

OSHA Tidings



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Veterinary OSHA Management for Your Practice

April 2023

OSHA and the Blood Borne Pathogen Standard

By Dr. Kendrick

Employee Assistance Plans (EAP's)

By Laura Conn, CVT, CVPM, CVBL

OSHA Management Consulting



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#1 in OSHA Services for the Veterinary Practice

- *Veterinary Specific Manuals*
- *Training*
- *Safety Data Sheet Library*
- *GHS Secondary Container Labels and Charts*
- *Advocacy*
- *Complaint Response*

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Doc Chery

Dr. Chery F. Kendrick is the owner, president, and chief regulatory specialist at VetOSHA.

OSHA and the Bloodborne Pathogen Standard

By Dr. Chery F. Kendrick
VetOSHA

Let us face it, we are NOT human medicine and are not constantly dealing with other human's bodily fluids, so what does OSHA's BBP (Bloodborne Pathogen Standard) have to do with us? How does the OSHA BBP Standard apply to veterinary medicine?

It is simple, really. OSHA realizes that one of the potential hazards in the veterinary practice is injury from our patients that can lead to bleeding.

OSHA's BBP Standard addresses the hazard of exposure to blood and other bodily fluids, and how to protect our employees from that hazard. The number one rule to follow is to put on gloves before ever helping anyone who is bleeding. We also wear gloves when cleaning up other people's blood, or other bodily fluids like vomitus, or urine.

If we anticipate splash hazard such as an arterial bleed that is spurting, we should wear a face shield.

Bottomline: remind your team of the PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) required when dealing with others' blood and other bodily fluids.

When discussing the BBP Standard and PPE with your team it is a good time to expand the discussion to PPE use in general, and the importance of careful and consistent disinfection.

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OSHA and the Bloodborne Pathogen Standard (Con't)

**By Dr. Chery F. Kendrick
VetOSHA**

One of the great lessons of the COVID pandemic was the increased awareness of disinfecting practices, and the use of PPE to prevent exposure to diseases. Ensure your team clearly understands the requirement for proper dilution of disinfectants when preparing the solutions for use.

“Eyeballing it” is Never an acceptable practice in a veterinary medical facility, and incidentally, is an OSHA violation. Automatic mixers and dispensers are an excellent investment to ensure proper dilutions and complete disinfection of your clinic.

Stay safe!

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Laura Conn, CVT, CVPM, CVBL

Laura is the Director of Management and Education at VetOSHA.

Manager's Minute:

While we most commonly discuss the managers role in OSHA related paperwork, ergonomics and providing a safe working environment, we often leave out the role we hold regarding the mental wellbeing of our team members.

So often managers are the ones who spend a significant amount of their time listening to concerns and frustrations from team members. These may be work related, but often we are the sounding board for other issues in their lives. Some days it may feel we are more of a counselor than a manager!

While we care deeply about our team, and we are more than willing to listen, our resources to help them are limited. Sadly, after time, this may wear on us as well.

Fortunately, there are now resources becoming available which veterinary clinics may be able to provide to assist all of us. These are Employee Assistance Programs (EAP's). While relatively new, more and more programs are being offered. Each company offers different programs, one of the most common is to ensure that people have mental health resources. Often, they provide a set amount of sessions, and then are able to refer you to someone in your area.

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Manager's Minute: Con't

Other options commonly offered include access to meditation or relaxation programs, financial/legal advice, wellbeing information, and support groups.

While the practice does provide the EAP, any service the team member takes advantage of is completely confidential. Team members can feel safe and secure in signing up for any service that is offered and know that the practice does not have any access to their information.

Offering these services is beneficial to EVERYONE in veterinary practice, including the managers and the veterinarians. We take on a heavy mental load in our profession, and this is a step in the right direction to take care of our people (including ourselves)!

Resources for EAP's include: VHMA, AAHA, State Veterinary Technician and Veterinary Associations.

If you have any questions or concerns, please always reach out to us at team@VetOSHA.com. We are always here to help you!

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