



# Keeping Your Employees Safe:

Contact with Bodily Fluids

by JOHN MONTELEONE, CIRM, CPRP

**O**n a fairly regular basis, our employees are exposed to bodily fluids in the performance of their normal job duties. That can include everything from cleaning locker rooms and bathrooms, scraping up blood on the ice, emptying the trash bins in player boxes (which always present the risk of vomit presence) and even putting away rental skates.

With this risk, employers have an obligation to protect their employees that may be exposed to blood-borne pathogens such as the Hepatitis B virus, Hepatitis C virus and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), the virus that causes AIDS.

Providing personal protective equipment (PPE), like single-use gloves for cleaning restrooms, has become common practice in our industry, but occasionally we are still asked about what to do when there's blood on the ice (see

Ask STAR, page 50), or how to clean up vomit on the player benches.

And while most employees voluntarily “glove up” as part of a common understanding that those jobs can be unpleasant and wearing gloves makes it a bit less distasteful, we still could do our part to reinforce that precaution. We spend considerable time training our employees on how to clean bathrooms and disinfect locker rooms quickly and effectively, but how much time do we spend actually training our employees on the hazards of some of these jobs and the appropriate steps to take?

A written plan with basic guidelines for employees and patrons will help decrease their risk of transmitting or being exposed to an infectious disease. ★

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*IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF RINK -  
How to clean up vomit*

## Cleaning Bathrooms and Locker Rooms—Normal Cleaning

- Wear disposable gloves and other appropriate PPE (eyewear) if necessary.
- Replace gloves if they become torn—double layer if necessary.
- Don't eat or drink anything while performing cleaning tasks.
- Don't rub or touch eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Avoid handling of any personal items including cell phones, pens, clipboards, or staff radios.
- Wear gloves at all times when handling cleaning equipment like mops, mop buckets, spray bottles, etc.
- Remove gloves, making sure to never touch bare skin.
- Dispose of gloves appropriately.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water.

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**EMPLOYERS HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO PROTECT THEIR EMPLOYEES FROM EXPOSURE TO BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS SUCH AS HEPATITIS B, HEPATITIS C AND HIV.**

**Q: WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO CLEAN UP BLOOD FROM THE ICE?**

**A:** Cleaning up blood on the ice is tricky, because you are ultimately dealing with both a solid and a liquid.

To start, first make sure you are keeping all employees safe. As suggested on page 46 of this issue of *RINK* where we discuss dealing with blood-borne pathogens, employees should first be sure to wear appropriate personal protective equipment, such as disposable gloves and eyewear.

Once protected, spray the entire area with a bleach and water mixture. Use about 1½ cups of liquid chlorine bleach and 1 gallon of fresh water.

Next, use a hand scraper to scrape up all the blood, just like you would clean up a paint spill during an ice install. Then, sweep up these shavings using a plastic putty knife and plastic dustpan. Refer to your health department for rules on how to properly dispose of these ice shavings.

All tools used for the cleanup should then be thoroughly disinfected using the same bleach and water mixture and should be air-dried. Gloves should then be removed and hands washed thoroughly using soap and warm water.