

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE PROPER DECONTAMINATION OF EMERGENCY VEHICLES WITH RESPECT TO THE COVID-19 VIRUS

We have had many requests with regard to the protocols involved in the decontamination of vehicles exposed to the COVID-19 virus.

This is a complex issue because of the very nature of this virus. Named the Novel Corona Virus 19 which means the following:

1. "Novel" **coronavirus** (nCoV) is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans. **COVID-19's** animal-to-person spread was suspected after the initial outbreak among people who had a link to a large seafood and live animal market. Because it's so new, very little is known about how this **coronavirus** acts.
2. Coronaviruses are a group of related viruses that cause diseases in mammals and birds. In humans, coronaviruses cause respiratory tract infections that can range from mild to lethal. Mild illnesses include some cases of the common cold, while more lethal varieties can cause SARS, MERS, and COVID-19. Symptoms in other species vary, in chickens, they cause an upper respiratory tract disease, while in cows and pigs they cause diarrhea. There are yet to be vaccines or antiviral drugs to prevent or treat human coronavirus infections.
3. 19 refers to the year this particular virus was first observed. On February 11, 2020 the World Health Organization announced an official name for the disease that is causing the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak, first identified in Wuhan China. The new name of this disease is coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. In COVID-19, 'CO' stands for 'corona,' 'VI' for 'virus,' and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as '2019 novel coronavirus' or '2019-nCoV.'"

Several elements must be addressed in developing a protocol to disinfect an emergency vehicle.

1. Identify a disinfectant that is approved by CDC, NIH and EPA to be used in the disinfectant process.
 - a. Does it work to destroy the COVID-19 and other viruses/bacteria?
 - b. Will it cause collateral damage to the infrastructure and equipment (monitors; triage equipment/material; surfaces such as metal, fabric, and/or working surfaces; retainer device; electronics; oxygen systems, etc.)?
 - c. Can it be used in a very timely manner with little disruption of service availability?
 - d. Will it have an adverse effect for operational personnel, patients and/or service personnel?
 - e. Time period disinfectant remains viable.
 - f. Does disinfectant of vehicle need to be performed at a specific location?
 - g. Is PPE other than eye protection, gloves and approved medical mask required to disinfect vehicle?
 - h. What BBP issues must be addressed during disinfectant process?
 - i. What OSHA/EPA issues must be addressed?

- j. What training must be provided to operational and service personnel with regard to disinfecting vehicles?
- k. How is waste (if any) disposed of (Bio Hazard and non-Bio Hazard) during the disinfection process?
- l. Direct and Indirect cost of performing a disinfection to one vehicle.
- m. Availability of approved disinfectant.
- n. Does disinfectant reach all inaccessible areas of patient area in vehicle (behind benches, cabinets, etc.; webbing (seat belts, restraints, etc.); flooring; seams in upholstery, etc.?)

These issues are considered and discussed in our attached document -
**RECOMMENDED PROTOCOL FOR THE DECONTAMINATION OF MBULANCES AND
EMERGENCY VEHICLES IN RELATION TO COVID-19 AND OTHER PATHOGENS.**