

Bloodborne Pathogen Awareness

Bloodborne Pathogens (BBPs) are microorganisms found in infected human blood and bodily fluids that can cause diseases in humans. The most common diseases are Hepatitis B and C, as well as HIV. Bloodborne pathogens get into your body through the eyes, nose, mouth, open cuts in the skin, and other mucous membranes. The contact must be direct. Employees cannot get a BBP disease if an infected person just touches them. However, in order to be safe at work, employees should presume all human blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM) (spine, joint, brain, heart, or any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood) can infect you and take appropriate precautions. You can keep yourself safe, and prevent exposure by using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), engineering controls and good work practice controls. Engineering controls are the priority of the three controls.

Engineering controls are devices that isolate or remove the bloodborne pathogens hazard from the workplace. They include sharps disposal containers, self-sheathing needles, and safer medical devices, such as sharps with engineered sharps-injury protection and needleless systems.

Work practice controls are practices that reduce the possibility of exposure by changing the way a task is performed, such as appropriate practices for handling and disposing of contaminated sharps, handling specimens, handling laundry, and cleaning contaminated surfaces and items.

Personal Protective Equipment is the last line of defense, but an important part of handling potential BBP's. Some PPE examples are; wearing gloves whenever exposed to BBP's, wearing eye protection and masks whenever splashes, sprays, spatter or droplets may occur. Washing your hands with soap and water after an exposure.

Eating, drinking, smoking, chewing gum, applying cosmetics or lip balm, and handling contact lenses are banned in areas where BBP exposure is high. These activities increase the chance that a BBP could get into your system so you should avoid these activities at all costs.

The City provides Hepatitis B vaccinations for all workers whose jobs require them to come into contact with BBP's. You can receive the vaccination after you take the City required bloodborne pathogens training.

If you think your eye, mouth, other mucous membrane like your nose, an open cut or sore came into contact with blood or another infectious substance/material, you should notify your supervisor immediately. Some additional steps, like a post-exposure evaluation and follow-up will be required.

Warning labels must be placed on any container that stores or transports blood or OPIM. If you are transporting any of these items, notify your supervisor so they can be disposed of properly without putting anyone at risk.

If you have any questions about how this policy applies to you or any questions about exposure or disposing of blood or OPIM safely, please contact the City of Madison Safety Coordinator at 608-266-9128.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____