**Sharps Exposure and Disposal Safe Work Procedure**

**Background:**

If a worker comes into contact with a needle or other sharp paraphernalia it is important to follow all necessary precautions to avoid obtaining an infection or illness. If exposed to blood, the most serious infections are hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and HIV. These guidelines are based upon the exposure to bodily fluids from needle sticks.

**Hazards:**

* Avoid contact on skin with anything sharp

**PPE Required:**

* Gloves
* Footwear

**Special Equipment Required:**

* Tongs
* Sharps container

**Pre-set up Procedure:**

* Collect and don all PPE equipment
* Do not allow public within the area

**Procedure:**

* Take sharps container and tongs back to the area. \**Under no circumstances can you touch the needle with anything other than the tongs*
* Put sharps container on the ground (never hold container while inserting needle)
* Carefully pick up the needle with the tongs and drop into the sharps container. \**Do not force needle in.*

**Post Procedure:**

* Wash hands thoroughly
* If sharps container is half full, advise OH&S rep to properly dispose.

***\*\*If the needle breaks skin, refer to Sharps Exposure Procedure below.***

**Sharps Exposure Procedure**

\*\*If you have been punctured with a needle...

**Procedure**:

* Do not panic
* Inform a first aid attendant
* Allow bleeding but **DO NOT** squeeze
* Wash area with water and soap
* Clean area with antiseptic or alcohol
* Get to the hospital immediately; you have 2 hours to begin therapy

**Post Procedure:**

* Make sure first aider fills out staff first aid report
* Inform supervisor & OH&S representative of the incident.

**Summary:**

* If a needle has been found please treat is seriously
* Inform co-workers of situation
* Inform supervisor of situation
* Document incident on appropriate Incident Report Forms