

Chemical Spill at Eaglecrest High School

Arapahoe County, CO – On Wednesday September 24, 2008 a chemical spill occurred at Eaglecrest High School 5100 S. Piccadilly Street in Arapahoe County. At approximately 3:00pm Cunningham Fire Rescue responded to a report of a chemical spill that occurred outside of the building. The initial report was that the chemical was hydrochloric acid.

When firefighters arrived on-scene they confirmed that approximately 20 gallons of hydrochloric acid was spilled on the east side of the building. The product was being delivered by a commercial supplier and is used as part of the disinfection process for the swimming pool located at the school. The product was in a 55 gallon drum. The spill occurred while the drum was being unloaded from the truck. The exact actions that caused the drum to spill have not been determined and are being investigated.

There were students and staff at the school when the spill occurred. School staff immediately isolated the area and evacuated the building. Hazardous materials technicians were able to enter the spill area and neutralize the spill by spreading soda ash directly on the spilled product. Clean-up of the spilled acid started shortly after the spill was neutralized. The spill was entirely on the exterior of the school and no damage to the building resulted. Assistance was provided to Cunningham Fire Rescue by the South Metro Fire Rescue Authority and the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office.

The primary concerns for injuries were exposure to the vapors and direct contact with the acid. Nobody came into direct contact with the product; however, there were a handful of people that were possibly exposed to the vapors being released by the spill. A total of eight people were treated on-scene and four were transported to a local hospital as a precautionary measure.