

Regulated Medical Waste Plan and Disposal

1. Licensing

- All facilities producing regulated medical waste (any waste generated in the diagnosis, treatment or immunization of human beings or animals, in research, or in production or testing of biologicals) are required to obtain a license from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Safety Management Services (SMS) obtains and maintains these licenses.

2. Types of Regulated Medical Waste

Regulated medical waste (RMW) is defined by law as:

- Cultures and stocks of infectious agents and associated biologicals, including laboratory waste, vaccines, media used to grow microorganisms, culture dishes, and related transfer devices.
- Liquid body fluids from humans or animals (except urine) which are in containers (plastic or glass) and are free flowing liquid, such as blood, blood products and potentially infectious material.
- Semi-liquid body fluids (except urine and feces) which have been saturated or become caked on items and may release blood or other potentially infectious body fluids when compressed during handling.
- Pathological waste such as human tissue, organs, products of conception, body parts other than teeth, body fluids removed by trauma or during surgery, autopsy or other medical procedure and not fixed in formaldehyde.
- Sharps that have been used in animal or human patient care or in clinical/research laboratories.
- Waste from research animals exposed to agents which are infectious to humans.

3. Containers

Regulated medical waste may be placed in red bags, biohazard-labeled plastic bags, sharps containers, fiber drums, biohazard boxes, or biohazard buckets.

- Sharps must be placed in a properly labeled container designed for that purpose.
- Containers must be closable, rigid, puncture-resistant containers that can be secured to preclude loss of contents. Cultures and stocks of material contaminated with infectious agents must be placed in puncture-resistant containers.

- Other regulated medical waste such as liquid body fluids, semi-liquid body fluids and pathological waste must be placed in bags or other containers that are closable, impervious to moisture and constructed to contain all contents and prevent leakage of fluids.
- Containers must have sufficient strength to resist ripping, tearing, breaking, or bursting under normal conditions of usage or handling.

4. Labeling

- Sharps containers shall be conspicuously labeled with the word "Sharps".
- All containers of regulated medical waste (including sharps containers, red bags and biohazard buckets) must be clearly labeled with the following information:
 1. Universal biohazard symbol, or word "biohazard" printed not less than 1 inch high.
 2. Calendar date a waste was first placed in the container.
 3. Calendar date the container must be sent to disposal (eleven weeks after waste was first placed in the container).
 4. Unit or department where the waste was generated.

5. Handling

- UMHHC Environmental Services manages the process of obtaining and changing out RMW containers in the areas they service.
- Off-site locations and on-site areas not serviced by UMHHC Environmental Services must describe how this process is completed at their location as part of the site Regulated Medical Waste Management Plan.
- Standard precautions including personal protective clothing and equipment (PPE) shall be used at all times when handling materials that may be contaminated with RMW.

6. Collection and Disposal

- Solid RMW is routinely processed through the UMHHC autoclave which steam decontaminates the material and grinds the residue for landfill disposal.
- The preferred method for disposing of liquid body fluids and semi-liquid body fluids is by flushing down the sanitary sewer.
- Regulated medical waste must be processed for final disposal within ninety (90) days of generation. Off-sites must ensure their RMW is sent to University Hospital at least one week before this date. Sharps

containers must be emptied or discarded when they are three-quarters (75%) full.

7. Packaging and Transport

The department, unit or individual producing RMW is responsible for placing it in appropriate containers and ensuring the containers are securely closed and free of leaks or exterior contamination.

- At onsite locations, Environmental Services (ES) staff transports waste at least daily from the collection sites to the centralized autoclave for processing.
- At offsite locations, RMW is packed by the producing unit and then picked up and transported to the UMHHC autoclave by a transportation service (Metro Delivery) licensed by the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) to carry regulated medical waste.

8. Training

- The producing unit or department is responsible for training employees in the management of regulated medical waste.

References

[Hospital Waste Management: Regulated Medical Waste](#)

[UMHHC Policy # 05-03-023 Regulated Medical Waste Management](#)

[UMHHC Policy # 05-03-026 Hazardous Waste Management](#)

[OSEH: Biohazardous \(Medical\) Waste Disposal; Guide No: HM001](#)

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