



CASE STUDY

How Emergency Decon Services Uses Decon7 Products to Protect Firefighters

The Problem

Firefighters are at risk even after the fire is out. Exposure to carcinogens on the scene presents a major health risk to firefighters, and if those dangerous chemicals are brought back to the firehouse or individual homes, everyone around them is also potentially exposed. Over the years, carcinogens have become worse due to contaminants from burning plastics and other sources, putting firefighters at a higher risk of getting cancer.

Another significant challenge is overcoming the culture of firefighter service. Having soot on your face is seen as a badge of honor and dirty gear is a visual indicator for seasoned veterans. In addition to providing the right products for decontaminating gear, there has to be a mindset shift so that firefighters have an understanding of the risks to themselves and anyone else that comes into contact with them.

Background

Emergency DECON Services (EDS) Co-founders Rich Gross and Tom Riedel have been friends and fellow firefighters for more than four decades. They know the dangers of firefighting—both immediate and long-term—from personal experience and were inspired to create a company to help combat the cancer problem in the profession. The dream turned into reality in February 2020 when the partners launched EDS.

Based in Sayville, New York, EDS is an industry-leading decontamination services provider. The company also distributes products and provides education to help minimize toxic exposures and promote a safe and healthy work environment across a range of industries.

The Solution

When forming the company, Rich and Tom researched a variety of products to determine what to use for fireground and gear decontamination. Most of the products they encountered were effective cleaners, but did not neutralize the dangerous chemicals and carcinogens found at firegrounds and on turnout gear. They discovered Decon7 online and quickly realized the many benefits the product line would bring to EDS, including:

- ✔ Unlike the other companies they researched, Decon7 has ample data from independent research, labs, and academia to back their claims. This helps EDS sell their products and services in the field.
- ✔ Decon7 products can be applied in many ways, such as spray, fog, foam, mist, and for laundry. Use according to label instructions.

Before fully committing, the EDS team wanted to see just how well D7 worked. They asked Mike Allen, Chief of Islip's Hazmat Team, to test and provide feedback on D7. Testing with a 90% hydrochloric acid solution in a ceramic bowl, the team was pleasantly surprised when it was neutralized by D7 within 30 seconds after the product was applied.

EDS also performed its own field test on turnout gear that had been exposed to contaminants typically found at a fireground. The EDS test compared D7, standard detergent, and water only for cleaning the gear. The results showed that D7 performed better than the two alternatives, further encouraging EDS to adopt the product line for their burgeoning business.

In addition to providing both products and hands-on training, EDS includes education about the risks associated with fireground carcinogens and higher cancer levels in the profession to help combat the cultural challenges within fire services.





Results

Thanks to the versatility and power of the Decon7 product line, more opportunities have opened up for EDS. Although the initial intent of the company was to provide decontamination services for firefighting teams, it evolved into a three-pronged business model that includes education and training, product sales, and decontamination services.

Because Decon7 products are so easy to use, EDS is now able to make agencies more self-sufficient and less reliant on service providers by selling and installing mobile decontamination systems and providing associated training services. EDS provides customers with a comprehensive training manual in addition to unlimited hands-on training, ensuring that their customers are both comfortable applying it and using it properly so no product is wasted.


EDS customers also recognize the value of Decon7 products and their feedback is resoundingly positive. Some are even posting their own YouTube videos on how they use it. Fire services administrators appreciate that there is no need for expensive machinery to apply the products, allowing them to allocate their budgets to replenishing the product and not purchasing the equipment to use it. Because less product is needed, the cost per application is also relatively low.

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The Future

The EDS team is excited to continue sharing the capabilities of Decon7 products with others. Customers are starting to recognize the potential cost-savings of eliminating other products and replacing them with the Decon7 product line. This has sparked expansion into other industries and types of applications.

EDS is also enthusiastic about growing their relationship with Decon7. As Rich says, “The Decon7 team is remarkable. They have been supportive from day one. There is no other company out there that has the product, price, effectiveness, and support of the product like Decon7. They have made our lives really easy and we wouldn’t be where we are today without them. Now we have a full suite of products and services thanks to the Decon7 portfolio.”



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**Rich Gross, Co-founder,
Emergency DECON Services**

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