
Policy Number: 2319
Title: Agency Name – Use of Shatterball
Effective Date: TBD

PURPOSE: To provide basic knowledge, procedures, and appropriate applications for the use of Shatterball, by employees of this agency that carry or are assigned Shatterball for use in the field.

APPLICABILITY: Any employee of this Agency that has been assigned or carries Shatterball for use in the field.

DEFINITIONS:

Shatterball – A one-inch spiked (non-sharp) metal ball shaped hand tool designed to breach tempered auto glass windows at low velocity.

Tempered Glass Window - Tempered glass is a type of safety glass processed by treatments to increase its strength compared with normal glass. Tempering puts the outer surfaces into compression and the interior into tension. Such stresses cause the glass, when broken, to shatter into small granular chunks instead of splintering into jagged shards as ordinary annealed glass does. The granular chunks are less likely to cause injury. Tempered glass is commonly used in automobile windows, residential windows, and commercial building windows.

Laminated Glass Window – A glass window consisting of two or more sheets of glass with plastic sheeting bonded between to resist shattering. Automobile windshields are always made of laminated glass. Some automobile manufacturers use laminated glass in a vehicle’s side front windows. Almost all rear automotive windows are tempered glass.

PROCEDURES:

A. **Authorized Use of Shatterball:**

1. During any emergency rescue response or attempted extrication of a person or animal from a vehicle, or any structure that has a glass window or door.
2. During any emergency or high-risk situation in which the removal of a glass window would likely increase the overall safety of anyone involved in the situation; including but not limited to: Officers, suspects, third parties, witnesses, or bystanders.
3. To aid in the apprehension or rescue of a person in which a glass window is preventing or reducing the effectiveness and or safety of the apprehension or rescue.
4. To mark, help bring attention to, or help identify a vehicle involved in the commission of a felony, where an Officer can safely deploy a Shatterball upon a side or rear window to achieve such marking. Such markings allow the vehicle to stand out in the community and to Officers.

B. **Responsibilities Related to the Use of Shatterball:**

1. Any Officer that uses a Shatterball and damages a window in the course of official duties shall inform their direct supervisor when it is safe and practical, within a reasonable timeframe.
2. When deploying a Shatterball on a window that is in close proximity to a person’s face, the Officer should consider giving a verbal warning to the subject to look away from the window, prior to deploying the Shatterball. A warning is not necessary in situations where such warning could compromise the safety of the user or delay an emergency rescue that is time sensitive.

3. It is the responsibility of the issuing agency to ensure that employees who are issued Shatterball for use in the field, understand the basic instructions on how to deploy a Shatterball on a window.
4. Individual Officers that carry Shatterball when it is not issued by their Agency, are responsible for understanding the basic instructions on how to deploy a Shatterball on a window before doing so in the field.