State of Hawaii
Dept. of Labor & Industrial Relations
HIOSH
Hawaii Occupational Safety & Health

HAZARD HIGHLIGHT

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Bloodborne Pathogens and Needlestick Prevention

Protecting Workers When Handling Contaminated Sharps

Sharps are objects that can penetrate a worker's skin, such as needles, scalpels, broken glass, capillary tubes and the exposed ends of dental wires. If blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM), as defined in the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens standard (29 CFR 1910.1030), are present or may be present on the sharp, it is a contaminated sharp and appropriate personal protective equipment must be worn.

A needlestick or a cut from a contaminated sharp can result in a worker being infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and other bloodborne pathogens. The standard specifies measures to reduce these types of injuries and the risk of infection. Careful handling of contaminated sharps can prevent injury and reduce the risk of infection. Employers must ensure that workers follow these work practices to decrease the workers' chances of contracting bloodborne diseases.

Five Most Frequently Cited Sections of Bloodborne Pathogens Standard

Jan.2010 - Dec. 2020

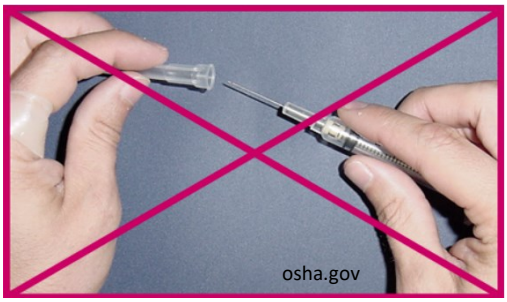
1. [1910.1030(c)(1)(i)] - Establishment of a written Exposure Control Plan.
2. [1910.1030(g)(2)(i)] - Employee training program.
3. [1910.1030(c)(1)(iv)] - Review and update Exposure Control Plan.
4. [1910.1030(f)(1)(i)] - Availability of HBV vaccination, post-exposure evaluation and follow-up.
5. [1910.1030(d)(2)(i)]- Use of engineering and work practice controls.

General Guidance

Engineering controls are the primary means of eliminating or minimizing employee exposure and include the use of safer medical devices, such as needleless devices, shielded needle devices, and plastic capillary tubes.

Best practices for preventing sharps and needlestick injuries include:

- Plan safe handling and disposal before any procedure.
- Use safe and effective needle alternatives when available.
- Use needles with engineered sharps injury protection (SESIPs).
- Always activate the device's safety features.
- Do not pass used sharps between workers.
- Do not recap, shear, or break contaminated needles.
- Immediately dispose of contaminated needles in in properly secured, puncture-resistant, closable, leak-proof, labeled sharps containers.
- Complete Bloodborne Pathogens training



CONSULTATION & TRAINING
(808) 586-9100
http://labor.hawaii.gov/hiosh

For more information, please contact HIOSH at:
dlir.hiosh.ct@hawaii.gov or 808-586-9100