



# SAFETY NEWS BULLETIN

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## Has Your Company Completed Bloodborne Pathogens Training?

Did you know that over 600,000 Americans will contract Hepatitis B this year? Did you know that there are over 50 million persons in the world with HIV and growing? Did you know that it's estimated that 25 percent of Americans with HIV and most people with Hepatitis C are not yet diagnosed?

Preventing Bloodborne Pathogen Exposures should be a topic discussed as part of training at your facility or jobsite. You would assume that in the event of an injury or emergency, employees would offer assistance to each other to prevent an injury from getting worse, so it is imperative that they receive proper training on how to protect themselves while offering assistance. Bloodborne Pathogens training is especially essential since simple universal precautions can greatly reduce and almost eliminate the chance of spreading an infectious blood disease.

Most bloodborne infection exposure cases occur in the health care profession. For the average employee, it occurs while on a job site or at a facility while rendering First Aid. But some cases can come from even the smallest areas of potential exposure. For instance, how many times has an employee had a bloody nose or a small hand cut and thrown a tissue in the trash only to have another employee come and collect that trash without universal precautions? Periodic training can be completed to prevent a little exposure scenario from becoming a huge liability.

### What are universal precautions?

First, this means that employees should *always* treat blood and body fluids as if these materials are infectious, even if they don't think the materials really are infectious.

Second, be careful when cleaning up areas where bodily fluids or blood may be located, especially accident/injury sites.

Third, wear appropriate gloves, use disinfectant cleanser to wash down surfaces, and wash hands carefully afterwards.

Collect and label all exposed items and place in a labeled and sealed bag.

### Other notes:

High exposure applies when treating a co-worker's bleeding injury, or when giving rescue breathing.

Do not eat, drink, smoke, apply cosmetics, or handle contact lenses in work areas that could be contaminated or when hands could be contaminated.

Do not keep food or beverages in refrigerators, cabinets, or work areas where they could be exposed to potentially infectious materials.

Do not touch with bare hands objects that could be contaminated with bloodborne pathogens, such as blood-covered surfaces or tools.

Ask your Safety Compliance Company Representative to provide specific training at your facility to discuss what the law requires and which areas are of high exposure at your facility or job site.

Sincerely,

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