



POLICY DOCUMENT

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT HAZARDOUS MATERIAL RESPONSE PLAN: STAFF PARTICIPATION

INTRODUCTION:

Hazardous materials incidents can and do involve emergency departments with little or no advance warning. Emergency Departments need to have a response plan to hazardous materials incidents which protects staff and other patients in the Emergency Department while still providing hazardous materials victims with access to medical care in a timely manner.

In developing such plans it is important that Emergency Departments clearly identify those staff who will be participating and those who will not be participating in a hazardous materials response, especially those staff who should not participate for medical or other reasons.

STAFF PARTICIPATION

The following staff should not participate in a hazardous materials incident:

- Those staff who do not want to participate in a hazardous materials incident
- Those staff who do not have appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Those staff who have either not been provided with training on the use of PPE or have not had regular retraining to maintain their competency in the use of PPE
- Where appropriate PPE includes breathing apparatus, those staff with pre-existing medical conditions that preclude the use of breathing apparatus:
 - Asthma
 - Heart disease
 - Diabetes
 - Epilepsy
 - Claustrophobia
 - Staff who are pregnant or planning to become pregnant
- Those staff who cannot wear breathing apparatus:
 - Males with full face beards
 - Any staff member with a permanent fixed body piercing above the shoulders
 - Any staff member with a facial deformity which prevents a respirator from forming a seal
- Staff who should not wear breathing apparatus:
 - Any staff member with an intercurrent febrile illness and a temperature greater than 37.5C
 - Any staff member who has had any nausea, vomiting; or an upper respiratory tract infection in the preceding 72 hours.
 - Any staff member who has ingested alcohol in the preceding six hours