Biohazards Used Needles (Laundry, Housekeeping) Stats and Facts

FACTS

Handling used needles in hotel settings, particularly in laundry and housekeeping, poses significant biohazard risks to staff. Here are the primary hazards and concerns associated with encountering used needles:

1. **Infection Risk:** Used needles can carry blood-borne pathogens like Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV. If a worker is pricked by a contaminated needle, there’s a risk of transmission of these diseases.
2. **Psychological Impact:** Encountering needles, especially if a needlestick injury occurs, can cause significant anxiety and stress for employees as a result of worrying about potential infections.
3. **Improper Disposal Risks:** Needles that are not properly disposed of can pose risks not just to housekeeping and laundry staff but also to guests and other employees who may come into contact with them.
4. **Injury Risk:** Beyond infection transmission, needlestick injuries can cause immediate physical harm, such as puncture wounds, which may lead to secondary infections.
5. **Legal and Compliance Issues:** Hotels have a legal obligation to provide a safe working environment. Failure to adhere to proper biohazard disposal protocols can result in regulatory penalties and legal liability.

STATS

- In fact, according to a study of hotel records covering thousands of employee injuries, this position represents the

highest overall injury rate among all categories of hotel employees, with an injury rate of 10.4%, almost double the injury rate for non-housekeepers (5.6%). Occupational hazards hotel cleaners are exposed to can include physical, chemical, biological, and psychosocial.

- A report from the Canadian Center for Occupational Safety and Health revealed that a hotel housekeeper changes his or her body position every three seconds while cleaning a room. If the average time spent cleaning each room is less than 25 minutes, a housekeeper would assume 8,000 different body postures during every eight-hour shift.
- We estimated that in 2022, 550,819 deaths were caused by biological risk factors, with 476,000 deaths attributed to communicable infectious diseases and 74,000 deaths caused by noncommunicable factors. Among these, there were 223,650 deaths attributed to COVID-19 at work. We calculated the rate of 584 DALYs per 100,000 workers, representing an 11% increase from the previous estimate of the global burden of work-related disabilities measured by DALYs.