

SAFETY MEETING TOPIC

This form shall be completed and kept on file

Job Name _____ Location _____ Job No. _____

Meeting Leader _____ Title _____

Date Held _____ Place _____ Time _____

Subject of Meeting WHAT ARE BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Concerns over AIDS and other diseases that can be passed from one person to another have caused OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) to issue the Bloodborne Pathogens standard. The standard requires employers to provide protection for workers from diseases that can be spread from contact with human blood and body fluids. The term "bloodborne pathogens" refers to disease-causing agents that are passed from one person to another through blood.

The standard was intended for health care workers. However, most industries have first-aid responders at the jobsite. Some industries, like laundrers or housekeeping services, handle materials used by others. These materials can contain body fluids or blood.

Many diseases are passed through the blood of one person to another. Two viruses that are associated with two common and very dangerous diseases are HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) and HBV (Hepatitis B Virus). Both can be passed or transmitted to another by blood. Any body fluids that contain blood can carry HIV or HBV. Therefore, all body fluids should be considered potentially infectious. HIV is also carried in semen.

The viruses cannot be passed by shaking hands, eating food prepared by an infected person or by using objects such as toilet seats, telephones or other surfaces used by an infected person. Infection will occur when objects that carry the blood of an infected person are allowed to enter your blood.

The following are examples of cases where the exchange of blood or body fluids with an infected person can pass the virus:

- Sharing needles
- Pregnant women to the unborn child
- Blood splashed on mucous membranes (eyes, nose, etc.)
- Tattooing/Ear Piercing
- Sexual contact
- Blood splashed on unprotected skin (open wounds, chapped skin, etc.)

Persons infected with HIV often have no symptoms. The virus attacks your ability to fight off other diseases and is associated with the development of AIDS. AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Infected individuals often are diagnosed with ARC (AIDS Related Complex).

ARC is a variety of conditions caused due to AIDS. Some ARC symptoms are fungal infection of the mouth, fatigue and weight loss. AIDS is often discovered when a person gets infected with another disease that can take advantage of a weak immune system.

Hepatitis B symptoms are like the flu. Fatigue, mild fever, muscle and joint aches, nausea, diarrhea, abdominal pain and jaundice or yellowing of the skin are some of these symptoms. HBV carriers may develop cancer or cirrhosis of the liver. HBV can also cause death. There are over 1 million carriers of HBV. Many carriers show no signs or symptoms of infection.

A vaccination can offer protection against Hepatitis B. The vaccination has proven 90% effective. It has also been 70-88% effective even when given up to one week after an exposure has occurred. Three injections are given. The second and third injections are given one month and six months after the first. A vaccination is not currently available for HIV.