



Western Nevada College ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires all employees reasonably expected to have occupational exposure to blood and "other potentially infectious material" (OPIM) be:

- Trained on Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP) Standard 29 CFR 1910.1030.
- Offered the Hepatitis B Vaccine (Hep B) free of charge.

What are BBPs and Why Get the Hep B Vaccine?

BBPs are microorganisms carried in blood that can cause life-threatening diseases, such as Hepatitis A, B, or C (liver diseases) and HIV (the virus that causes AIDS). The principal sources of BBP are contaminated blood, but they can also be transmitted by OPIM, such as semen, vaginal secretions, fluid from the lungs (sputum) or abdomen (vomit), and other bodily fluids that come in contact with your broken skin or mucous membranes. The risk of exposure to BBP in the work setting is low, and most exposures to blood and OPIM **do not** result in infection.

The **Hep B vaccine** is given to prevent the severe liver disease that can develop when people are infected with the Hep B virus. The vaccine is recommended for all infants and children, all unvaccinated adults under 60, and unvaccinated adults 60 and older with certain risk factors. Nevada first required the Hep B vaccine for students entering schools in the fall of 2002.

The Hep B vaccine provides life-long immunity. There are two different Hep B vaccines available, one requiring two doses, one month apart (for 18+ years only), and another requiring three doses, given three months apart.

Employees flagged for BBP training, due to hazards commonly found in their work environment, include those from the following departments:

*Allied Health *Art *Auto *Biology *Ceramics *Chemistry *Child Development Center
*Construction Management *Emergency Medical Services *Emergency Response Team
*Facilities *Fire Science *Geology *Gym *Janitorial *Machine Tooling
*Manufacturing *Photography *Physics *Printing *Reprographics *Shipping and Receiving
*Theatre *Welding

If you completed the Vector on-line BBP training, or received in-person BBP training from EH&S, you should have completed the **attached WNC**

Hepatitis B Employee Immunization Form, informing EH&S that you:

1. Would like to receive the Hep B vaccine, free of charge.
 2. Have already been vaccinated against Hep B.
 3. Or you decline the Hep B vaccine. If declined, you may request the vaccine at a later date so long as your work exposure remains.
- **If you received BBP training, but did not fill out the attached BBP form, please fill it out, sign it, and return it to EH&S.**
 - **If you were not assigned BBP training, but believe you have occupational exposure to BBP, please contact EH&S.**

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS & THE HEPATITIS B VACCINE

Universal Precautions were developed to prevent the transmission of Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP) when providing first aid and healthcare.

Simply put:

- Always **ASSUME** that any blood, bodily fluids, and anything they have been in or on, are potentially infectious.

Based on that assumption:

- Never allow blood or any other bodily fluids to directly contact any part of your body.
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate for the situation, e.g., gloves.
- Practice proper hygiene, cleanup, and BBP disposal.
- Your unbroken skin is your best protection against BBP. Always clean and bandage any open cuts before coming to work.
- Wash hands often!

BBP Universal Symbol



CONTACT:

Katherine Strain, MS
WNC Environmental Health and Safety Coordinator (EH&S)
775-445-3348
katherine.strain@wnc.edu