



Needle Safe Devices

Information for SIAST Students

The New Regulations

The new regulations that came into effect October 18, 2005:

1. Require all employers, in consultation with their occupational health committee(s) (OHC), to adapt and implement written exposure control plans by January 1, 2006, to:
 - describe how Needle Safe Devices (NSDs) will be evaluated, selected and in use by July 1, 2006, in health care and correctional facilities (by July 1, 2007, for blood collection agencies and other national programs that require a Health Canada approval to make the change),
 - describe how representatives of workers or self-employed persons who will use the devices will be consulted in their identification, evaluation and selection,
 - describe how affected workers will be trained before July 1, 2006, and
 - address other new requirements in section 85 such as:
 - i. training workers on the use of engineering controls (including NSDs and sharps safe devices (SSDs) and other infection control measures prior to their performing tasks that put them at risk of exposure, and
 - ii. ensuring that new types of NSDs and SSDs and other infection control measures are identified and evaluated and considered for selection on an ongoing basis.
2. Mandate the use of NSDs in health care facilities and correctional facilities by July 1, 2006 (or July 1, 2007, as noted above), except where:
 - they pose a risk to patients/workers/self-employed persons,
 - the health care facility is a veterinary facility, or a private medical or dental office/clinic,
 - the needles were purchased before October 18, 2005 for a public health emergency,
 - it is an injection ready needle device containing an antibiotic or biological product that was purchased prior to October 18, 2005, or
 - the needle is purchased during a public health emergency.
3. Require employers or contractors to keep a sharps injury log.

The Need for Change - Why New Regulations?

Needlestick injuries, as well as other sharps-related injuries (sharps injuries), can be a significant risk for health care and other workers. Some of these injuries can expose workers to bloodborne infections that are potentially life threatening, such as Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). After a sharps injury, prolonged follow-up testing may be required, with considerable emotional impact on both the worker and his/her family regardless of test results. The financial implications of such an injury can also be extraordinary, particularly if the exposed worker eventually develops a disease and requires life-long treatment.

To contact the Occupational Health and Safety Division:

Visit our website: www.labour.gov.sk.ca

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