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| **Safety Procedure Title:** | **Bloodborne Pathogens Contaminated Laundry** |
| **Issue Date:** | **July 2002** |
| **Revised Date:** | **October 2015;**  **Charlotte Fetterly, M.Sc(A) Occupational Hygienist**  **Fetterly OHS Services Ltd.** |
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# DRY CLEAN OR DISPOSE OF CONTAMINATED LAUNDRY

During the course of their duties, employees may have blood or certain body fluids splashed on their clothing. Small amounts of blood or certain body fluids splashed on clothing can be laundered while gross amounts of blood, such as large saturated areas, may require clothing to be bagged for transport to incineration or a sanitary landfill in a manner that prevents leakage and that complies with provincial regulations.

Isolating the laundry and minimizing manual handling prevents employees’ exposure to laundry contaminated with blood or body fluid capable of transmitting bloodborne pathogens.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTAMINATED LAUNDRY

Contaminated laundry should be:

* Effectively bagged or containerized at the location of use. For example, when contaminated laundry is wet and there is a reasonable likelihood of soak-through or leakage, laundry should be placed and transported in other leak-resistant bags or containers.
* Handled as little as possible.

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### Contaminated Laundry to be Dry Cleaned

If **small amounts** of blood or certain body fluids are splashed on clothing:

* Remove the soiled garment(s) as soon as possible following the exposure.
* Shower or thoroughly wash the potentially contaminated skin area with soap and water.
* Wear Disposable gloves.
* While wearing disposable gloves, place the suspected contaminated clothing in a single, plastic garbage bag. The bag should be tied securely and not over-filled. Stick a biohazard label on the garbage bag. Place the plastic garbage bag in a designated area. Ask your supervisor where this area is located. The potentially contaminated clothing will be taken to a Dry Cleaning or the Dry Cleaning company may pick up the laundry.
* Direction will be provided to the Dry Cleaning company to wash the contaminated clothing separately from other laundry items.

Clothing containing blood, certain body fluids that are sent to dry cleaners should be appropriately labeled. For example, blood soaked laundry should be stored in bags that are appropriately labeled (biohazard symbol). The biohazard label informs laundry and dry cleaning facilities to take the necessary precautions when cleaning the contaminated clothes.

Dry cleaning personnel should be knowledgeable of procedures to handle contaminated clothing.

### Contaminated Laundry to be Dry Cleaned

If **clothing is saturated or dripping with** blood and/or certain body fluids:

* Remove the soiled garments(s) as soon as possible following the exposure.
* Shower or thoroughly wash the potentially contaminated skin area with soap and water.
* Wear disposable gloves.
* While wearing disposable gloves, place the suspected contaminated clothing in a yellow plastic waste holding bag. Refer to the Manage Biomedical Waste guideline for bag specifications. The bag should be tied securely and not over-filled.
* Place the yellow plastic waste holding bag in the designated area. The potentially contaminated clothing may be picked up by a disposal company.

**NOTE:** Contaminated clothing that is to be disposed of is considered a “regulated waste” and must be disposed of in accordance with federal, provincial and local regulations. Do not discard blood soaked clothing into the regular garbage.

Please advise your supervisor if you notice the garbage or yellow plastic waste holding bag supply running out.