



TOOLBOX TALK #31

Monday Morning Safety Reminders

Vol. 1 No. 31

Blood Borne Pathogens

Our goal is zero injuries, but we still must prepare for dealing with them. It is not unlikely that at some point in your construction career you will have opportunity to come into contact with someone else's blood. This can be a simple first aid case, or a serious injury. It could involve a member of your crew, or it could involve a member of another company's crew.

Blood can transmit disease. The two most serious infections to protect against are HIV and Hepatitis B. Both are incurable and potentially fatal. Both can be transmitted by contact through an open cut or wound, even if that open cut is exceptionally small. If you are in a position to assist someone with a bleeding injury, the first step is to obtain latex gloves from our first aid kit. Work under the assumption that the blood is infectious, and never ask or assume. Always properly dispose of any gloves, bandages or other objects that have absorbed blood.

Those of you trained in first aid are familiar with one-way masks for use in performing artificial respiration. Masks can prevent blood from splashing onto your face, nose and mouth. Eye protection should be used when the potential for splashing of blood exists. Once you have completed assisting the injured person, be sure to wash thoroughly with soap and hot water. If you have not had first aid training, please contact the American Red Cross. All professional metal building constructors should have this training.

If someone is hurt on one of our jobsites, you may be in a position to help. Be sure to protect yourself first, and avoid making a bad situation worse. With proper training and education, you can reduce the exposure to blood borne pathogens to virtually zero. Always remember that you can become infected through an opening in your skin that is too small for you to even see. This is another aspect of our job that we have to make safe, consistent with our goal of zero injuries.

Facilitator Notes: Deliver this talk in accordance with your own company policies. If your company does not provide or require first aid training, encourage this become a part of your program. Otherwise, encourage your crew to pursue this training as a teambuilding activity. Do not permit or participate in jokes about infectious blood. This is a serious health matter that can have long-term ramifications. Set the example for your crew.

Additional Notes: _____

Crew Member Comments: _____

Presented By: _____ **Date/Time** _____

Attendees: _____

List additional attendees on back of sheet