

**\*\*\* NOTICE\*\*\***

This after-action report was released on Wednesday, June 3, 2020, and provided details related to the rally and march that took place on Tuesday, June 2. The report details how and why Cyanocarbon (CS) gas was used to disperse a large group of people who refused to leave the intersection at Main and Edmonds at the end of the march. The report does not specifically state the number of canisters that were used. Lewisville PD manually deployed a total six canisters of CS gas in two separate incidents.



## **AFTER ACTION REPORT**

### **JUNE 2, 2020 DEMONSTRATION**

On Tuesday, June 2, about 350 people participated in a peaceful march and rally as part of the national reaction to recent deaths of black men and women during interactions with police. These demonstrators gathered at Lewisville High School at about 6 p.m., marched nearly 2 miles to Wayne Ferguson Plaza in downtown Lewisville, and held a 30-minute rally that included comments from event organizers, City Councilman Brandon Jones, and Police Chief Kevin Deaver. The march and rally were completely peaceful, with no confrontations between demonstrators and law enforcement.

After the rally, demonstrators began their walk back to the high school where their vehicles were parked. There were groups ranging in size from a few people to up to 50 individuals. Near the intersection of Main Street and Edmonds Lane, an intoxicated male ran into oncoming traffic. Officers asked the person to get out of the roadway, for his safety. After darting around cars, the individual ran back toward the group. He ran into a female and child, knocking them to the ground. A large group then spilled into the roadway. Officers responding to the incident began getting pelted with water bottles and other objects. The crowd was warned multiple times to disperse from the roadway. Cyanocarbon (CS) gas was rolled into the crowd in an attempt to disperse them. Most of the crowd dispersed after the gas was deployed. A few did not and were arrested for various charges. Those arrested were transported to the Lewisville City Jail.

The remaining crowd continued walking to Lewisville high School. At the high school, protesters blocked the roadway again and threw rocks and other items at the police, as seen in video of the incident. By this time, the event organizers had made their way back to the crowd. Chief Deaver met with the organizers in an attempt to deescalate the situation. The organizers were eventually able to convince the crowd to leave the street. Officers backed away from the incident. The crowd continued to peacefully protest from the sidewalk and curb along Main Street. There were no other confrontations with the police.

The four young members of the community who organized the march and rally worked with Lewisville PD on traffic control measures to protect participants from passing vehicles. They also arranged for volunteers to stay after the rally and clear trash from Wayne Ferguson Plaza. When a few people attempted to elevate tensions, these organizers intervened and kept the peace. Their passion and leadership were invaluable, and we thank them for their efforts.

Lewisville PD made every reasonable effort to avoid confrontation with the demonstrators as they exercised their Constitutional right to publicly assemble and share their important message

Kevin Deaver  
Chief of Police  
Lewisville Police Department  
1187 West Main Street, Lewisville, Texas 75067  
P.O. Box 299002, Lewisville, Texas 75029



of equality and justice. It is unfortunate that a very small number of people decided to cause a disruption to what was otherwise a peaceful and powerful event.

### **Was there any property damage reported?**

The event ended with no reports of injuries or property damage. Lewisville PD thanks the participants who remained focused on their message and did not resort to senseless criminal activity or violence.

There have been social media posts claiming that vehicle windows were broken in a residential neighborhood south of the high school. According to police reports, those vehicle windows were broken on Monday and were not related to anything that happened on Tuesday.

### **Were there any arrests made?**

Nine people were arrested, six of them for blocking a roadway, two for blocking a roadway plus additional charges, and one for public intoxication. Listed cities of residence are Lewisville (5), Flower Mound, Corinth, and Dallas (2). All nine arrests were directly related to the incident at Main Street and Edmonds Lane.

Arrests made:

- 18yo BF from Dallas, Obstructing a Highway
- 27yo WM from Flower Mound, Obstructing a Highway, Assaulting a Police Officer, Resisting Arrest, Evading Arrest
- 22yo WM from Lewisville, Obstructing a Highway, Interfering with Public Duties
- 33yo BM from Lewisville, Obstructing a Highway
- 19yo BM from Lewisville, Obstructing a Highway
- 48yo WF from Corinth, Obstructing a Highway
- 24yo BM from Lewisville, Obstructing a Highway
- 53yo WM from Dallas, Public Intoxication
- 22yo WF from Lewisville, Obstructing a Highway

### **Was tear gas used by police?**

Kevin Deaver  
Chief of Police  
Lewisville Police Department  
1187 West Main Street, Lewisville, Texas 75067  
P.O. Box 299002, Lewisville, Texas 75029



Tear gas (Cyanocarbon gas) was not shot into a crowd. After multiple warnings, a canister of tear gas was rolled about five feet away from a large group that refused to leave the street at Main and Edmonds. They scattered but continued to block the roadway, so it happened a second time after two more warnings.

CS gas was deemed to be the best available option. Leaving the street blocked was interfering with emergency traffic into the nearby hospital and was backing up traffic onto both directions of Interstate 35E. The only other means to get people out of the street would have been to physically move them, which would have increased the risk of a violent confrontation.

Unless someone was in the group who refused to leave the street, they were not directly affected by the tear gas. And the people who stayed in the street did so after being specifically warned that tear gas would be used.

### **Did police use rubber bullets or pepper spray on demonstrators?**

There have been social media posts alleging gunfire, the use of rubber bullets, and the use of pepper spray. None of these claims is correct. The police department uses foam (40mm) impact rounds as a less-lethal option, not rubber bullets. One round was fired at a protester as he was picking up a CS container to throw back at police. That round did not strike the protester. No officers used pepper spray or Mace on a demonstrator.

### **Was there any violence directed at police officers by demonstrators?**

Bottles and other items were thrown at police officers prior to any CS gas deployment. This occurred while protesters were in the intersection of Main Street and Edmonds Lane and while they were protesting along the roadway in front of LHS. No officers were injured as a result.

### **Was a bomb threat received?**

A few hours before the scheduled start of the event, Lewisville PD became aware of a bomb threat posted to a private social media account. While it did not appear to be a credible threat, it still required investigation and caution. In the interest of public safety, this information was shared on the city's social media accounts while it was being investigated. Federal authorities also were notified since a bomb threat is a violation of federal law, even if it is a false threat. Lewisville PD later determined that the threat was not credible, and there were no incidents during the event.

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Chief of Police  
Lewisville Police Department  
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### **Were Texas DPS or the National Guard involved?**

In the days leading up to the demonstration, there were several social media comments that implied a desire by some people to escalate tensions during the Lewisville event. Based on that, and upon advice from an area police chief who had experienced a similar demonstration, Chief Deaver asked Texas DPS to provide some officers. With demonstrations scheduled in several nearby communities, the state officers also could provide mutual aid support to those cities that Lewisville would be unable to provide.

Texas Department of Public Safety sent a blended field force unit (which included some National Guard members under Texas DPS command) as a backup for crowd control purposes. That unit did deploy on Main Street and helped keep demonstrators out of the street during the latter part of the return walk to the high school after tensions escalated with objects being thrown at police officers.

### **Did the police department do anything to assist with the demonstration?**

The most important role for Lewisville PD was to ensure the safety of participants and bystanders. Police units escorted the marchers, keeping vehicle traffic out of the right lane on Main Street and closing intersections to let the demonstrators pass by safely. During the rally, officers passed out bottled water to those who needed it. Afterward, the department arranged for buses to carry participants back to the high school, but the rally ended and participants had left before the first bus arrived.

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