Lesson 10 Review: Industrial Hygiene & Bloodborne Pathogens

Industrial hygienists recognize that engineering, work practice and administrative controls are the primary means of reducing employee exposure to occupational hazards. The primary roles of an OSHA industrial hygienist include the following:

- Analyzing, identifying and measuring workplace hazards or stressors that can cause sickness, impaired health or significant discomfort in workers through chemical, physical, ergonomic or biological exposures.
- Determining the extent of employee exposure to hazards.
- Deciding what is needed to control work hazards.
- Providing technical assistance and support to the agency's national and regional offices.

Note the following key points in this lesson:

- Universal precautions must be observed to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.
- Engineering and work practice controls are the primary methods used to control the transmission of HBV (Hepatitis B Virus) and HIV (Human Immuno Deficieny Virus).
- When there is occupational exposure, the employer must provide, at no cost to the employee, the appropriate personal protective equipment.
- The employer must make available the hepatitis B vaccine and vaccination series to all employees who have occupational exposure, and post-exposure evaluation, and follow-up to all employees who have had an exposure incident.
- Biohazard warning labels are required on containers of regulated waste, refrigerators and freezers containing blood and other potentially infectious materials and other containers used to store, transport, or ship blood or other potentially infectious materials.

Despite the overall controls used to prevent hazards, correctional programs, such as medical programs, preventative maintenance systems and emergency preparation, may still be necessary.