

Employee email from Richard Sarles

Subject: Infectious Disease Prevention

Dear Coworker:

Last week, I met with senior leaders in our Rail, Bus, Safety, MetroAccess and Police departments to review standard protocols for preventing the spread of infections and handling public health hazards. We reviewed both standard operating procedures for routine cleaning, as well as more extensive responses to address health hazards throughout the system. Given the fact that we are entering flu season, as well as rising concerns about the transmission of the Ebola virus, I want to remind all of us about the protocols we must follow.

As a general matter, under our 2013 WMATA System Safety Plan, we adhere to a *Bloodborne Pathogens Procedure* that provides instructions to our employees for handling blood or other potentially infectious materials in compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards.

Metro routinely cleans our revenue vehicles and facilities. In addition to routine cleaning, during winter months we disinfect our vehicles in response to seasonal influenza (the flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by a virus). As a result, every year between October 1 and March 31, BUS, RAIL, MACS and PLNT disinfect vehicles and facilities at least weekly. The routine disinfection programs are underway again this year and will help to reduce viruses on contact surfaces.

In the event that an employee becomes aware of blood or body fluids on a revenue vehicle, he/she should take the following immediate actions:

- Notify the bus or rail operator.
- Bus or rail operator will report the incident to BOCC/ROCC.
- Bus operator will remove the vehicle from service. The rail operator will isolate the rail car to prevent access to the impacted vehicle or be governed by the ROCC instruction.
- Operator will return the vehicle to the bus division or rail yard.
 - o Bus operator will notify the dispatcher to remove the bus from service. The dispatcher will notify BMNT to disinfect/clean up waste materials.
 - o Rail operator will notify the interlocking operator, who will notify CMNT to disinfect/clean up waste materials.

- BMNT or CMNT will decontaminate the equipment following established procedures.

In the event that an employee becomes aware of blood or body fluids in a station or facility, he/she should take the following actions:

- Notify the RTRA station manager or the MOC at (202) 962-1530. A PLNT custodian will clean up/disinfect the area according to procedures.

When handling materials contaminated with blood or body fluids, it is important to follow the procedures described in the Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan. A copy of the Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan is attached for your reference. Please ensure that you and your teams comply fully with the requirements of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) contained in the plan.

Also, remember that all employees who administer first aid as part of their responsibilities should utilize universal precautions -- treat all human blood and body fluids as if known to be infectious. If first aid requires cleaning or dressing wounds, employees must wear gloves, available in the kiosks and wherever first aid kits are maintained. Custodial Services shall be notified as soon as possible for cleanup of blood and body fluids. Contaminated areas must be barricaded to prevent patron access until areas are cleaned and disinfected.

In maintaining a safe system, Metro continues to coordinate with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, as well as with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) - which has regional partnerships through hospital alliances, the Laboratory Response Network, health departments, public safety agencies and health care providers for sharing information, detecting illness and responding to confirmed cases of infectious disease.

Please practice safe personal hygiene by frequently washing your hands and covering your cough, or coughing into your elbow. If you have any concerns about the health and safety of Metro employees or customers, please notify your supervisor or contact the safety hotline – available 24 hours, 7 days a week, at **202-249-SAFE (7233)**.

Sincerely,

Richard R. Sarles

General Manager and

Chief Executive Officer