managing a countywide hazardous materials response team. Subsequently, the other four enabling public entities also approved the Inter-local Agreement.

Pursuant to the Urban Cooperation Act, the Inter-local Agreement was sent to the Governor's Office where the Governor ultimately approved it, on October 23, 1996.

Soon after approval, the Hazmat Authority Board began to meet regularly and started to form the response team. \$104,414.00 was collected to fund equipment needs (\$30,000.00 was donated by Washtenaw County as a one-time investment) and team members were recruited from the Washtenaw County's local fire departments. After several months of equipment acquisition and training, the Team became response capable on a 24-hour a day basis in December 1999.

