

Policy Statement

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Handling of Hazardous Materials

Revised June 2019, June 2013, October 2006

Originally approved June 1999, replacing CR036(85) "Hazardous Materials, Access to Information" and CR026(88) "Hazardous Materials, Transportation of Hazardous Materials"

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Handling of Hazardous Materials

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The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) believes that nuclear, chemical, and biological hazardous materials pose a significant risk to individuals and communities if improperly handled or if released accidentally or intentionally into the environment.

- Individuals who are at risk, including emergency personnel, have the right to know when these materials are used in or transported through their communities.
- Emergency personnel must have immediate access to all information necessary to treat victims, protect themselves, and prevent exposure of others.
- Hazardous materials should be clearly and appropriately marked.
- Vehicles transporting hazardous materials should be clearly marked that they are used for such purposes, and drivers of those vehicles should be educated in the safe transport of hazardous materials.
- Emergency personnel responsible for the care and treatment of victims of exposure to hazardous

materials should be appropriately educated and trained in methods of self-protection, patient protection, and resuscitation.

- Administrative and clinical guidelines should include principles of decontamination of personnel, patients, and vehicles, including minimum equipment requirements for personal protective equipment and recommended safety procedures.
- Emergency personnel and facilities should be updated by local, regional, state, or federal authorities or agencies as needed to allow preparation when a defined threat is identified.

ACEP supports state and federal policies that promote adherence to these principles.

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