

Chemical Warfare Rules v1.0

Nuclear, Biological and Chemical (NBC) Warfare was a very real and deeply unpleasant threat throughout the Cold War and armies on both sides of the Iron Curtain trained intensively to fight on a contaminated battlefield. However, battlefield NBC suits, respirators and decontamination drills would have done very little to protect troops against nuclear or biological warfare, so the 'NB' part of 'NBC' falls outside the scope of *Battlefront: First Echelon* and we instead concentrate on the 'C'.

However, note that NBC warfare will add an extra layer of complexity to the game and will therefore slow it down and as a consequence, these rules should be considered to be optional and only used with the consent of both players.

Chemical weapons should only be available to fixed-wing aircraft (bombs or spray-tanks) and to certain artillery systems, as listed in the table below. They should only be used as part of a scenario and must form part of a pre-planned fire/air support plan. Chemical weapons will never be available on call as ad hoc fire/air support.

In terms of doctrine, NATO armies would never resort to chemical weapons unless Warsaw Pact forces had already employed them. Indeed, after the 1950s, only the USA maintained sufficient stocks of chemical weapons for offensive use, though many NATO allies retained the ability to manufacture them. As with tactical nuclear weapons, most NATO nations also retained weapons systems capable of delivering such weapons, should they be made available from US stocks in the event of war.

NBC Defence Posture

In scenarios where chemical weapons are likely to be a factor, each player must indicate the NBC Defence Posture of each ME in their force. In reality there are many levels of NBC Defence Posture, but we simplify it to three. At the highest level, units are encumbered by deeply uncomfortable and fatiguing NBC protective clothing and have their AFVs completely buttoned down. Soviet NBC clothing was particularly cumbersome.

Place a suitable marker face down next to each ME to indicate the NBC Defence Posture:

- **NBC Defence Posture 1** – All troops are dressed in their normal uniforms, with protective clothing and decontamination equipment close at hand. Troop and Gun units at Posture 1 suffer no restrictions to movement or Discipline rating, though will run a proportionately higher risk of suffering casualties in the event of a chemical attack.
- **NBC Defence Posture 2** – All troops are dressed in most of their protective clothing, with respirators ready to don at short notice. Thus they have a compromise between NBC protection and mobility. All units suffer the following effects:
 - Troops and Guns may not conduct a Rapid Advance action.
 - Warsaw Pact Troops and Guns move at half speed.
- **NBC Defence Posture 3** – All troops are dressed in full protective clothing with respirators and armoured vehicles are buttoned up, with NBC defence systems activated. All units suffer the following effects:



- Discipline rating of all units is reduced by one level.
- All units suffer a -1 Spotting modifier.
- Troops and Guns may not conduct a Rapid Advance action.
- Troops and Guns move at half speed.

In addition to the above, there might be poorly-equipped troops (call it '**NBC Defence Posture 0**'), who have very little, or no access to NBC protective clothing and decontamination equipment. These might belong to a nation which does not have access to such equipment, or perhaps are a poorly-equipped reservist unit belonging to one of the poorer NATO or Warsaw Pact allies. This is the only posture they can adopt. They will act normally until such time as they come under NBC attack; at which point they will suffer accordingly (see below).

When units are spotted, the enemy will be able to observe the NBC Defence Posture of that unit, so flip that ME's NBC Defence Posture marker face-up. Spotting an enemy already 'suited and booted' for chemical warfare is often an indicator that they are about to use chemical weapons on you!

It takes 1 action for a Manoeuvre Element to voluntarily change its NBC Defence Posture.

All units of a Manoeuvre Element, including attachments must adopt the same NBC Defence Posture.

If a unit is Suppressed or Disordered, its first action **MUST** be to change its NBC Defence Posture if the rest of the ME is doing so, even if this means not rallying.

If a unit suffers a 'No Action', 'Fall Back' or 'Panic' Manoeuvre result it may still change NBC Defence Posture as a free action.

On the first use of chemical weapons against a Battlegroup during a scenario, ALL surviving elements of that Battlegroup, including any attached elements, will immediately adopt NBC Defence Posture 3 as a free action once the results of the chemical attack have been resolved. Manoeuvre Elements not currently affected by chemical weapons may then voluntarily relax their NBC Defence Posture in a subsequent turn, taking an action to do so.

Manoeuvre Elements with at least one unit affected by chemical weapons may not voluntarily relax their NBC Defence Posture until all of the ME's units are clear of the contaminated area.

Units will not voluntarily enter an area contaminated by chemical weapons unless they are already at NBC Posture 3. The only exception to this is where units are Panicking as a result of a Manoeuvre check. Units Falling Back as a result of a Manoeuvre check will move to avoid the contamination (if possible – otherwise they too will move through the contaminated area).



Types of Chemical Weapons

Chemical weapons are typically grouped into one of two classes: Persistent and Non-Persistent. The type and quantity of each type of chemical weapon available to each eligible support unit must

be made clear in the scenario briefing. And the location for the deployment of each type of weapon must be made clear in the player's preparatory fire plan.

Persistent Agents are typically liquids or powders that do not readily disperse or chemically break down and need to be manually removed from the environment. These contaminants will remain in place throughout the scenario and will not disperse.

Non-Persistent Agents are typically liquids or gases that create a temporary cloud in the target area, but quickly disperse or chemically break down into harmless compounds, thus allowing a force to occupy the area without too much ill effect.

At the start of each turn, roll a D10 for each area contaminated by non-persistent agents. The cloud will disperse on a roll of 10. Add +1 for each subsequent dispersion check (up to a maximum of +4). Add +2 if the weather is rainy or windy.

Effects of Chemical Weapons

Chemical Weapons produce a contaminated area equivalent to double the normal Indirect Fire Template for a particular weapon. For a gun or mortar, this typically means two IDF Templates arranged side-by-side per weapon. For a multiple rocket launcher, this typically means four IDF templates arranged 2x2 per weapon.

For chemical aircraft bombs or aerial spraying, give each attack four IDF templates, arranged 2x2. If the aircraft has sufficient ordnance for more than one attack, it may deliver all its munitions in one pass, increasing the size of the contaminated area along its flight path (e.g. a aircraft able to make two attacks would create a contaminated area 2x templates wide by 4x templates deep).

Additional attacks on the same area will not produce any additional effect.

For game purposes and simplicity's sake, aircraft and helicopters are not affected by chemical weapons. In reality they are, but aircrew generally have far superior NBC protection suits than ground troops.

When units come under chemical attack, or have to pass through contaminated areas, each unit within the contaminated area immediately suffers an attack as per the Fire Chart, modified as shown:

Effect of chemical weapons:
+4 to attack die against all unit types.

Target:
-3 if at NBC Defence Posture 3
-2 if at NBC Defence Posture 2
-1 if at NBC Defence Posture 1
+1 if at NBC Defence Posture 0
+1 if disordered

NBC Countermeasures:
-1 if first-line NATO countries (due to excellent and widespread training and detection equipment) **OR**
-1 if an armoured vehicle equipped with an NBC protection system
-1 if a dedicated NBC reconnaissance unit is within 5 inches



Note that cover provides no benefit to the defender.

Note also that after the initial exposure, all units at NBC Defence Posture 3 will not suffer further attacks from the chemical weapon. However, they will suffer additional effects, as shown below. Units at NBC Defence Posture 0 however, will continue to suffer additional attacks from the chemical weapon in every enemy Indirect Fire Phase until they leave the contaminated area.

Additional effects of being within a contaminated area:

-1 Manoeuvre modifier for all units currently within a contaminated area (this is in addition to dropping a Discipline grade for being at NBC Defence Posture 3) **OR**

-2 Manoeuvre modifier for all units attempting to enter a contaminated area during this Manoeuvre Phase (they must be at NBC Defence Posture 3 to do so) **OR**

-4 Manoeuvre modifier for all units currently within a contaminated area at NBC Defence Posture 0

+1 Fire Combat modifier against units within the contaminated area (minor damage to vehicles and equipment, wounds, etc will compromise the integrity of NBC Defence measures and increase the effect of enemy fire)

**CHEMICAL ATTACK MODIFIERS
(INDIRECT, AIR-TO-GROUND OR INTERDICTION ATTACK)**

Firer:

+4 chemical weapon attack

Target:

-3 NBC Defence Posture 3

-2 NBC Defence Posture 2

-1 NBC Defence Posture 1

+1 NBC Defence Posture 0

+1 Disordered

NBC Countermeasures:

-1 if first-line NATO country

-1 if an armoured vehicle equipped with an NBC protection system

-1 if a dedicated NBC reconnaissance unit is within 5 inches

Note that cover provides no benefit to the defender.

