



POLICY & PROCEDURE

SECTION: HUMAN RESOURCES

NO: HR-HS-21

REFERENCE: Health and Safety

Date:

November 24, 2020

Next Review Date:

November 2022

TITLE: SHARPS AND NEEDLE STICK INJURIES

1. 0 POLICY

- 1.1 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.
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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. Essentially, any object that is able to cut the skin can be considered a "sharp"

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The manager is responsible for:

- a. Ensuring workers are familiar with the hazards associated with sharps and sharp objects and the proper disposal procedures.
- b. Issuing the proper personal protective equipment to the worker to provide protection when exposed to sharp objects including needles.
- c. Provide training to the worker on the procedures for the correct handling and disposal of sharp objects.
- d. Ensure all incidents are investigated and reported.
- e. ensure that this policy is adhered to.

3.2 The worker is responsible to

- a. Use the required personal protective equipment or clothing as assigned in accordance with this procedure.
- b. Follow the safe work procedures as outlined below for the handling and safe disposal of sharp objects including sharps (needles).
- c. Report to their manager all incidents regarding sharps and needle stick injuries.
- d. Contact their manager if not comfortable handling or picking up discarded needles or sharps.

4.0 HAZARDS

- 4.1 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 diseases or viruses that could be dangerous to the health of employees and the public, who have come into contact with them.
- 4.2 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

5.1 Required Personal Protective Equipment includes:

- Safety Boots
- Safety Glasses
- Disposable Gloves

6.0 PROCEDURES

6.1 Employees are to be aware of the following general actions they should take:

- (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. Replace the containers before they are completely filled - sharps containers should be removed and replaced when they are three quarters full. DO NOT reuse sharps disposal containers.

6.2 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:**

- Thoroughly rinsing the injury site with running water, and gently cleaning with soap and water if possible.
- Flushing the eyes, nose, or mouth with running water if they have been exposed.
- Broken skin should be rinsed thoroughly.
- Report the incident to your manager.
- Immediately seek medical treatment.
- File a claim or an incident report with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).
- Follow instructions for further treatment and follow-up from medical professionals, where necessary
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History			
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