



## **Clinical Waste Management Department of Health and Safety**

Effective date: 8/1/2013

### **Introduction:**

All biologically-contaminated waste materials and non-contaminated medical 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 general wastes. Therefore, all infectious waste materials generated on the WLU campus are collected in a separate waste stream organized by the Health and Safety Office and the contracted cleaning service company, and are removed from campus by a licensed contract firm for incineration.

This procedure will minimize risk to staff, the public, and the environment from improperly handled infectious waste. It will also minimize the potential for any infectious waste emergencies.

### **Purpose and Scope:**

The purpose of this procedure is to establish a program to handle, collect, and dispose of infectious waste. Each department which generates infectious waste must:

- Write specific procedures that contain information regarding identification, safe handling, treatment, packaging, and collection of infectious waste;
- Provide appropriate training on handling procedures, safety procedures, emergency preparedness and response, and spill cleanup;
- Provide personal protective equipment and offer Hepatitis B vaccination;
- Segregate infectious waste from other waste at the point of generation;
- Prevent infectious waste containing radioactive material from leaving the site of generation;
- Properly store infectious waste as required by regulations;
- Manage infectious waste in a manner which prevents exposure to the public or release to the environment;and
- Complete the Clinical Waste Disposal form for pickup.

### **Definition of Infectious Waste:**

An infectious waste is any used material which is generated in the health care community in the diagnosis, treatment, immunization, or care of human beings; generated in embalming, autopsy, or

necropsy; generated in research pertaining to the production of biological which have been exposed to human pathogens; and generated in research using human pathogens. Infectious waste includes: sharps, microbiologicals, blood and blood products, pathological waste, contaminated animal waste, and isolation waste.

### **Segregation and Packaging:**

Infectious waste will be segregated from other waste as close to the point of origin as practical to avoid commingling with other waste. If infectious waste is put in the same container as other waste, or if solid waste is put into a container labeled as infectious waste, the entire contents of the container must be handled as infectious waste.

All sharps will be placed in rigid, puncture-resistant and leak-resistant containers designed for the safe containment of sharps.

Infectious waste will be contained in clearly marked bags or other containers that are red or orange in color. Containers must have sufficient strength to prevent bursting and tearing and must withstand handling, storage, transfer, or transportation without impairing the integrity of the container. Red autoclaved bags must be placed directly in the accumulation boxes provided. The biological hazards symbol will be used to mark these containers.

All infectious waste which is being collected must be kept in a safe location which minimizes exposure to students, employees, and the public. It must be located so as to maintain integrity of packaging and prevent release of contents.

### **Spills**

All spills of infectious waste will be cleaned up immediately by a properly protected person trained in the appropriate procedures. Use the following procedure when cleaning up an infectious waste spill:

1. Identify the spill with a warning sign or prevent contamination by installing a barricade.
2. During cleanup, all personnel will wear proper personal protective clothing and equipment, including goggles or safety glasses and gloves.
3. All spill residue, including broken glass, will be disposed of as infectious waste. Broken glass must be removed carefully to prevent puncture.
4. Cover a liquid spill of less than 5 ml or 5 gm with absorbent gauze pads and cover with liquid disinfectant. Wipe solids with wet absorbent gauze. Clean spill area with disinfectant solution.
5. For spills greater than 5 ml or 5 gm, limit spread by covering with absorbent sheets or spill pads and cover with liquid disinfectant.
6. Thoroughly clean all contaminated surfaces with a detergent solution and then wipe with clean water.
7. Dispose of all contaminated absorbents and other materials as infectious waste.

**Treatment by Autoclave:**

A written quality assurance plan must be implemented if infectious materials are to be treated by autoclave or steam sterilization. The following waste will be sterilized before collection:

- Culture plates and stocks;
- Any infectious waste that must be stored longer than 92 hours at room temperature;
- Level 1 and level 2 infectious waste.

Level 1 material is placed in clear bags, autoclaved, and then discarded as non-regulated waste. Level 2 infectious waste is placed in red bags, autoclaved, and then put into infectious waste collection for pickup by EHS.

**Infectious Waste Pickup**

Each department must complete a CLINICAL WASTE DISPOSAL FORM which can be obtained on-line at [www.westliberty.edu](http://www.westliberty.edu) .

Once the form is completed, the cleaning service needs to be contacted for pick-up.

The cleaning company picks up infectious waste from various sites around the WLU campus on a need basis. Standard medical waste must be packed in boxes lined with red bio-hazard waste liners. Boxes must be packed so that none exceed 50 pounds and they must not leak. The bottom and top of the boxes must be securely taped.

Contact the Health and Safety Department, or WLU's contracted cleaning company when you need assistance with:

- Obtaining more Infectious waste bags and boxes or
- Scheduling a pickup when you have accumulated a sufficient quantity of infectious waste.