

	<b>West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources</b>				
	<b>MANUAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROCEDURES</b>				
Section	Disease Control	Date	June 22, 2006	Procedure #	DC-9
Subject	Use of Pre-sterilized Needles, Tubes, and Instruments in Tattoo Studios			Page	1 of 1

With the ever increasing use of disposable, pre-sterilized needles, tubes, and instruments in Tattoo Studios, this office has concluded that it is acceptable for a tattoo studio to operate with these instruments and be **exempt from having an autoclave on site** as long as the following guidelines are met:

- Studios that use pre-sterilized instruments must have the following documentation from the instrument manufacturer:
  - method of sterilization and lot number,
  - recommended method of storage, and
  - expiration date
- All unused, pre-sterilized instruments which have expired must be appropriately disposed.
- Packaging of pre-sterilized instruments must be dry, intact and undamaged. Instruments in wet or damaged packaging cannot be used and must be appropriately disposed.

An autoclave shall be required if the Tattoo Studio intends to re-sterilize packages of instruments which have expired, packages which have become compromised or wet, or cleaned, reusable instruments. Instruments to be sterilized shall be sealed in bags made specifically for the purpose of autoclave sterilization and shall include a color code indicator and the date of sterilization.

Unused sterilized instruments that were previously sterilized in an autoclave must be re-sterilized if not used within six (6) months of the date of sterilization in accordance with Chapter 16, Article 38, Section 3 (e) of the WV Public Health Laws.

This memorandum applies only to tattoo studio operations and not to body piercing studio operations. All body piercing operations must remain in full compliance with the West Virginia [Body Piercing Studio Business Rule, 64 CSR 80](#), and procedures manual memo [DC-10 Autoclave Requirements in Body Piercing Studios](#).

References                    [64 CSR 80, Body Piercing Studio Business Rule](#)  
    [DC-10 Autoclave Requirements in Body Piercing Studios](#)

History

Attachments