



# SAFETY ALERT

RISK MANAGEMENT & SAFETY

## Campus Incident—Needle Stick

**Event:** November 3, 2016  
**Category:** Sharps  
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### Description

A maintenance employee received a needle stick from a hypodermic needle as he was repairing a sink drain stopper. The employee was squatting to remove the nut on the P-trap while reaching into the sink to hold/remove the stopper. As the employee grabbed the stopper he was pricked by a needle as it was beneath the sink stopper.

### Findings

- The hypodermic needle was a diabetic needle.
- The maintenance employee stated that he did not see the needle due to its size and it was under the sink stopper.

### Causes

The needle prick occurred because the needle was present in the drain of the sink. It was unknown when the needle fell into the sink. The maintenance technician did not observe the needle under the stopper due to his position and the size of the needle.

### Recommended Actions

1. Communicate this incident to other maintenance and housekeeping personnel.
2. Inform the maintenance personnel and housekeeping to look for needles or other sharp objects prior to working on plumbing fixtures or in other areas (garbage) where hypodermic needles may have fallen.
3. Inform the maintenance personnel that it is required to wear a leather type or other substantial glove while conducting plumbing work.