



Capsule—Protection of Health Care Workers on Two Fronts!

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OSHA Begins Enforcing Needlestick Safety Provisions

(from the CDC Working Group on Safe Disposal of Needles and Syringes in the Community)

On July 17, 2001, OSHA began enforcement of the new requirements in its bloodborne pathogen standard. The new requirements direct employers to:

1. Involve frontline employees who provide direct patient care in identifying and choosing safety devices.
2. Maintain a log of injuries from contaminated sharps for employers with 11 or more employees. (Information must be recorded and maintained in a manner to protect the privacy of the injured employee.)
3. Select safer needle devices as they become available.

State and territories that operate their own OSHA-approved programs must adopt the revisions to the federal bloodborne pathogens standard, or a more stringent amendment to their own standard, by October 18, 2001. The following web sites are useful resources for information.

- OSHA web site on needlestick prevention:
<http://www.osha-slc.gov/SLTC/needlestick>
- OSHA's technical background and summary on the revised bloodborne pathogens standard:
<http://www.osha-slc.gov/needlesticks/needlefact.html>
- OSHA's frequently asked questions on the revised bloodborne pathogen standard:
<http://www.osha-slc.gov/needlesticks/needlefaq.html>
- OSHA's PowerPoint presentation on needlestick prevention:
<http://www.osha-slc.gov/needlesticks/2001RevisedBBPStandardOutreach1.ppt>

- From the CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the publication "Preventing Needlestick Injuries in Health Care Settings":

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/hip/blood/blood.htm>

- Exposure Prevention Information Network (EPINet) at the University of Virginia, including a directory of resources on complying with needlestick safety regulations:

<http://www.med.virginia.edu/medcntr/centers/epinet/>

- The Safe Injection Global Network (SIGN) is an international organization dedicated to needle safety:

<http://www.injectionsafety.org>

- The National Alliance for the Primary Prevention of Sharps Injuries:

<http://www.nappsi.org/needlestick.shtml>

West Nile Virus on the Move—Increased Tracking Urged

An enhanced human and animal surveillance system (ArboNET) for West Nile Virus (WNV) in the United States has detected WNV activity in the District of Columbia as well as 12 states. WNV has now been detected as far south as Georgia and Florida. The finding of WNV in the southeastern states may indicate not only transmission by other types of mosquitoes but also longer transmission periods due to temperate climates. This report summarizes ArboNET data from January 1 through July 25, 2001, which documents epizootic WNV activity in the Southeast and indicates the need for widespread implementation of WNV prevention activities. See the following link: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5029a1.htm>.