

**Chapter 246-145 WAC**  
**ELECTROLOGY AND TATTOOING STANDARDS FOR STERILIZATION PROCEDURES**  
**AND INFECTION CONTROL**

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**WAC SECTIONS**

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**WAC 246-145-001 Purpose and scope.** These rules establish standard universal precautions for preventing the spread of diseases by using sterilization procedures and infection control in the commercial practices of electrology and tattooing.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 70.54.340. 02-11-109, § 246-145-001, filed 5/20/02, effective 6/20/02.]

**WAC 246-145-010 Definitions.** For the purpose of these rules, the following words and phrases have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

- (1) "Electrologist" means a person who practices the business of electrology for a fee.
- (2) "Electrology" means the process of permanently removing hair by using solid needle or probe electrode epilation, including:
  - (a) Thermolysis, being of shortwave, high frequency type;
  - (b) Electrolysis, being a galvanic type; or
  - (c) A combination of both which is accomplished by a superimposed or sequential blend.
- (3) "Gloves" means medical grade gloves that are FDA approved.
- (4) "Sterilization" means a process that destroys all forms of microbial life, including highly resistant bacterial spores.
- (5) "Tattoo artist" means a person who practices the business of tattooing for a fee.
- (6) "Tattooing" means the indelible mark, figure, or decorative design introduced by insertion of nontoxic dyes or pigments into or under the subcutaneous portion of the skin upon the body of a live human being for cosmetic or figurative purposes.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 70.54.340. 02-11-109, § 246-145-010, filed 5/20/02, effective 6/20/02.]

**WAC 246-145-020 Standard universal precautions for preventing the spread of disease. (1)**  
Electrologists - The following universal precautions must be used by electrologists in the care of all clients.

- (a) Wash hands with soap and water immediately before and after each client contact;
- (b) Wash hands and other skin surfaces immediately and thoroughly if contaminated with blood or other body fluids;
- (c) Wash hands immediately before fresh, unused gloves are put on and after gloves are removed;
- (d) Clean the client's skin by applying an antiseptic or antibacterial solution prior to and following treatment;
- (e) Wear fresh, unused gloves with each client to prevent skin and mucous membrane exposure contact with blood or other body fluids of each client;
- (f) Wear gloves for touching blood and body fluids, mucous membranes, or nonintact skin of all clients, and for handling items or surfaces soiled with blood or body fluids;
- (g) Change gloves after contact with each client;
- (h) Immediately remove gloves that are torn or have small pinholes, wash hands and put on fresh, unused gloves;
- (i) Take precautions to prevent injuries caused by needles and other sharp instruments or devices during procedures; when cleaning used instruments; during disposal of used needles; and when handling sharp instruments after procedures;
- (j) Prevent needlestick injuries by not recapping needles, not bending or breaking needles by hand and by not otherwise manipulating by hand;
- (k) Dispose of used disposable needles and other sharp items in puncture-resistant containers;
- (l) Inspect hands for small cuts, sores and abrasions; if present, use a Seal-skin product or bandage. If the electrologist has weeping dermatitis or draining sores, the electrologist should avoid contact with clients and equipment until the weeping dermatitis or draining sores are healed;
- (m) Regularly clean and disinfect countertops; regularly clean walls when visibly soiled; regularly vacuum and clean carpets and floors; and
- (n) Clean and disinfect other frequently touched surfaces including, but not limited to, equipment and lamps between each client.

(2) Tattoo artists - The following universal precautions must be used by tattoo artists in the care of all clients.

- (a) Wash hands with soap and water immediately before and after each client contact;
- (b) Wash hands and other skin surfaces immediately and thoroughly if contaminated with blood or other body fluids;

- (c) Wash hands immediately before fresh, unused gloves are put on and after gloves are removed;
- (d) Clean the client's skin by applying an antiseptic or antibacterial solution prior to and following treatment;
- (e) Wear fresh, unused gloves with each client to prevent skin and mucous membrane exposure contact with blood or other body fluids of each client;
- (f) Wear gloves for touching blood and body fluids, mucous membranes, or nonintact skin of all clients, and for handling items or surfaces soiled with blood or body fluids;
- (g) Change gloves after contact with each client;
- (h) Immediately remove gloves that are torn or have small pinholes, wash hands and put on fresh, unused gloves;
- (i) Take precautions to prevent injuries caused by needles and other sharp instruments or devices during procedures, when cleaning used instruments, during disposal of used needles, and when handling sharp instruments after procedures;
- (j) Prevent needlestick injuries by not recapping needles, not bending or breaking needles by hand and by not otherwise manipulating by hand;
- (k) Dispose of used disposable needles and other sharp items in puncture-resistant containers;
- (l) Inspect hands for small cuts, sores, and abrasions; if present, use a Seal-skin product or bandage. If a tattoo artist has weeping dermatitis or draining sores, the tattoo artist should avoid contact with clients and equipment until the weeping dermatitis or draining sores are healed;
- (m) Regularly clean and disinfect countertops; regularly clean walls when visibly soiled; and regularly vacuum and clean carpets and floors;
- (n) Clean and disinfect other frequently touched surfaces such as, clip cords, pigment holders, pigment bottles, pens, equipment and lamps between each client; and
- (o) Take other measures to prevent cross contamination as included in national standards per RCW 70.54.340.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 70.54.340. 02-11-109, § 246-145-020, filed 5/20/02, effective 6/20/02.]

**WAC 246-145-030 Sterile procedures.** (1) Electrologist - To ensure that clients are not exposed to disease through needles or other instruments, electrologists must:

- (a) Use single-use, presterilized disposable needles on one client and then dispose of the needle immediately in a puncture-resistant container;
- (b) Not use reusable needles;
- (c) Use single-use sharp items on only one client and dispose of the items immediately in a puncture-

resistant container;

(d) Only reuse cleaned and sterilized sharp items and instruments that are intended for multiple use;

(e) Thoroughly clean and sterilize reusable sharp items and instruments between clients;

(f) Accumulate reusable sharp items and instruments in a holding container by submersion in a solution of a protein-dissolving enzyme detergent and water;

(g) Sterilize reusable items in a steam autoclave or dry-heat sterilizer, which is used, cleaned and maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions;

(h) Resterilize a reusable sterile instrument before using it on a client, if it is contaminated by dropping, by touching an unsterile surface, by a torn package, by the package being punctured, damaged, wet or by some other means;

(i) Immediately dispose of a single-use item in a puncture-resistant container, if it is contaminated by dropping, by touching an unsterile surface, by a torn package, by the package being punctured, damaged, wet or by some other means;

(j) Immediately dispose of an instrument in a puncture-resistant container if the expiration date has passed; and

(k) Monitor sterilizers to determine that all conditions of sterilization are met. This includes:

(i) Assuring that sterilizers have a thermometer and timer to indicate whether adequate heat has been applied to packaged equipment;

(ii) Using or checking chemical indicators on each package to assure the items have been exposed to the sterilization process;

(iii) Sterilizers must be tested by biological spore tests according to the manufacturer's instructions. In the event of a positive biological spore test, the electrologist must take immediate action to ensure all conditions of sterilization are met; and

(iv) Documentation of monitoring must be maintained either in the form of a log reflecting dates and person(s) conducting the testing or copies of reports from an independent testing entity. The documentation must be maintained at least three years.

(2) Tattoo artists - To ensure that clients are not exposed to disease through needles or other instruments, tattoo artists must:

(a) Use single-use, presterilized disposable needles on one client and then dispose of the needle immediately in a puncture-resistant container;

(b) Not use reusable needles;

(c) Use single-use sharp items on only one client and dispose of the items immediately in a puncture-resistant container;

(d) Only reuse cleaned and sterilized sharp items and instruments that are intended for multiple use;

- (e) Thoroughly clean and sterilize reusable sharp items and instruments between clients;
- (f) Accumulate reusable sharp items and instruments in a holding container by submersion in a solution of a protein-dissolving enzyme detergent and water;
- (g) Sterilize reusable items in a steam autoclave or dry-heat sterilizer, which is used, cleaned and maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions;
- (h) Resterilize a reusable sterile instrument before using it on a client, if it is contaminated by dropping, by touching an unsterile surface, by a torn package, by the package being punctured, damaged, wet or by some other means;
- (i) Immediately dispose of a single-use item in a puncture-resistant container, if it is contaminated by dropping, by touching an unsterile surface, by a torn package, by the package being punctured, damaged, wet or by some other means;
- (j) Immediately dispose of an instrument in a puncture-resistant container if the expiration date has passed; and
- (k) Monitor sterilizers to determine that all conditions of sterilization are met. This includes:
  - (i) Assuring that sterilizers have a thermometer and timer to indicate whether adequate heat has been applied to packaged equipment;
  - (ii) Using or checking chemical indicators on each package to assure the items have been exposed to the sterilization process;
  - (iii) Sterilizers must be tested by biological spore tests according to the manufacturer's instructions. In the event of a positive biological spore test, the tattoo artist must take immediate action to ensure all conditions of sterilization are met; and
  - (iv) Documentation of monitoring must be maintained either in the form of a log reflecting dates and person(s) conducting the testing or copies of reports from an independent testing entity. The documentation must be maintained at least three years.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 70.54.340. 02-11-109, § 246-145-030, filed 5/20/02, effective 6/20/02.]

**WAC 246-145-040 Penalty for not complying with rules.** Any electrologist or tattoo artist out of compliance with the rules in this chapter will be guilty of a misdemeanor.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 70.54.340. 02-11-109, § 246-145-040, filed 5/20/02, effective 6/20/02.]