



CITY POLICY & PROCEDURE

SECTION: HUMAN RESOURCES

NO: HR - HS - 21

REFERENCE: HEALTH & SAFETY

Date: Jan 31, 2017

**Next Review Date:
Jan 31, 2019**

TITLE: SHARPS AND NEEDLE STICK INJURIES

1.0 POLICY

The City of Dryden is committed to the health, safety and well-being of our employees and the citizens that it serves. The City of Dryden will ensure that all appropriate safeguards are enacted to protect our employees that may be exposed to the risk of needle stick injuries.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Needle Stick Injury - A penetrating stab wound from a needle or other sharp object that may result in exposure to blood or other bodily fluids.

Sharps - Objects including but not limited to needles, syringes, razor blades, broken glass, and other items that could cause a puncture, cut or abrasion injury if not handled in a safe manner.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

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- 3.1 The supervisor is responsible for ensuring workers are familiar with the hazards associated with sharps and sharp objects and the proper disposal procedures. The supervisor is responsible for issuing the proper personal protective equipment to the worker to provide protection when exposed to sharp objects including needles. The supervisor will also provide training to the worker on the procedures for the correct handling and disposal of sharp objects. The supervisor will ensure all incidents are investigated and reported. The supervisor will also ensure that this policy is adhered to.
 - 3.2 The worker is responsible to use the required personal protective equipment or clothing as assigned in accordance with this procedure. The worker is also responsible to follow the safe work procedures as outlined below for the handling and safe disposal of sharp objects including sharps (needles). The worker must report to their supervisor all

incidents regarding sharps and needle stick injuries. The worker should contact their supervisor if not comfortable handling or picking up discarded needles or sharps.

4.0 HAZARDS

The presence of used needles, drug paraphernalia and needle kits can be found in City parks, washrooms, waste containers and catch basins/manholes. The presence of used needles, drug paraphernalia and needle kits can carry disease or viruses that could be dangerous to the health of employees and the public who come into contact with them.

Hypodermic needles, syringes and condoms, for example, can carry small amounts of bodily substances that could be contaminated with viruses such as HIV or hepatitis B and C. Viruses can enter the body of a person through the skin (especially if it is broken or if they have an abrasion or rash), or through the eyes, mouth or mucus membranes. Viruses can also enter the body by being poked or stuck by a needle (sharps). The word "sharps" is most often used to refer to needles and syringes, but sharps can also mean other sharp instruments such as razor blades and knives. Workers need to know how to protect themselves against contact with these sharp objects which may have been improperly discarded in the garbage. Also, workers need to be aware that there is the possibility that "drug residue or substances" could be present.

5.0 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Required Personal Protective Equipment includes:

- Safety Boots
- Safety Glasses
- Disposable Gloves

6.0 PROCEDURES

Some basic procedures all employees should know are:

- (a) Always survey the scene to be on the lookout for signs of drug use or hazardous substances (needle wrappers, saline bottles/lids, antiseptic wipes, condoms).
- (b) Never touch a used needle or condom with your bare hands.
- (c) Always assume that sharps and condoms are contaminated and hazardous.

- (d) Always wear gloves when cleaning washrooms and taking out the garbage.
- (e) Never put your hands into places you can't see.
- (f) Be especially careful around garbage and handle it as little as possible.
- (g) Be alert. Watch for sharp objects sticking out of the bag. Listen for broken glass when you move the bag.
- (h) Don't compress garbage or reach into garbage containers.
- (i) Use puncture-resistant, liquid-resistant gloves or specially designed tools to pick up overflowing garbage, condoms or sharps.
- (j) Don't let garbage bags get too full. Leave enough free space at the top so that when you grab it, you only grab the top of the bag, not the stuff inside. Lighter bags are also easier to carry away from your body.
- (k) Don't use your hand to hold or support the bottom of the bag.
- (l) Use single-use disposal kits for needles. Monitor sharps collection/disposal containers in public washrooms and replace as needed. Ensure containers are not over-filled. DO NOT reuse sharps disposal containers.

How to safely pick up discarded needles, sharps and tools:

- (a) Put on personal protective equipment – disposable gloves.
- (b) Open Sharps Collector Container and place on ground or area by needle or sharp. Sharps should never be carried to container. The container should be brought to the sharps.
- (c) Using the Needle Disposal Forceps grab the needle around the plunger end or middle and carefully hold the forceps away from your body and place the needle into the Sharps Collector Container and ensure the lid is securely closed with tape. Never try to bend or re-cap a needle.
- (d) Sterilize the Needle Disposal Forceps by using a sterilization pad and safely remove your disposable gloves and place both in the garbage.
- (e) Wash hands with Antimicrobial Hand Rinse.
- (f) Report pick-up of needle or sharps or tools in the log provided and re-stock sharps kit as required.

7.0 NEEDLE STICK INJURIES/EXPOSURES

Source: Centre for Disease Control (CDC)

If you experienced a needle stick or sharps injury or were exposed to the blood or other body fluid during the course of your work, **immediately follow these steps:**

- Never put compression on a needle stick injury. Let the wound bleed freely for a moment then wash it with soap and water.
- Flush splashes to the nose, mouth, or skin with water.
- Irrigate eyes with clean water, saline, or sterile irrigants.
- Report the incident to your supervisor.
- Immediately seek medical treatment.
- Obtain follow-up testing and counseling if required.

History			
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