

Part 554 Bloodborne Infectious Diseases and the Construction Industry

The bloodborne infectious disease rules were amended in Michigan, June 28, 2001. Since construction employers did not have input in promulgating these rules, the Construction Safety and Health Division is in agreement with the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in not enforcing these rules for construction. However, both the Construction Safety and Health Division and OSHA agree that construction employers need to protect their employees exposed to blood or other potentially infectious material. This will affect construction employers as there are first aid providers on their staff. More specifically, the following construction standard will be used to protect construction employees exposed to blood or other potentially infectious material.

Construction Safety Standard Part 1:

R 408.40132(3) requires employers to have a person who has a valid certificate in first aid training present at the worksite.

R408.40114(d) Provide instruction in recognition and avoidance of hazards to control or eliminate any hazard. Under this provision, the employer is required to train first aid providers in the hazards of bloodborne pathogens. Training is also required for those employees responsible for the decontamination of blood from equipment and surfaces.

R408.40119(1) Material placed in a container in a manner that does not create a hazard to an employee. This includes containers for sharps and other regulated waste generated from rendering medical assistance. Regulated waste includes contaminated items that would release blood during handling or if compressed.

R408.40132 (5) requires first aid kits to be accessible at job sites. First aid kit supplies shall be sealed in individual packages, stored in a weatherproof container and checked before being sent out on each job and at least weekly. Expended items are to be replaced. It is recommended that personal protective equipment and chemicals (i.e. bleach) used to decontaminate surfaces be kept with the first aid supplies.

Rule 408.1011(a) of the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Act (Act 154 of 1974, as amended) requires employers to furnish a workplace which is free from recognized hazards which may cause or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm, may be applied where appropriate to the construction industry. It is under this rule, that the Occupational Health Division may require, where appropriate, the provision of the hepatitis B vaccine and post-exposure evaluation to those employees who have occupational exposure.

Even though MIOSHA is not enforcing the bloodborne infectious diseases rules for construction, those rules can be used by construction employers as guidelines for protecting their employees exposed to blood or other potentially infectious material. If there are additional questions or concerns regarding this issue, please contact the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

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