

Electroshock Weapon Projectile Bloodborne Hazard Advisory

An electroshock weapon is a non-lethal weapon used for incapacitating a person by administering electric shock aimed at disrupting superficial muscle functions. One type is a conductive energy device (CED), an electroshock gun popularly known by the brand name “Taser.” This device fires small pointed barbed projectiles that administer the shock through a thin, flexible wire. Hazards arise when the blood/tissue covered projectiles are not handled properly during removal and storage after deployment of the weapon. Transmission of a bloodborne pathogen to the employee could result.

Hazards

- Weapon operators: exposed skin coming into contact with contaminated projectiles while removing them from a person.
- Emergency medical technicians or physicians: coming into contact with contaminated projectiles while removing them from a person.
- Law enforcement personnel: contacting the contaminated projectiles while they are being stored for evidence or awaiting disposal.

Safe Work Practices

- Treat all electroshock weapon projectiles as contaminated sharps.
- Use a one-handed technique to remove/handle the projectiles.
- Never use your fingers to remove the projectiles from the person.
- Use a tool or an engineered device for removal and handling.

- Use appropriate personal protective equipment established by the employer’s bloodborne pathogen exposure determination.
- Store/dispose of contaminated projectiles in a container that is closable, puncture resistant, leakproof on sides and bottom, and labeled with an appropriate biohazard warning symbol or color coded red.
- Employees must be trained on proper projectile removal/handling, as well as decontamination procedures.
- Procedures in the event of employee exposure to a contaminated projectile must be established and followed.

If CEDs are issued to employees for use, the employer has the responsibility of addressing the hazards of handling the projectiles in their Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan. Free and confidential assistance is available to public employers through the New York State Department of Labor, Bureau of Public Employee Safety and Health, Consultation Program.

To take advantage of these services, contact your nearest PESH Office:

Albany	(518) 457-5508
Binghamton	(607) 721-8211
Buffalo	(716) 847-7133
Garden City	(516) 228-3970
New York City	(212) 775-3548
Rochester	(585) 258-4570
Syracuse	(315) 479-3212
Utica	(315) 793-2258
White Plains	(914) 997-9514