

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS PROGRAM

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In 1992 OSHA enacted the Bloodborne Pathogen Standard. The standard was implemented to stem the growing number of AIDS and Hepatitis B related cases arising in the Health Care Industry. It established what is known as Universal Precautions.

Care workers are to be protected from exposure to any human blood or other bodily fluid. The standard requires training, written procedures, personal protective equipment, control of needles, other sharp instruments and proper disposal among others.

When the standard came out however, OSHA started enforcing the requirements not only for Medical Facilities but, across the board for all industries. After careful review, OSHA revised their enforcement policies and established the following guideline. If a company employee or anyone whose job description requires that individual to provide any type of medical treatment, than the company needs to comply with the full Bloodborne Pathogen Program and ensure that the employee receives the necessary training per the standard.

If a company does not have such an individual, they are still required to train their employees in what constitutes a Bloodborne Pathogen and the methods they can take to protect themselves from accidental exposure. Also, companies must implement an Accident Injury Clean-Up Plan. The training does not need to be extensive, but should cover what are bloodborne pathogens, how are they exposed, use of protective gloves and other Personal Protective Equipment if helping an injured employee or if involved in cleaning up blood or bodily fluids.

The Accident Injury Clean-Up Plan should include procedures to take in case of an employee accident, who should be involved in the clean-up, necessary clean-up material, and sanitation procedures.

A Bloodborne Pathogen Clean-Up Kit should be available for use when clean up measures are required. The kit should contain the following:

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| * Latex or Vinyl Gloves | * Scraper |
| * Face Mask | * Scoop |
| * Chlorine Concentrate | * Clean-Up absorbent Pack |
| * Antiseptic Wipes | * Red Bio-Hazards Bags with ties |
| * Paper Towels | * Disposable Shoe Covers |
| * Apron | * Disposable Goggles |

Employees involved in a clean-up should be trained in the use of all items in the kit. If any of the items are used they should be replaced. The kit however, may not be sufficient to handle large clean-up situations. In those cases, additional clean-up material may be needed. This could include oil dry, bleach water, mixed 1 part bleach to 8 parts water and shovels. All materials should be placed in the Red Bio-Hazard Bag. Including any items contaminated that cannot be sanitized. The Red Bio-Hazard Bag cannot be thrown in the regular trash, but must be taken to an approved Medical Waste Facility by an approved Medical Waste Hauler.

If any employee has inadvertent contact with another employee's blood or bodily fluid, (contact through eyes, nose, mouth, ears, open cuts, wounds or sores) he/she is entitled to receive at no cost, a hepatitis B vaccination and AIDS test. Also, if an exposure takes place it must be recorded on your OSHA 300 Log.

If you have any safety related questions or need help with your Safety Program, please call American Safety & Health Management Consultants, Inc., at 1-800-356-1274.