

# Toolbox Talk

## 40. Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease)



### What?

- There are two types of leptospirosis that can affect people at work:-
  - Weil's disease - is a serious and sometimes fatal infection transmitted by contact with urine from infected rats (inhaling dust from droppings also carries risk of infection)
  - Hardjo - form of Leptospirosis - is transmitted from cattle to humans



### Why?

- Both diseases start with a flu-like illness with a persistent and severe headache
- Anyone who is exposed to rat urine or foetal fluids from cattle is at risk
- Those most at risk include sewage workers or those in contact with canal and river water.
- Hygiene is essential and extra care must be taken with skin injuries
- Leptospirosis is less severe if treated promptly so if you experience any symptoms while working in areas where there might be rats, stagnant or contaminated water make sure you carry the Company Leptospirosis warning card and show it to your Doctor if you experience symptoms

### Do



- ✓ Wear correct PPE
- ✓ Report any suspect areas where rats have been seen
- ✓ Cover open wounds e.g. cuts etc
- ✓ Wash hands with anti-bacterial agent
- ✓ If you work in infected areas, always carry the Company leptospirosis warning card
- ✓ Get attention immediately if symptoms occur

### Don't



- ✗ Work without the correct PPE
- ✗ Ignore symptoms (flu like illness with a severe and persistent headache)
- ✗ Eat or smoke in contaminated areas



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