

**Missouri Department of
Natural Resources
Administrative Policies and Procedures**

Chapter 3 Work Environment Employee Health and Safety Policy

Measures to Prevent Exposure to Pathogens

Effective date

Revised

Number: 3.09-01

March 17, 2003

The following describes specific measures that department employees shall use to reduce the potential risks associated with exposure to blood and other body fluids.

REFERENCES

Workers' Compensation Law RSMO 287

Drug Regulations RSMO 195

Health and Safety of Employees, Hepatitis B Immunization for at Risk Employees RSMO 292.650

Emergency Care, no civil liability, exceptions RSMO 537.037

DEFINITIONS

Bloodborne pathogens: Microorganisms that are found in human blood and can cause disease.

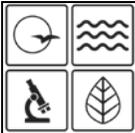
First responders: Those trained and equipped to provide first aid.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Determination of employees at risk for exposure to bloodborne pathogens

In general, exposure to blood or other infectious body fluids is not a risk that department staff faces while at work. However, in certain situations, there is the possibility that some employees may encounter blood, infectious body fluids or, more likely, potentially infectious items contaminated by blood or infectious body fluids while conducting their routine duties. Examples of these situations include but are not limited to:

- Complaint investigators, Regional Office staff, or Solid Waste Management staff investigating illegal dumps;
- Hazardous Waste Program staff or Regional Office staff investigating abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites;
- Environmental Emergency Response staff processing seized clandestine drug lab debris;
- Any department staff providing assistance or first aid to an injured person,



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- Commissioned law enforcement employees, maintenance workers, facility heads, construction workers, and other employees who may in the course of their duties, come into contact with potentially infectious body fluids or humans waste,
- Employees who are trained and responsible for performing life saving duties, or administering first aid.

In most situations, such as staff investigating illegal dumps or hazardous waste sites, supervisors shall instruct employees not to handle items visibly contaminated by blood or infectious body fluids. If there are a large number of contaminated items, items marked as infectious waste or items marked as biohazards, the solid waste management staff at the appropriate regional office should be advised.

Program or regional office directors or district supervisors, with assistance from the appropriate division health and safety staff, will identify employees recommended for vaccination.

Recognition of items contaminated by blood or infectious body fluids

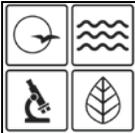
Any item that has visible blood or body fluid staining on it should be considered to be potentially infectious. Commonly found potentially infectious items include: used bandages, syringes, needles, other sharp objects, used personal protective equipment or bloody clothing. Items that are marked as infectious waste or biohazards should be considered potentially infectious.

Processing clandestine drug lab debris

Because used needles are almost always included in seized drug lab debris, it is not possible to process the debris without handling used needles. Supervisors shall instruct responders to handle used needles only to place them in a sharps container, and to wear protective gloves any time used needles are handled. Where possible, employees shall use remote means (such as pliers) to pick up and handle used needles. Sharps containers are located in each Clandestine Drug Lab Collection Station and on each Environmental Emergency Response vehicle. Employees shall wash their hands with soap and water upon completion of the processing of drug lab debris. If soap and water is not available, waterless antibacterial cleaners may be used to clean hands, provided that employees wash their hands with soap and water as soon as possible.

Other situations where used needles may be encountered

There may be other situations where department employees encounter used needles or other contaminated items. In these situations, supervisors shall instruct employees not to handle the items. If a used needle sticks an employee, the employee shall immediately report the incident to Workers' Compensation and to his/her supervisor. Workers' Compensation will determine the



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need and provide for post-exposure measures designed to preserve health and prevent the spread of disease.

Providing first aid

Some department staff are trained as first responders and are required to provide care to an injured or ill person. Other employees of the department are trained in first aid but not required to provide first aid. However, if an employee is trained in first aid and chooses to provide first aid to an injured individual, he/she shall take the following precautions to avoid exposure to blood and infectious body fluids:

- Employees will avoid contact with blood/body fluids whenever possible;
- Employees shall use personal protective equipment (gloves, CPR masks, etc.) to provide a barrier between the victim's body fluids and the first aid provider;
- Employees shall wash their hands and any other area which has been splashed with blood or body fluids with soap and water as soon as possible after providing first aid (waterless antibacterial cleaners may be used if soap and water is not available, provided that soap and water is used as soon as possible).

Impermeable gloves (latex, nitrile, etc.) and CPR masks with a one-way valve are the preferred personal protective equipment for rendering first aid and CPR. However, in an emergency, items such as fabric, plastic sheeting or plastic bags may be used as a temporary barrier to prevent or reduce the potential for exposure to blood or other body fluids.

Any employee who is exposed to blood or other infectious body fluids while at work shall immediately report the exposure to Workers' Compensation and to his/her supervisor particularly if the exposure includes the employee's broken skin, eyes, nose, mouth or other mucous membranes or a needle stick. Workers' Compensation will determine the need and provide for post-exposure measures designed to preserve health and prevent the spread of disease.