

Folks: As a long term-now retired Eastern Oregon Parole Officer, I want to assure you that it has long been the practice (and DPSST training) of Oregon Law Enforcement Officers to use Tear Gas and Pepper Spray as an ALTERNATIVE to more lethal forms of force. We were repeatedly and carefully trained by the Academy to use verbal skills first & then less-than-lethal force in a confrontation BEFORE we resorted to unholstering our firearms.

Tear Gas is just one more tool in law enforcement tool-bag and if it is outlawed, Officers will just be compelled to use other more physically dangerous forms of force at an earlier time in any serious confrontation. .

Our DPSST training usually required that we personally experience the effects of the weapon (tear gas, OC, stun gun) BEFORE these instruments were issued to us. Though clearly made highly uncomfortable, we weren't killed or seriously harmed by the experience and it gave us a clearer understanding of what we might be inflicting on others.

Oregon rioters and looters and even well intentioned demonstrators should not be empowered to choose what counter-measures police have to use. (the fox guarding the hen-house?). It is sincerely hoped the Oregon Legislature will do the right thing here and not simply accede to the political whim of the day. In the long run fewer people will be permanently injured or killed if police retain Tear Gas in their tool-bag.