## Retail Tagger Safety Infographic



# Shared Tagging Guns and Bloodborne Disease Risk

**Handheld tagging guns**, also known as swiftachers or swift-taggers, are used in retail to attach price tags or other tags to clothing, accessories, and household goods. Tagging guns have a hollow needle to penetrate material and to deliver a plastic thread fastener, which attaches the paper tag to the retail item. Injuries from the needle ("needlesticks") are common in retail workers who use tagging guns. Therefore, when tagging guns are shared, workers may be exposed to pathogens (disease causing agents such as viruses or bacteria) that are spread through blood ("bloodborne infections").

HEALTH HAZARD ALERT

**Bloodborne infections** are caused by pathogens that are spread through contact with an infected person's blood. Bloodborne infections include **hepatitis B**, **hepatitis C**, and **human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)**. Although these are serious infections, treatment is available if testing shows that you are infected. There is also a vaccine available that you can take to prevent hepatitis B infection.

### To prevent bloodborne pathogen exposure while using a handheld tagging gun

#### **EMPLOYERS SHOULD:**

- Issue individual tagging guns to workers that are labeled with the worker's name.
- Provide a locker or other secure space for workers to store their tagging guns when not using them.
- Provide an appropriate biohazard waste container for disposal of used needles.
- Instruct workers to report needlestick injuries to their supervisor.
- Provide worker training in the safe use of tagging guns.
- Provide worker training about bloodborne pathogens.
- Be familiar with the Cal/OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard.
- Have an Injury and Illness Prevention Program.

#### WORKERS SHOULD:

- Avoid sharing their tagging gun with coworkers.
- Label tagging gun with their name.
- Store their tagging gun in a secure space when not using it.
- ▶ Handle only their own tagging gun needles.
- Dispose of their own used needles in an appropriate red biohazard waste container.

#### If a tagging gun must be shared, workers should:

- Never lend a tagging gun to a coworker with a needle loaded.
- Always make sure the prior user removes the used needle if a tagging gun is borrowed.
- Report tagging gun injuries to their supervisor immediately.

**Source:** https://www.cdph.ca.gov