



Structural Decontamination Following Riot Control Agent Use (CS, OC, or Similar)

When Riot Control Agents such as tear gas (CS) or pepper spray (OC) are used inside a building, the chemical residue can linger on walls, floors, furniture, and ventilation systems. Proper cleanup is essential before re-occupying the space to minimize discomfort and prevent re-exposure.

Immediate Steps

1. Ventilating the Area
 - Open all doors and windows to allow fresh air circulation.
 - Use fans, if available, to increase air flow and speed up removal of airborne particles.
 - Continue ventilation for several hours or longer, depending on the severity of contamination.
2. Protect Yourself During Cleanup
 - Wear gloves, protective eyewear, and a mask or respirator to avoid secondary exposure.
 - Use old or disposable clothing during the process.
3. Remove Residue from Surfaces
 - Wipe down hard, non-porous surfaces (tile, glass, metal, sealed wood) with soap and water.
 - Avoid using bleach or harsh chemicals, which may react with the agent.
 - Pay special attention to countertops, doorknobs, and other frequently touched areas.
4. Textiles and Soft Surfaces
 - Wash contaminated clothing, bedding, and curtains separately in hot water with regular detergent.
 - Upholstered furniture and carpeting may retain residue and odors; professional cleaning is often recommended for these items.
 - In severe cases, disposal of heavily contaminated textiles may be the safest option.
5. Ventilation Systems
 - Replace HVAC filters before re-using the system.
 - If the system was running during deployment, ducts may require professional cleaning.
6. Porous Surfaces (Drywall, Wood, Insulation)
 - CS and OC particles can absorb into porous building materials.
 - Mild contamination may be addressed by thorough washing and repainting.
 - In severe cases, replacement of drywall, insulation, or carpeting may be necessary.

Professional Decontamination Services

Specialized remediation companies are available to perform full decontamination after chemical agent use. These companies have protective equipment, industrial cleaners, and experience handling tear gas cleanup. Engaging professionals is strongly recommended if:

- Contamination is widespread throughout the home.
- Children, elderly individuals, or those with respiratory conditions live in the residence.
- The HVAC system was running at the time of deployment.

Expected Timeline

- Light contamination: a day or two of ventilation and surface cleaning may reduce most effects.
- Heavy contamination: professional remediation and multiple cleaning cycles may be required before safe re-occupancy.