SUBPART X - BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN PROGRAM

420.270 General. 420.272

(a) This subpart establishes the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Bloodborne Pathogen Program (BPP). It is designed to protect the NRCS employee from occupational exposure to hepatitis B virus (HBV), Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and other potentially infectious material. All employees shall observe universal precautions to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. Unidentifiable body fluids shall be considered potentially infectious materials. This program can reduce exposure through a combination of work practices, personal protective clothing and equipment, and training.

420.271 Responsibilities.

(a) The Designated Agency Safety and Health Officer (DASHO) shall have national program administration and oversight with the assistance of the Safety and Occupational Health Manager (SOHM).

(b) Regional Conservationists, Deputy Chiefs, State Conservationists, Directors of the Pacific Basin, Caribbean Area, and Division Directors, will ensure full and effective implementation of this program at all levels.

(c) Supervisors who direct or affect the actions of others shall decide which employees are occupationally exposed and ensure that they comply with the requirements outlined in this program.

(d) Employees with occupational exposure shall comply with the program.

420.272 Authority.

(a) 29 CFR Part 1910.1030, Bloodborne Pathogens.

420.273

420.273 Definitions.

(a) Assistant Secretary of Labor for the Occupational Safety and Health (or designated representative).

(b) Bloodborne pathogens are microorganisms, such as bacteria, fungus, or viruses, present in human blood that can cause disease in humans. Bloodborne pathogens include, but are not limited to, Hepatitis B virus (HBV) and Human Immunodeficiency virus (HIV or AIDS).

(c) BLOOD is human blood, human blood components, and products made from human blood.

(d) Contaminated means the presence or the reasonably anticipated presence of blood or other potentially infectious material on an item or surface.

(e) Decontamination means the use of physical or chemical means to remove, inactivate, or destroy bloodborne pathogens or other potentially infectious material.

(f) Director means the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (or designated representative).

(g) Exposure means reasonably anticipated skin, eye, or mucous membrane contact with an infectious material which is not ingested.

(h) Infectious material means human body fluids: semen, vaginal secretions, amniotic fluids, saliva, blood, and all body fluids where it is difficult or impossible to differentiate between body fluids.

(i) Occupational exposure means the reasonable anticipated skin, eye, mucous membrane, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious material that may result from the performance of employees duties.

(j) Personal protective equipment means items an individual employee may use to prevent contamination by potentially infectious material.

(k) Universal precautions are defined as the standard precautions all persons should use to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.

420.274 Risk Group.

(a) Health Care Providers. Individuals officially assigned to administer first-aid or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

(b) Janitorial Work. Persons who clean restrooms may be at increased risk because of their exposure to infectious waste material. It is important that NRCS insure that janitorial personnel are aware of and trained to handle bloodborne pathogens. This will reduce NRCS employee exposure.

(c) AmeriCorp Supervisors. NRCS employees officially assigned to supervise AmeriCorp personnel at the job site would be expected to provide emergency medical care.

(d) Employees who perform "Good Samaritan" Acts. Employees who are not necessarily at risk of exposure in the performance of their duties, but due to unforeseen circumstances administer medical care.

420.275 Requirements.

(a) All NRCS employees and janitorial service personnel should be familiar with this policy.

(b) A first-aid kit, laytex gloves, CPR mouth piece, and appropriate cleaning solutions should be available at all office locations.

420.276 Universal Precautions.

(a) Care should be taken by all NRCS employees whenever the potential for exposure to bloodborne pathogens occurs. Employees should follow the infection control precautions in this policy to reduce the risk of exposure to blood and other body fluids. All body fluids should be considered potentially infectious.

(b) Gloves are to be worn when it is anticipated that an employee's hands may be in contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials, including contaminated items or surfaces. Gloves should be easily accessible. Hands will be washed thoroughly with soap and water immediately after possible contact with blood and/or body fluids and before donning and after removing the gloves.

(c) Gloves must be of laytex or vinyl and of appropriate size for each worker. If the gloves are contaminated with blood and/or other body fluids, they must be disposed of as noted in section (f)(5).

(d) Caution should be taken whenever splashes, spray, splatter, or droplets of blood or other potentially infectious materials are generated and eye, nose, or mouth contamination can be anticipated.

(e) Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) mouth pieces will be supplied at all NRCS facilities. CPR equipment will be used for all emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. NRCS employees who are first-aid and CPR certified may wish to carry their own packet containing gloves and pocket mask for CPR.

(f) The following procedures should be used for cleaning blood or body fluid spills:

(1) Area of the spill will be cordoned off to prevent the accidental spread of body fluids.

(2) Vinyl or laytex gloves are to be worn.

(3) An appropriate germicide or bleach solution should be prepared. A bleach solution can be prepared by mixing a quarter cup of bleach to one gallon of water. Bleach solution should be made fresh and used only on hard floors.

(4) Remove any large pieces of glass or other particulate material. Do not pick up material with your hands. All particulate material should be placed in a puncture-resistant and splatter-proof container.

(5) Carefully remove the body fluids from the spill surface with paper towels or gauze sponges. When the towel or sponge is saturated, replace it with a new one. Do not wring out fluids. Place soiled towels, sponges, and gloves in a puncture-resistant and splatter-proof container.

(6) Once body fluids have been removed from the area, use the bleach solution to decontaminate the area. Start outside the spill area and move to the center of the spill by making a series of overlapping concentric circles with a sponge. Allow the area to dry and repeat the process. The soiled sponges should be placed in the puncture-resistant, splatter-proof container.

(7) Place the puncture-resistant, splatter-proof container in a safe holding area until it can be disposed of as solid hazardous waste.

420.277 What to do if Exposed.

(a) The exposed employee will be sent to the doctor for a Hepatitis B vaccination. Complete a CA-16, Request for Examination or Treatment.

(b) A copy of CA-1, Report of Injury, must be filed with the Department of Labor (DOL), Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP).

(c) A copy of the healthcare professional's written opinion will be provided to the exposed employee within 15 days of the completion of the evaluation. The written opinion shall be limited to:

(1) Hepatitis B vaccination: Whether hepatitis B vaccine and vaccination series is indicated and if the employee has received such vaccination.

(2) Post-exposure evaluation and follow-up: The exposed employee has been informed of the evaluation results and any other medical conditions that result from exposure.

(d) All other findings and diagnoses shall remain confidential and will not be included in the written report.

420.278 Medical Records.

(a) Accurate medical records will be maintained by NRCS for each employee with occupational exposure. The records will be maintained for the duration of employment plus 30 years (see 29 CFR Part 1910.20 for quidance and exceptions). Medical records shall include:

(1) Name and social security number of the employee.

(2) Copy of the employee's hepatitis B vaccination status to include dates of all hepatitis B vaccinations and any medical records concerning the employee's ability to receive vaccinations.

(3) Copy of all results of evaluations, medical testing, and follow-up procedures.

(4) Copy of the healthcare professional's written opinion.

(5) Copy of information provided to the healthcare professional.

(b) Medical records shall be kept CONFIDENTIAL and never disclosed or reported without an employee's prior written consent. This applies to any person within or outside NRCS except the Assistant Secretary, and the Director in accordance with 29 CFR Part 1910.20.