



# HEALTH & SAFETY NOTICE

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## SHARPS SAFETY POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This Health & safety Notice must be read and understood by all management and employees who are likely to encounter Sharps in the workplace. This includes, but is not limited to, all cleaners and manual workers as well as Managers & Supervisors. Sharps include needles, scalpels, cutters, broken glass, and any sharp instruments found in the workplace. The safe handling and disposal of sharps is paramount in reducing the risk of exposure to blood-borne viruses, and extreme care must always be taken when handling and disposing of sharps. Avoid direct handling of sharps whenever possible.

### 2. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Vacman Cleaning Ltd that all staff groups will be educated to understand the principles and practice of dealing with sharps management safely.

### 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff groups employed by Vacman Cleaning Ltd who are likely to encounter sharps in the workplace.

### 4. PURPOSE

Effective sharps management is essential for safety of employees and to prevent transmission of infection. All personnel must comply to make this measure effective.

### 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

For implementing, monitoring and performing specific documented functions.

#### 5.1 All Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the correct procedure is followed when dealing with sharps and that any problems that occur with sharps management are reported to their line manager.

#### 5.2 Supervisors / Managers

It is the responsibility of all managers to ensure that all staff in their sphere of management receive appropriate training and understand the importance of dealing with sharps safely.

### 5.3 Area Supervisors

It is the responsibility of the Managing Director and all Area Supervisors to ensure that appropriate training is available for all staff groups working in risk areas, such as toilets and communal areas, understand the importance of dealing with sharps safely.

### 5.4 Managing Director

It is the responsibility of the Managing Director to ensure that the Company policy is complied with, reviewed annually and that sufficient funding is made available to ensure adequate training and equipment is available for safe management of sharps.

## 6. MANAGEMENT OF SHARPS

- Clinical sharps such as needles should be handled manually only where there is no other means of safely removing it from the location that it has been discovered.
- In most cases a litter picker or dust pan and brush should be used.
- Where it is absolutely necessary for manual handling, strong vinyl gloves are to be used and the item is to be lifted at the furthest point from the needle tip.
- Needles must **NOT** be recapped, bent, broken or disassembled before disposal.
- Vacutainer tube-holders and the needle and holder should be disposed of intact into a sharps container.
- Needle safety devices must be used where there are clear indications that they will provide safer systems of working.
- Discard sharps immediately and directly into a sharps container. Sharps must never be carried or passed in the hand, or be left lying around
- Sharps containers must comply with UN (United Nations) 3921 and BS 7320 standards. They must have a handle, an effective closure device and be resistant to penetration.
- Assemble sharps containers appropriately following manufacturer's instructions.
- The container label must be completed at the time of assembly
- When carrying the container or when it is left unsupervised, close the aperture to prevent spillage, or tampering.
- Place sharps containers of a suitable size in each location where sharps are handled, on a level stable surface or in a wall holder.
- Do not place sharps containers on the floor, or above shoulder height; use wall or trolley brackets. Sharps containers should be placed out of direct sunlight.
- Carry them by the handle; do not hold them close to the body.
- Never leave sharps lying around.
- Do not attempt to retrieve items from a sharps container.
- Do not attempt to press down upon sharps to make more room.

- When approaching the Maximum Fill line, lock the container using the closure mechanism. Sharps containers must never be filled above the Maximum Fill line.
- The label on the container must be completed before sending away for disposal.
- Place damaged sharps containers inside a larger sharps container, lock and label prior to disposal.
- Sharps containers must only be disposed of by the licensed route in accordance with local policy.
- Never place sharps containers into a yellow clinical waste bag.
- If sharps are spilled from a container use a safe technique to retrieve them, e.g. a dustpan and brush, and place carefully in a container.

## 7. REPORTING OF INCIDENTS

All staff injuries should be reported in accordance with the local procedures. Staff must be aware of first aid measures for dealing with these incidents, and the reporting and recording of them appropriately.

Where risk assessment indicates possible exposure to blood and body fluids staff should be vaccinated against hepatitis B

For injuries from a high-risk source of blood borne viruses, post exposure prophylaxis is available, and staff must be aware of the local policy .

Approved by:



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(Managing Director)

Date: ...10../01.../.2006...