Honey Bees and Emergency Response

Call Classification

**Nuisance Call**
1) a swarm or colony is located in a path frequently traveled by the public
2) Honey Bees are active but not stinging

Options:
1) Contact local Extension Center for a beekeeper to collect or relocate the colony
2) Refer to a pest management professional for eradication

**Emergency Call**
1) Someone has been stung or is in the process of being stung by a large number of bees or is incapacitated
2) Individual stung is showing signs of an allergic reaction
3) Bees are aggressively stinging

Option:
1) Subdue flying bees until victim is evacuated
2) Evacuate victim
3) Destroy bees or call beekeepers to salvage or relocate colony

Situation Evaluation:
- Is someone being stung now?
- How many victims are there?
- What is the location of the victim(s)?
- Are the honey bees swarming or are the bees originating from a hive or wild colony?
- What is the location of the hive or colony?
- Are there bystanders who need to be alerted?

On-scene Activities:
- Stage engine at least 30 yards from active honey bees
- Contact County Extension Center for area beekeepers if additional assistance is needed
- Ensure that first responders have suitable PPE
- Locate medical and other personnel out of operational area by at least 150 yards
- Direct rescue efforts
- Evacuate victim
- Secure the scene

Contacts
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Edgecombe County Center
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Personal Protective Equip.

PPE Options:
- Chemical spill suit with bee veil and taped cuffs over gloves, or
- Sting shield with bill cap with turnout gear, or
- Full gear with SCBA

Control Strategies

Foam & Water Recommendation:
- AFFF—Aqueous Film Forming Foam is recommended by Arizona F.R. Departments
- Class A Foam is an acceptable substitute at 2-5%
- Soap solution is another option at 2-5%
- AFFF kills bees within 60 seconds and knocks them down immediately by wetting them
- Plain water will only knock bees off temporarily and will not normally kill them

Approach Recommendation
- Approach victim with a full fog pattern — sweeping the air surrounding the firefighters and patient.

Stinger Removal

Stinger Removal:
Bees leave a stinger with a venom sac attached
* Do not pull stinger
* Gently scrape with blunt-edged object

Information gathered from:
LSUAgCenter.com—Planning for Honey Bee Nuisance Calls & Emergencies
Univ. of Florida—Africanized Honey Bee Emergency Response