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Handling of Hazardous Materials

Revised October 2006 and
June 2013

Originally approved June 1999
replacing CR036 (1985),
“Hazardous Materials, Access
to Information” and CR026
(1988), “Hazardous Materials,
Transportation of Hazardous
Materials”

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, minimum equipment requirements including personal protective equipment, and recommended safety procedures.
- Emergency personnel and facilities should be updated by local, regional, state and/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.