



## TOOL BOX SAFETY TOPIC

## BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

### Introduction

Workers in the pipeline, construction and related industries could be exposed to bloodborne pathogens by exposure to bodily fluids due to work related accidents. These workers may be engaged in construction work as defined in 29 CFR 1910.12(b) or in maintenance activities.



OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogens standard 29 CFR 1910.1030 does not apply to construction work as defined in 29 CFR 1910.12(b). Employees engaged in construction activities that are occupationally exposed to the hazard of bloodborne pathogens (such as those workers designated as responsible for providing first aid or medical assistance) are covered under several construction standards as well as the General Duty Clause of the Occupational Safety and Health Act. The Bloodborne Pathogens standard can be used as a guide to assist employers in protecting first aid providers.

For workers doing maintenance work, the Bloodborne Pathogens standard would apply only to workers who are reasonably anticipated to be occupationally exposed to bloodborne pathogens while performing their jobs

### **Exposure Determination**

Exposure is most likely to be a result of contact with body fluids due to a workplace accident or injury.

Exposure determination should be made without regard to the use of personal protective equipment. Workers who have the potential to incur occupational exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials while performing their job should be provided training upon initial assignment and annually thereafter.

### **Methods of Compliance and Work Practice**

29 CFR 1926.21(b)(2) requires that each employee be trained in the recognition and avoidance of unsafe conditions and the regulations applicable to his or her work in order control or eliminate any hazards or other exposure to illness or injury.

All designated first aid providers must be trained in the hazards of bloodborne pathogens. If you choose to help, protect yourself from exposure to blood and other body fluids by the use of barriers such as gloves, mouth and eye protection.

Methods such as the care and upkeep of hand tools, powered equipment, machine guards, and good housekeeping practices, may be used to reduce exposure to bloodborne pathogens hazards. Always wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after performing emergency care. Use antiseptic hand cleaner or antiseptic towelettes if soap and water are not available.



### **Personal Protective Equipment**

PPE should be provided to employees where there is exposure to hazardous conditions or where there is a need to use such equipment. This includes gloves, gowns, masks, eye protectors, and resuscitation equipment when appropriate for rendering first aid or other medical assistance. Antiseptic hand cleaner or towelettes should be provided for cleaning hands.



### **Cleaning and Sanitizing the Workplace and Waste Handling**

Contaminated work surfaces or equipment should be decontaminated (sanitized). The use of 10% bleach solution (1 part bleach to 9 parts water) would be adequate for such decontamination.

All bodily fluids, wastes, cleanup materials, and disposable PPE must be placed into proper disposable color-coded orange – red bags or bags marked with the biohazard symbol.



### **Post-Exposure Evaluation and Follow-Up**

All incidents involving exposure or suspected exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials should be reported. If appropriate the hepatitis B vaccine should be offered to employees with exposure.

Confidential Medical Records should be kept on all occupational exposure.

### **Information and Training**

All First Aid Providers and other personnel will be provided information and training on the hazards of bloodborne pathogens and the methods of exposure prevention or protection.

### **Bloodborne Pathogen Test Question**

1. Assume that all human blood and human body fluids are infectious.
  - a. True
  - b. False
2. If bodily fluids are released into or onto the workplace facilities a 10% bleach solution is an acceptable solution for clean up.

- a. True
  - b. False
3. You do not have to report an exposure to bodily fluids unless you want to.
- a. True
  - b. False
4. You can dispose of bodily fluid waste in the regular trash.
- a. True
  - b. False
5. If personnel are exposed to bodily fluids and seek medical evaluation you do not have to keep any records.
- a. True
  - b. False
6. All personnel must be trained in general knowledge about the Bloodborne Pathogen standard and how to prevent exposure to bodily fluids.
- a. True
  - b. False
7. PPE should include Bodily Fluid Containment kit, latex gloves, face shield, gowns, masks eye protection, and disinfectant towelettes.
- a. True
  - b. False

**Answers:**

1-a, 2-a, 3-b, 4-b, 5-b, 6-a, 7-a.

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