Needlestick Prevention

Toolbox Talks are intended to facilitate health and safety discussions. Find more Toolbox Talks on the Occupational Safety web page.

General Information
According to the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (UMASH), over 80 percent of farm workers and 73 percent of swine veterinarians have accidentally stuck themselves with a needle. Needlestick injuries are usually minor but can become serious. With simple precautions, needlestick injuries can be avoided.

Preventive Measures
- Ensure proper training of employees on the safe use and disposal of needles.
- Modify work practices that have an increased risk of needlestick injury.
- Ask for assistance when restraining animals.
- Slow down and do not rush injections.
- Use proper equipment and techniques. Consider using safety needles.
- Use an appropriate sharps container. Do not use food or beverage containers.
- Label the container “Sharps – Do not recycle” to warn of the needlestick hazard.
- Keep the sharps container nearby so that sharps can be disposed of immediately.
- Replace dull needles.

Safety tips when working with needles
- Do not recap needles.
- Do not put needle caps in your mouth.
- Discard all unusable needles; do not try to straighten them.
- Do not keep needles (used or unused) in your pocket.

If You Get Stuck:
- Stop what you are doing.
- Immediately wash the wound with soap and water.
- Report the injury to your supervisor.
- Contact your health care provider.

Discussion Date: ______________________
Supervisor: ______________________
Participants: ______________________

Source: http://umash.umn.edu/