

HSC Laboratory Infectious Waste Disposal

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The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has established a Medical Waste Management regulation in Chapter NR 526 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code.

The regulation identifies the following categories of wastes as infectious waste.

- Contaminated sharps which are both infectious and may easily cause punctures or cuts in the skin, including but not limited to: hypodermic needles, syringes with needles attached, scalpel blades, lancets, broken glass vials, broken rigid plastic vials and laboratory slides.
- Unused or disinfected sharps which are being discarded, including hypodermic needles, scalpel blades, lancets and syringes with needles attached.
- Bulk blood and body fluids from humans.
- Human tissue.
- Microbiological laboratory waste.
- Tissue, bulk blood or body fluids from an animal which is carrying a zoonotic infectious agent.

Wastes presumed not to be infectious wastes include all of the following:

- Items soiled but not saturated with blood or body fluids from humans included in the definition of "bulk blood and body fluids".
- Items soiled with body fluids from humans not included in the definition of "bulk blood and body fluids".
- Intravenous tubing after needles have been detached.
- Tissue, blood, body fluids or cultures from an animal which is not known to be carrying or experimentally infected with a zoonotic infectious agent.
- Animal manure and bedding.
- Other solid wastes, including but not limited to containers, packages, waste glass, laboratory equipment and other materials which have had no contact with blood, body fluids, clinical cultures or infectious agents.
- Formerly infectious waste, after it has been treated.

To apply good lab waste management practices in the HSC all lab personnel should:

- *Place all non-infectious wastes in trash receptacles other than those designated for infectious wastes.*
- *Segregate sharps infectious wastes from other infectious wastes. Sharps infectious wastes shall be discarded in separate sharps containers.*
- *Autoclave all non-sharps containing infectious wastes. Infectious wastes that have been autoclaved and do not contain sharps can be discarded with all other building trash after being placed in an opaque outer container, such as a black plastic bag.*
- *Sharps containers, whether or not autoclaved, shall be placed in the infectious waste containers provided by the infectious waste contract service.*
- *Blood and body fluids can be discarded in a laboratory sink followed by copious amounts of rinse water.*
- *Not discard radioactive, reactive, corrosive, ignitable, toxic or any hazardous wastes in infectious waste containers. Contact your employer to arrange disposal of these wastes.*

For additional information related to this issue contact Dan Sweetman at dsweetman@uwlax.edu or 785-6800.