

## Weekly Safety Tip – 5/17/10 – HOW TO CLEAN UP BLOOD

Whether it's from a paper-cut or any other occupational injury, where there are people (with blood flowing in arteries and veins), there is a potential for blood. And if there is blood or other bodily fluid spilled, there is also a potential that you might be called upon to clean it up. In fact, in 29 CFR 1910.1030(d)(4)(ii) OSHA states that work surfaces must be "*cleaned and decontaminated after contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.*" Here is a link to that regulation: 29 CFR 1910.1030.

[http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_table=STANDARDS&p\\_id=10051](http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=10051)

Clean up following an accident or cleaning up equipment used in the delivery of Emergency Medical Care are good examples of times when there continues to be a potential for exposure even though the direct hazards are no longer present. Whenever body fluid cleanup is required, the following steps should be practiced.

1. Even though it is dry, consider it still infectious. Remember universal precautions at all times. If it not your fluid, it is infectious.
2. Barricade the area and ensure that others are warned of the hazard. Keep others not involved in the process clear of the potential hazards.
3. Start with the correct PPE. Always wear gloves. Consider other barriers as the potential for contact increases.
4. Tools may be required to pick up sharp items or broken objects. Don't think a Latex glove will stop a puncture.
5. Cover it up. Take a washcloth or other soft absorbent cloth (or paper towel) and cover the area where the potentially infectious material is present. Covering will help to further identify the area and will help to hold the disinfectant solution in contact with the potential pathogens.
6. Pour a pre-measured solution of bleach (Clorox or similar) onto the cloth. The solution should use approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup in a gallon of warm water. The solution should also be freshly prepared for maximum effectiveness. Alcohol or other commercially available biocide solutions can also be used in place of bleach.
7. Allow the solution to sit for at least 10 minutes. Longer is better.
8. Clean up the area using the cloth. Ensure that the cloth is properly disposed of or laundered as necessary.
9. If necessary, repeat the steps until the area is clean of all visible contaminants.

OSHA also states that you must be trained if you have "occupational exposure" to blood or body fluids, whether that is as part of your regular work assignment, or if you are going to be part of a medical first aid or response team. If you need a Bloodborne Pathogen course, we recommend our online course. You can read more about it here, from [www.hazmatschool.com](http://www.hazmatschool.com). Online Bloodborne Pathogen training.

[http://www.hazmatschool.com/descriptions/BBP\\_1284\\_information.html](http://www.hazmatschool.com/descriptions/BBP_1284_information.html)