Introduction

All biologically-contaminated waste materials and non-contaminated "medical-like" waste materials (such as needles and syringes) are handled separately from the general waste stream. These wastes are not accepted by the landfill to which the University sends its general wastes. Identification of these materials in the general waste stream could jeopardize the University's use of that landfill facility. Therefore, all such wastes generated on campus are collected in a separate waste stream by EHS and are removed from campus by a contracted firm for incineration.

Scope and Application

The procedures described in this section apply to all biologically-contaminated wastes and biologically-non-contaminated medical-like materials that could be perceived as infectious generated from University facilities.

Procedure

Infectious waste is picked up by EHS from various sites around the Columbia Campus on a weekly basis. Standard medical waste boxes are provided by EHS (call 777-5269) which includes a red plastic bag liner. All medical waste must be packed in these lined boxes. The boxes must be packed in such a way as to not leak or exceed 45 lbs. The bottom and top of the box must be taped securely.

Waste Categories

All syringes and needles, contaminated or not, are placed in puncture proof sharps containers specifically designed for that purpose and provided by the generating department. When these containers are full, they are deposited by lab personnel in the cardboard medical waste box provided by EHS.

All other biologically-contaminated materials, whether glass or plastic, are put in autoclave bags and sterilized. After sterilization is complete, lab personnel put the waste in the provided biological waste box.
Chemical decontamination in 1:10 bleach solution or equivalent is an acceptable alternative to steam sterilization provided that fresh solutions are maintained for that purpose.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**Laboratory Manager/Supervisor**

- Ensure that all individuals generating waste understand and follow the prescribed waste disposal procedures.

**EHS**

- Pick up properly sealed boxes of medical waste
- Provide consultation and advise on medical waste handling and issues of regulatory compliance.
- Provide medical waste boxes upon request.

**Individual**

- Handle waste categories as described above.

**For More Information**

- Contact the Infectious Waste Manager at 777–5269.
- The following references are available through EHS:
  
  –South Carolina Infectious Waste Management Regulations R.61−105