

Environmental Standard Operating Procedure (ESOP)	
Medical Waste Operations (MWO)	
Environmental Affairs (EA): Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) D/I Manager (760) 830-8361	Revised: 1 October 2024

Subject: MEDICAL WASTE OPERATIONS

References: (a) Integrated Contingency and Operations Plan  
(b) Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Instruction  
(c) Medical Waste Management Act

1. Purpose. This document provides environmental protection guidelines for management of medical waste operations.
2. Application. This guidance applies to personnel working in medical operations that generate medical waste (such as hospital, medical, and dental offices; Battalion Aid Stations; clinics; and veterinary offices) aboard the Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command (MAGTFTC), Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC) Twentynine Palms. For further references to MAGTFTC, MCAGCC in this document, the term "installation" will be used.
3. Procedures. Medical waste operations are regulated by federal, state, and local laws to protect health care staff and others from exposures to bloodborne pathogens (BBPs). Management of medical waste helps prevent the transmission of bloodborne diseases. The primary concern in medical waste management is the reduction of exposure to BBPs, tracking of waste materials, and training of personnel in order to reduce impact to human health and the environment.
  - a. Requirements for reducing the impact includes maintaining a log of waste generated and disposed of, training of personnel, handling procedures, labeling, and storage procedures.
4. Operational Controls. The following controls apply:
  - a. Separate regulated medical waste (RMW) from other waste at its point of origin.
  - b. Place RMW in containers, bags, or sharps containers (as appropriate for the waste) that are either labeled with the universal biohazard symbol and the word "Biohazard" or color-coded red.
  - c. Line containers with labeled or color-coded red plastic bags of sufficient thickness (typically 3 millimeters), durability, puncture resistance, and burst strength to prevent rupture or leaks.
  - d. Dispose of used and unused sharps waste into rigid, puncture resistant sharps containers that are appropriately labeled.
  - e. Never clip, cut, bend, or recap needles, nor overfill sharps containers.

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- f. Remove and seal sharps containers when 3/4 full or above the fill line.
  - g. Close and seal sharps container before removal or replacement to prevent spillage or protrusion of contents during handling, storage, or transport.
  - h. Label sharps and RMW containers with the unit's name, a point of contact, and phone number.
  - i. Place sharps containers ready for disposal in a second container (plastic bag or rigid box) which is labeled and/or color coded.
  - j. Turn in all disposals of sharps and RMW containers to the installation's permitted storage facility (Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms [NHTP]) the same day the container is closed out.
  - k. Confirm that permitted RMW storage area(s) are temperature controlled and constructed to prevent pest access, and to allow for easy cleaning.
  - l. Label permitted RMW storage area(s) with the following: "CAUTION-BIOHAZARDOUS WASTE STORAGE AREA-UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS KEEP OUT" (English) and "CUIDADO-ZONA DE RESIDUOS-BIOLOGICOS PELIGROSOS-PROHIBIDA LA ENTRADA A PERSONAS NO AUTORIZADAS" (Spanish). Additionally, hang a universal biohazard sign.
  - m. If there are specific situations or other concerns not addressed by this procedure, contact EA RCRA D/I Manager office via phone at (760) 830-8361.
5. Documentation and Record Keeping. The following records must be maintained:
- a. The disposal of sharps and RMW containers must be turned into the installation's permitted storage facility NHTP and documented within the NHTP's medical waste logbook.
  - b. The permitted RMW storage area(s) will maintain a medical waste logbook.
6. Training. Affected personnel must be trained in this document and the following:
- a. General Environmental Awareness training
  - b. Globally Harmonized System training
  - c. Initial BBP and refresher training
7. Emergency Preparedness and Response Procedures. Refer to the spill response procedures listed in the Abatement ESOP and the Integrated Contingency and Operations Plan.

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8. Inspection and Corrective Action. The Environmental Compliance Coordinator (ECC) will confirm unit adherence to this ESOP. The ECC will confirm that unit personnel are trained in this ESOP and maintain appropriate documentation in accordance with this ESOP.

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Medical Waste Operations - ECC/Unit Inspection Checklist	
Date:	Time:
Installation:	Work Center:
Inspector Name:	Signature:

Inspection Items	Yes	No	Comments
1. Is the regulated medical waste (RMW) properly segregated from other waste at its point of origin?			
2. Is the RMW placed in containers, bags, or sharps containers that are either labeled with the universal biohazard symbol and the word "Biohazard" or red in color?			
3. Are containers lined with labeled or color-coded red plastic bags of sufficient thickness (typically 3 millimeters) to prevent rupture or leaks?			
4. Are all used and unused sharps waste placed into rigid, puncture resistant sharps containers that are appropriately labeled?			
5. Are all sharps waste disposed of in sharps container without clipping, cutting, bending, or recapping?			
6. Are sharps containers less than 3/4 full or below the fill line?			
7. Are all sharps and RMW containers properly labeled?			
8. Have all sharps and RWM container(s) been turned into MCAGCC's permitted storage facility (Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms) the same day of closeout?			
9. Is the permitted RMW storage area temperature controlled and constructed to prevent pest access, and to allow for easy cleaning.			
10. Is the permitted RMW storage area labeled, in English, "CAUTION-BIOHAZARDOUS WASTE STORAGE AREA-UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS KEEP OUT," and, in Spanish, "CUIDADO-ZONA DE RESIDUOS-BIOLOGICOS PELIGROSOS-PROHIBIDA LA ENTRADA A PERSONAS NO AUTORIZADAS"? Is there a universal biohazard sign?			
11. Is the RMW properly labeled or color-coded and placed into rigid, leak-proof container(s) before transportation to offsite facility?			
12. Is the medical waste logbook available for review?			

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Inspection Items	Yes	No	Comments
13. Validate with the permitted RMW storage facility Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms that medical waste turn-ins meet the ESOP operational controls. <i>NOTE:</i> document what unit or facility is not complying.			
14. Are medical waste permit(s) available for review (if applicable)?			
15. Is the Medical Waste Management Plan available for review?			
16. Are medical waste records available for review?			
17. Are training and inspection records maintained and available for inspection?			

Additional Comments:

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Corrective Action Taken:

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Unit Inspector:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_