

# INFECTIOUS DISEASES REVIEW

The Safety Department would like to remind all operators of their responsibilities regarding infectious diseases in the transit workplace.

While performing your duties, you may be exposed to infectious diseases. Some diseases may be airborne, such as the common cold or influenza. Some may be bloodborne, such as HIV and Viral Hepatitis. It's possible that you may come into contact with contaminated surfaces or potentially infectious material, such as blood and other bodily fluids. As disturbing as this may sound, the likelihood of an operator getting infected remains very low if some simple common sense procedures are followed.

The first (and perhaps most effective) thing is to have some basic knowledge of how infectious diseases are spread. There are basically two types of diseases. One type is called communicable which is spread from person to person when they touch, cough or sneeze. The second type is non-communicable which is spread through exposure to a contaminated source, such as blood, feces, food or water, or by an intermediate carrier such as an insect.

Infectious material can enter your body through one of four (4) routes:

- Inhalation – breathing in spores or infected droplets.
- Contact with nose or eyes – through the mucous membranes.
- Ingestion – by eating or swallowing.
- Cutaneous – through the skin.

Some universal precautions to take against infection are:

- Wash hands frequently and ASAP after any contact with potentially contaminated objects.
- Avoid hand-to-face contact (mouth, nose, eyes) – **remember that handling money is another source of infectious disease!**
- Use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Always assume that any fluid/garbage could be infectious and take the appropriate steps to minimize your exposure.

Operators have three (3) responsibilities when confronted with a substance/material that is potentially infectious:

1. Contain the substance by covering it with the items from the **Body Fluid Clean-Up Kit** or with any available material (paper towels, newspapers, schedules, etc.)
2. Isolate the substance / material and keep any customers away from the area.
3. Call Central Communications immediately for a bus change.