

Target audience:

Sydney Trains' workers, including contractors, who work in locations or are involved in work activities that may potentially result in needlestick injuries.

The Issue

A needlestick injury to a customer was reported at approximately 7:50a.m on 30 January 2023. Initial indications are that the injury may have resulted from a damaged Sharps Container located in a toilet facility at Central Station.



(a)



(b)

(a) Red circle depicting the damaged section of the Sharps Container before and (b) securing the damaged sharps container following the incident.

What you must do

This event highlights the importance of assessing the integrity of Sharps Containers and immediately isolating damaged containers that present a hazard and also provides a timely reminder of the following key principles:

Always:

- handle sharps in accordance with the relevant *Safe Work Instruction* e.g. [D2015/37072 Handling Sharps](#);
- ensure regular Workplace Inspections are conducted in accordance with the [SMS-16-OP-3076 Inspection Testing and Monitoring](#) procedure;
- report work health and safety related hazards as per [SMS-06-OP-3028 Reporting and managing Work Health and Safety \(WHS\) hazards](#);
- ensure damaged Sharps Containers are removed and replaced by authorised and competent parties;
- dispose needles into an approved sharps disposal container;
- ensure appropriate equipment such as gloves, safety glasses, tongs and sharps containers are used when handling needlesticks;
- use scrapers to remove rubbish between seats;
- wear suitable *Personal Protective Equipment* (e.g. gloves) when removing/ handling sharps;
- identify the object before handling or retrieving the object;
- hold rubbish bags by the handles or at the top of the bag.

Never:

- reach into an area that you can't see;
- pick up needles or sharp objects unless you have the appropriate PPE;
- physically compress rubbish bags;
- hold rubbish bags by the base of the bag.

If a person sustains a needlestick injury:

- Gain assistance from a first aid attendant as required;
- All staff and contractors who sustain a sharps injury in which there is any risk of contamination must either attend a Medical Centre or a Medical Practitioner for assessment and advice;
- Ensure the incident is reported as per the defined processes in [SMS-17-SP-3077 Incident Notification, Reporting and Investigations](#).

Contact your SEQR Representative or Line Manager if you have any questions.



Chadi Chalhou
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