

MID-OHIO VALLEY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

211 SIXTH STREET, PARKERSBURG, WEST VIRGINIA 26101

Phone 304/485-7374 Fax 304/485-7383

Syringe/Needle Public Removal Policy and Procedures

Approved by Board of Health: July 28, 2016

Effective Date: July 28, 2016

Purpose:

To protect the public health and provide an environment free from injury due to improper disposal of hypodermic needles and syringes, which may be contaminated with blood or body fluids, thereby causing hazard of mechanical injury or the spread of disease due to bloodborne pathogens.

Background:

If a hypodermic needle was used by an individual that has HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), HBV (Hepatitis B), and/or HCV (Hepatitis C), the virus can live on the needle outside of the body for an extended period of time. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), HIV can live outside of the body on a used needle for up to 42 days. HBV can live outside of the body for at least 7 days; HCV can live outside of the body for up to 21 days. Many factors, such as temperature, determine the exact life span outside of the body.

Reference:

Perspectives in Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Update: Universal Precautions for Prevention of Transmission of Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Hepatitis B Virus, and Other Bloodborne Pathogens in Healthcare Settings, MMWR, June 24, 1988(24);377-388

Policy:

The Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department (MOVHD) will respond to calls or complaints regarding syringes/needles found in public areas or from private business or residential sites when the syringe(s)/needle(s) does not belong to the owner/tenant and is in an area where public harm could occur from contact. The MOVHD will provide an annual community workshop in each of the six counties served to train the public on the proper handling of syringes/needles found in public areas so that citizens can choose to remove the items safely without assistance from MOVHD.

MOVHD Syringe(s)/Needle(s) Public Removal Procedure:

1. A press release regarding this policy will be provided to all media outlets in the MOVHD region upon approval of the policy by the Board of Health.
2. The press release, the MOVHD Web Site and MOVHD Facebook page will advertise the number to call to submit a complaint regarding syringes/needles found in public areas.

3. Calls or complaints may be received by any MOVHD employee (Appendix 1), but must be logged in the Environmental Health Division at extension 160 for record keeping, dispatch, monitoring and oversight.
4. Any trained member of the MOVHD staff may respond to a syringe/needle complaint.
5. Calls will be reported using the attached Needles/Syringes Log (Appendix 2)
6. Call response will occur within 24 hours of notification, unless holiday, weekend, or severe circumstances intervene.
7. Responders will obtain a syringe pick-up kit, including a sharps container and puncture resistant gloves for response to a call. These are available in the clinic area and the kit should be returned to the clinic area after response.
8. Any responder that is concerned about entering a dangerous area or who arrives at a complaint site and is concerned for their safety, may call for a police escort from the local police. If requested, an officer will be dispatched to the complaint site to maintain the safety of the responder.
9. At the complaint site, the responder may contact the person that made the complaint to assure the location is explored accurately and the syringe(s)/needle(s) located, or to confirm the syringe(s)/needle(s) has already been removed. If the person that made the complaint is not available by phone, the responder will make a reasonable effort to locate the syringe(s)/needle(s) from the information provided. If after a search of not more than 5 minutes, the syringe(s)/needle(s) is not found, the response will be abandoned.
10. When syringe(s)/needle(s) is located, the responder will retrieve the syringe(s)/needle(s) with gloved hand and will place the intact syringe(s)/needle(s) or all its pieces in a sharps container without further modifying the syringe(s)/needle(s)
11. The syringe(s)/needle(s), in closed sharps container, will be returned to MOVHD on the same day it is retrieved, and the closed sharps container will be disposed in the medical waste area. A response form, available in the forms section of the MOVHD Intranet, is to be completed for each response and submitted to the Division of Environmental Health.

Procedure for Annual Community Workshop:

1. MOVHD staff trained in universal precautions and bloodborne pathogens will advertise and conduct a workshop once per year in each of the six counties covered by MOVHD (Calhoun, Pleasants, Ritchie, Roane, Wirt and Wood)
2. Members of the community will be invited to attend and will be instructed on safe methods for disposing of used syringe(s)/needle(s) found in public areas.
3. A fact sheet of tips for collecting used syringe(s)/needle(s) in public areas will be provided on the MOVHD Web Site and MOVHD Facebook page.

Note:

Post-exposure prophylaxis treatment is available for individuals that have had an accidental needle stick from a used needle; therefore, these individuals should seek medical treatment immediately. Post-exposure prophylaxis treatment includes various prescription medications. The typical treatment of prescription medications lasts four weeks. Additionally, these prescription medications are very costly and often cause various undesirable side effects.

USED SYRINGES/NEEDLES COMPLAINT FORM (Appendix 1)

DATE OF CALL: _____

NAME OF CALLER: _____

PHONE NUMBER OF CALLER: _____

ADDRESS OF LOCATION OF USED SYRINGES/NEEDLES:

AREA DESCRIPTION OF LOCATION (gas stations, restaurants, buildings):

NAME OF RESPONDER ASSIGNED TO REMOVAL:

DATE RESPONDED: _____

SUCCESSFUL REMOVAL **YES** **NO**

IF NO, WHY? _____

SIGNATURE OF RESPONDER: _____

**MID-OHIO VALLEY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
SYRINGE / NEEDLE PUBLIC REMOVAL POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Signature Page

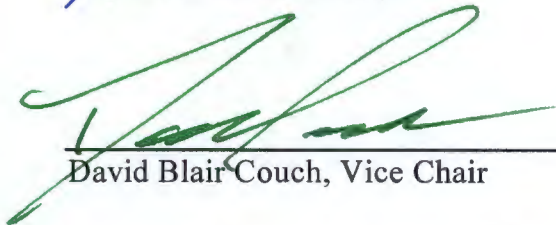
Approved by MOVHD Board of Health:



Stephen Worden, Chairperson

7/28/2016

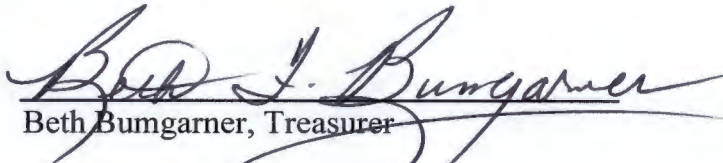
Date



David Blair Couch, Vice Chair

7/28/16

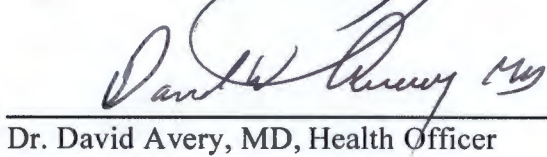
Date



Beth Bumgarner, Treasurer

07/28/16

Date



Dr. David Avery, MD, Health Officer

7/28/16


Date



Donna Steigleder, Member

7/28/2016

Date



Bill Shock, Member

7/28/16

Date

Joyce Faller
Joyce Faller, Member

07/28/2016
Date

Eleanor C. Little
Eleanor Little, Member

7-28-2016
Date

Approved via Phone Conference
Pamela S. Ward, Member

7/28/2016
Date

Approved via Phone Conference
Candace Westfall, Member

7/28/2016
Date

David K. McClure
David McClure, Member

7/28/16
Date

Joseph Martin
Joseph Martin, Member

7-28-16
Date

Absent
Amy File, Member (e)

7/28/2016
Date

Vacant (e)
Roane County Member

7/28/2016
Date

Vacant (e)
Wirt County Member

7/28/2016
Date