

# TRANSNEWS

SAFETY TIPS

Management Edition

Volume 36



P.A. Post Agency offers unsurpassed resources to assist in your commitment to safety and loss control. If there are any questions please contact us.

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## Bloodborne Pathogens

In workplaces where there is a risk of exposure to bloodborne diseases, (Hepatitis B and HIV), the employer is responsible for developing and implementing a Bloodborne Pathogens Plan and reducing or eliminating the risk of transmission of Hepatitis or HIV. These responsibilities are:

- Adherence to universal precautions
- Determining which positions carry the risk of exposure
- Developing an Exposure Plan and updating it
- Educational and training programs for employees

- Using appropriate protective equipment and clothing

### Hazards of Bloodborne Pathogens

Bloodborne pathogens are microorganisms in human blood that can cause disease in humans. They include the Hepatitis B virus (HBV) and the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which causes AIDS.

Occupational transmission of HIV is relatively rare, but the lethal nature of HIV requires that we take every possible measure to prevent exposure. HBV on the other hand is more easily transmitted and is potentially life

threatening. The Centers for Disease Control estimates there are approximately 28,000 HBV infections each year in the U.S.

Employers must provide engineering controls; workers must use work practices and protective clothing and equipment to prevent exposure to potentially infectious materials.

### Who Needs Vaccination?

Anyone who may be exposed to blood or other potentially infectious materials as part of their job duties. A three-injection series is recommended. The vaccination involves three injections. The second injection

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## QUICK TIPS

### Focus

Are you multi-tasking so much that you're just not getting anything done? If so, focus on just one key task at one time. Close off all the applications you aren't using. Close off the tabs in your browser that are taking away your attention. Focus solely on what you're doing. You'll be more efficient that way.

## Managing the Integrity of a Safety Committee

Encouraging employee involvement in company safety committees sometimes can be a challenge. Even so, to create a workplace that fosters employee engagement, morale and safety, employees must have a voice.

Depending on the specific workplace, some managers may face an uphill battle in achieving active employee participation in safety committees. Pressures of operational performance and

overall lack of motivation can contribute to the difficulties of creating a productive safety committee at work.

In an attempt to evade these challenges, some managers might simply designate a worker as a safety committee member or co-chair to maintain the presence of a safety committee. Thrusting an unsuspecting employee into this position, however, is an ill-advised move.

Even worse is when the safety coordinator or member of management signs off as an employee committee representative, because this is a position a member of the work force should hold.

### Give Employees a Voice

It is employees themselves who need to speak up about safety issues as part of the committee. The concept of employees

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is given one month after the first, and the third injection is given six months from the initial injection. More than 90 percent of those vaccinated will develop immunity to the Hepatitis B virus. To ensure immunity, it is important for individuals to receive all three injections.

### Handling Blood

Proper handling of blood and potentially infectious waste is essential to prevent unnecessary exposure. Handling must be done with great care - especially liquid or semi-liquid blood and other potentially infectious materials, items caked with these materials if compressed, and contaminated sharps.

If surfaces are contaminated with blood, they may require the use of a product potent enough to kill HBV, HIV and TB. Common laundry bleach and water is excellent and economical: mix 1 part bleach to 4 parts water to disinfect surfaces.

### What are Universal Precautions?

Universal precautions is the recommended policy for workers regarding blood and bodily fluids as potential sources of disease. "Assume that you will become infected, not that you won't"

The general rule is to wear gloves and other barriers to reduce the risk of

exposures. Specific precautions are to be taken with spills, trash and used sharps. For the purpose of post exposure management, employers must provide Hepatitis immunization and periodic HBV and HIV testing at the discretion of the affected employee.

### Engineering and Workplace Controls

Engineering controls are methods that isolate or remove hazards from the workplace. Some examples are:

- Washing hands immediately after removal of gloves.
- Removing personal protective equipment and clothing which is contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious material prior to leaving the contaminated area and placing the article in the appropriate designated area for disposal.
- Employees are prohibited from eating, drinking, smoking, applying cosmetics or lip balm, and handling contact lenses in work areas.
- Employees are required to perform all procedures involving blood or potentially infectious materials in such a way as to minimize splashing, spraying, and spattering.

### Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing (PPE)

In addition to engineering controls, employees must use appropriate PPE and

clothing. The employer is required to provide necessary equipment and clothing when there is a significant probability for exposure to potentially infectious materials. Specific requirements include:

- Gloves must be worn when an employee has the potential to have hand contact with potentially infectious materials. Gloves must not be washed or reused. If signs of deterioration are observed, replace them immediately.
- Eye and face protection - you must wear eye protection devices, such as goggles, safety glasses or face shields whenever splashes or sprays may be generated.
- Protective clothing that forms an effective barrier must be worn in exposure situations.

### When an Exposure Occurs:

First, an employee should report the exposure to a supervisor immediately. Then they must complete an incident report. Based on the exposure report the employee may be sent for medical attention and/or consultation. The attending physician will prescribe appropriate treatment and will evaluate any reported illnesses. Have the physician complete the Post Exposure Evaluation form and request a copy. Retain a copy of the Exposure Incident and the Post Exposure Evaluation on file.

*Safety Committee (Continued from Page 1)*

possessing the ability to form committees to voice their concerns to upper management is ingrained in the ideology of a just and equal society. Taking that privilege away from the employees can create a culture of mistrust, which means management risks losing the respect of the work force. Furthermore, members of management must not compromise their professional principles by utilizing the

committee body as a vehicle to advance personal mandates or impose their own version of health and safety on the work force or employer.

Safe, professionally minded employees result in safe and productive workplaces – this has been proven time and time again. If management attempts to step in and silence the voice of the employees, they may only endanger the workplace, lose the respect of the work force and slide down a

dangerous slope from which they may never fully return.

So give employees a voice. Create a working environment where employees feel free to speak up, communicate their concerns and suggest safety improvements. Help them understand the role they play in keeping not only themselves, but also their fellow coworkers, safe.

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# SAFETY TIPS

## Driver Edition



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## Seatbelts: Why You Should Use Them

The figures are familiar: 40,000 people die each year in car accidents, the leading cause of death for people under the age of 35. Safety belts can prevent death in about half of these accidents. If you know this and are still not wearing a safety belt, you may need to ask yourself why not. But first, let's look at what happens when a vehicle crashes.

### The Human Collision

Imagine running as fast as you can - into a wall. You'd expect to get pretty banged up. Do you think you could stop yourself if the wall suddenly loomed up when you were two feet away from it? This is exactly the

situation you face when the front of your car hits something at only 15 mph. The car stops in the first tenth of a second, but you keep on at the same rate you were going in the car until something stops *you* - the steering wheel, dashboard or windshield - if you're not wearing your safety belt. At 30 mph you hit "the wall" four times as hard as you would at 15. Or to put it another way, with the same impact you'd feel as if you fell three stories.

A properly worn safety belt keeps that second collision - the human collision - from happening.

### Wear It Right

"Properly worn" means with both straps snugly fitted to transfer the impact of the collision to the parts of your body that can take it - your hipbones and shoulder bones. With just the shoulder strap on, you can still slide out from under it and be strangled, while the lap belt alone doesn't keep your face from hitting the steering wheel.

### What's Your Reason For Not Wearing One?

"I'm only going to the shopping center." Actually, this is the best time to wear a safety belt, since 80% of traffic fatalities occur within 25 miles of home and under 40 mph.

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## Driving Safety Tips to Reduce Winter Incidents

Winter is here, along with hazardous travel conditions.. Preparing yourself for winter weather challenges will reduce the stress of this driving season. Winter weather and driving in snow and ice is difficult. It tests your skills and professionalism. You must be mentally and physically prepared so that everyone can get home safely.

There are three core issues connected with operating a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) in winter weather conditions.

They are:

- Limited Traction
- Limited Visibility
- Personal Safety (staying warm and uninjured)

Let's take a look at each of these three areas as we shift focus on driving in winter weather.

**Limited Traction** - Friction is the key element in being able to move, stop or maneuver the vehicle. The amount of total friction area on a typical CMV is

not much friction area to control or stop 30,000 pounds.

Managing this limited amount of traction is critical to safe driving in these conditions, i.e. winter!! Some tips include:

- Slow down!
- Drive Smoothly - No sudden starts or stops. Remember a sliding wheel will try to take the lead and is what leads to most slick road jackknives.
- Keep your view far down the

*Winter Driving (Continued on Page 2)*

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*"I won't be in an accident: I'm a good driver."* Your good driving record will certainly help you avoid accidents. But even if you're a good driver, a bad driver may still hit you.

*"I'll just brace myself."* Even if you had the split-second timing to do this, the force of the impact would shatter the arm or leg you used to brace yourself.

*"I'm afraid the belt will trap me in the car."* Statistically, the best place to be during an

accident is in your car. If you're thrown out of the car, you're 25 times more likely to die. And if you need to get out of the car in a hurry - as in the extremely tiny percent of accidents involving fire or submergence - you can get out a lot faster if you haven't been knocked unconscious inside your car.

*"They're uncomfortable."* Actually, modern safety belts can be made so comfortable that you may wonder if they really work.

Most of them give when you move - a device locks them in place only when the car stops suddenly. You can put a little bit

of slack in most belts simply by pulling on the shoulder strap. Others come with comfort clips, which hold the belt in a slightly slackened position. If the belt won't fit around you, belt extenders can be purchased.

*"I don't need a belt - I've got an airbag."* Lucky you! An air bag increases the effectiveness of a safety belt by 40 percent. But air bags were never meant to be used in place of safety belts, since they don't protect against side impacts at all.

## Advantages of Using an Adequate Following Distance

What are the advantages of always maintaining an adequate following interval?

- You will reduce your chances of an accident – and protect your driving career.
- You will provide a safe, smooth trip for your passengers.
- You will be less fatigued at the end of the day.
- There will be less wear and tear on your vehicle.

Above all, your goal is to be a safe driver -

to avoid accidents. If you keep at least a 4-second interval ahead of your bus, you will be less likely to be involved in an accident. Drivers who have accidents can lose out on safe driving benefits like bonuses. More importantly, drivers who have accidents can lose their jobs.

One yardstick by which the professionalism of a driver may be judged is the smoothness of his or her accelerations and decelerations. If you maintain proper following intervals you will measure high on this yardstick. Your passengers will have a good impression of

you.

A tailgater tends to be a nervous person. He or she grips the wheel tightly and watches like a hawk for any sign that the vehicle ahead is stopping or slowing. A professional driver is more relaxed. He/she knows that giving the passengers a smooth ride is more important than saving a few seconds. The professional will maintain a safe following interval and feel less fatigued at the end of the trip. Also, stop-and-go driving, with fast starts and abrupt stops, wastes fuel and is hard on the bus's brakes and tires.

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road. Avoid tunnel vision so you can predict traffic slowing down well in advance.

- Extra following distance is a must. Extra space equals extra time to maneuver and avoid other drivers and vehicles.
- Be especially careful when temperatures are in the 32-39 degree range. Black ice can form without warning and the roads will actually only look wet. Bridges will be the first to ice without the earth beneath them to insulate them from the air temperature.

**Limited visibility** comes in the form of poorly cleaned windows and mirrors, blowing snow and ice, and passing vehicles

kicking up snow and ice in front of your vehicle. Some tips to address limited visibility include:

- Clean your windshield, side windows and mirror before you leave and at every stop. If you can't see, you can't drive safely.
- Pre-trip the vehicle - carry extra fluids, especially wiper fluid.
- Be certain all hoses and belts are in good condition to not break down and leave you on the side of the road in the cold.

**Personal Safety** - staying warm and uninjured during harsh winter conditions. Some tips in this area include:

- Watch your step while entering or

exiting the vehicle or on untreated parking lots and sidewalks.

- Dress for the weather. Stay dry and wear layers of clothes.
- Keep the vehicle comfortable but not too warm or too cold to assure you are alert when driving.

Transportation is needed in even the coldest winter months. Some pre-planning and attention to detail will allow us to provide transportation services safely. Take extra care in winter conditions and come home safely. Be aware of weather and highway conditions where you are dispatched. Remember to drive safely in winter weather conditions.



## Safe Lift - Safe Back

P.A. Post Agency offers unsurpassed resources to assist in your commitment to safety and loss control. If there are any questions please contact us.

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How often do you lift something, dozens of times a day? We're lifting things all day long, from a toothbrush in the morning to bags of groceries, small children, big heavy boxes and equipment. Lifting is such an integral part of everything we do that we tend to do it automatically, without thinking. And that's when it can become a problem - suddenly we've lifted something and our back starts to hurt.

Lifting things incorrectly can cause a variety of injuries to our back and other parts of our body. Back strain, caused by overstretching certain muscles, is the most common type of injury. Lifting incorrectly can

also cause a hernia. These types of injuries can be worse if we're not in good physical condition. Poor posture, lack of exercise, and stress, coupled with incorrect lifting, can be a hazardous combination.

The best lifters in the world are small children. As adults we should emulate the techniques they use automatically. Watch any small child and you will see them:

- Bend at the knees when they squat
- Keep their head up when they squat
- Keep their back straight when they don't have the

agility to bend and lift at the same time

- Lift with their legs when they don't have a choice, with their weak arms
- Hold the load close to their body because if it's too far away from their body, they can't get their arms around it
- Avoid twisting when they fall
- Find stable footing so they don't fall
- Let you know when it's too heavy when they cry or call out for help

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## Bloodborne Pathogens

No doubt you are familiar with the term blood-borne pathogens, but do you understand what they are and the risks associated with becoming infected?

A blood-borne pathogen, as the term suggests, is a disease or infection-producing agent that can be acquired through exposure to blood and other body fluids containing blood. BBPs are transmitted from one individual to another when

blood or body fluids from the infected individual enter the body of a previously uninfected individual.

Significant exposure involves a route of entry into the body:

- Sexual transmission
- Splashes to the mucous membranes of the eyes, nasal passages or mouth,
- Contamination or exposure of broken or damaged skin (broken skin, cuts, wounds,

scratches, breaks, etc.)

- Penetration across the skin barrier (transmission with a contaminated sharp object or needle

There are a number of different infectious agents that can be transmitted through blood and bodily fluids including the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis A (HAV), hepatitis B (HBV) and C (HCV) viruses, and others. The three

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Safe lifting involves learning how our back works and using the right methods whenever we lift something larger than a toothbrush. There are several steps to take every time you are about to lift something:

**Size up the load:** Look it over, decide if you can handle it alone or need some help. Often we look at something that is questionable and lift it anyway, rather than appear weak to others. Keeping up the appearance that you are strong is not worth hurting your back.

**Size up the area:** Before you begin moving things make sure that there aren't any obstacles in the way. Make sure that you can make any turns without running into another object or stumbling over something on the floor.

**Keep your back straight:** Bend at the knees not the waist. As we grow, we have a better sense of balance and forget to use our leg muscles to do the work.

Bending at the waist will put strain on the back.

**Get a good hold:** Your grip has to be firm in order to move something efficiently. If you don't have a good hold on the item, it can slip out of your grasp and fall damaging the item and possibly you as well. Using gloves will also help give you a better grip and keep hands safe.

**Find stable footing:** You will be able to keep your balance better and use your leg muscles more effectively. These muscles are stronger than your back muscles.

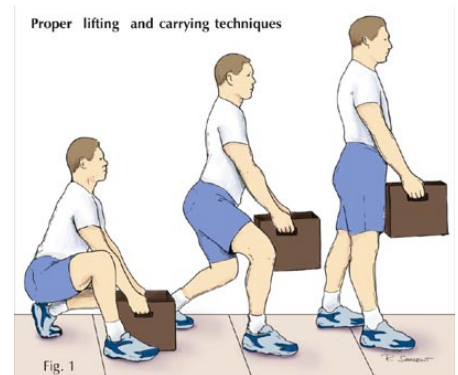
**Lift close to the body:** Don't try to lift something that is away from your body. The object will feel heavier and you won't be able to get a good grip on it. Plus reaching may strain your back.

**Avoid twisting:** Use your feet to change directions. Always move with your whole body. Twisting your upper body to move an object will put additional stress on your back.

**Teamwork:** It's easier and faster to have a

helper in moving things. Be sure to discuss how you're going to lift, and what direction you're going in, and make sure that there are no obstacles. Lift, carry, and lower the object in unison. If you're losing your grip, warn your partner and put the load down, reposition yourselves, and then continue. A moment's pause may save dropping or injury.

A back injury, besides being very painful, can leave you incapacitated for weeks and may even cause permanent damage. Follow the steps for safe lifting, and you will be carrying things for years to come!

*BBP (Continued from Page 1)*

most common blood-borne infections in North America are HBV, followed by HCV, then HIV.

The specific body fluids capable of transmitting BBPs include:

- blood, serum, plasma and all biologic fluids visibly contaminated with blood
- tissues
- cervical/vaginal secretions or semen
- saliva, urine, vomit

**Handling Blood and bodily fluids**

Proper handling of blood and bodily fluids is essential to prevent unnecessary exposure. Handling must be done with great care - especially liquid or semi-liquid blood and other potentially infectious materials, items covered with these materials, and contaminated sharps. Be sure to follow established company procedures and use bodily fluid clean-up kits provided by employers. Always use

universal precautions when handling blood or bodily fluids.

**What are Universal Precautions?**

Universal precautions are the name for the recommended procedures when dealing with potentially infectious blood or bodily fluids as potential sources of disease. The following procedures are general universal precautions:

- You should always assume that blood or bodily fluid is infected and they you may become infected, not that you won't.
- Take extra precautions when dealing with blood or bodily fluids
- Always wear gloves and other barriers to reduce the risk of exposures
- Avoid contact with blood or bodily fluids whenever possible
- Proper cleanup and decontamination of all surfaces, tools, equipment and other objects must be administered
- Wash all contacted body parts immediately after any potential

exposure

- Removing personal protective equipment and clothing which is contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious material as soon as possible and prior to leaving the contaminated area
- Placing the potentially contaminated articles in the appropriate designated area for disposal

**When an Exposure Occurs:**

First, contact a supervisor and report the exposure. Complete an incident report. You must report an exposure incident and receive medical treatment if necessary. Immediate reporting and treatment can help prevent the development of infection.

Complying with the procedures concerning blood borne pathogens will help reduce your risk of exposure and maintain a safe environment for you and your fellow employees.

# HELP OTHERS WHILE PROTECTING YOURSELF

Bloodborne



BIOHAZARD

Pathogens

## SHIELD YOURSELF FROM INFECTION

**“USE UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS”**



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