

Rhode Island DEM Medical Waste Regulations (excerpt)

DEM-OWM-MW-1-2009

2.3 Regulated Medical Waste

Means a special category of solid waste (including solid, semisolid, or liquid materials) that includes specific types of medical waste subject to the handling and tracking requirements of these regulations. A regulated medical waste is any waste, as defined in these regulations, generated in the diagnosis (including testing and laboratory analysis), treatment, (e.g., provision of medical services), or immunization of human beings or animals, in research pertaining thereto, or in the preparation of human remains for burial or cremation, or in the production or testing of biologicals, or in the development of pharmaceuticals, that is listed in this Section but is not excluded or exempted in Section 2.4 of these regulations. Regulated medical waste shall also include certain waste, as listed in this section that is generated in any process where it is likely to have come in contact with human blood or body fluids. Regulated medical wastes mixed with non-hazardous solid wastes shall be considered regulated medical wastes. For the purposes of these regulations, the following categories of medical wastes are regulated medical waste:

- a) **Cultures and Stocks**: Cultures and stocks of infectious agents and associated biologicals, including: cultures from medical and pathological laboratories; cultures and stocks of infectious agents from research and industrial laboratories; wastes from the production of biologicals; discarded live and attenuated vaccines; and culture dishes and devices used to transfer, inoculate, and mix cultures.
- b) **Animal Pathological Waste**: Contaminated animal carcasses, body parts, and bedding of animals that were known to have either:
 - 1) been exposed to infectious agents during research, including research in veterinary hospitals, production of biologicals, or testing of pharmaceuticals or
 - 2) been infected with highly communicable endemic diseases that are indicated in Appendix V to require special handling of carcasses and other materials.
- c) **Human Pathological Wastes**: Tissues, organs, and body parts of humans that are removed during surgery or autopsy, or other medical procedures (e.g., obstetrical procedures).
- d) **Human Blood, Body Fluids and Blood Products**
 - 1) Liquid waste human bloods or body fluids;
 - 2) Products of blood;
 - 3) Items saturated and/or dripping with human blood or body fluids;
 - 4) Items that were saturated and/or dripping with human blood or body fluids that are caked with dried human blood or body fluids; including, but not limited to, serum, plasma, and other blood components, and their containers (e.g., blood bags and blood vials) and body fluids as defined in these regulations; or
 - 5) Specimens of body fluids and their containers.
- e) **Sharps**: Objects including, but not limited to, hypodermic needles, syringes with or without the attached needle, Pasteur pipettes, scalpel blades, blood vials, needles with attached tubing, glass carpules, and glass culture dishes regardless of presence of infectious agents. Also included are other types of broken or unbroken glassware that have been used in animal or

human patient care or treatment, such as used slides and cover slips. For the purpose of these regulations, disposable syringes and needles are considered regulated medical waste after one use. The following categories of wastes are considered sharps:

- 1) **Medical and Veterinary Sharps:** Sharps that have been used in animal or human patient care or treatment, including sharps generated from the preparation of human and animal remains for burial or cremation, or in medical, research, or industrial laboratories.
 - 2) **Unused Sharps:** Unused, discarded hypodermic needles or other sharps as described above with the exception that if the unused sharp is in its original sealed packaging, it not by definition a RMW.
 - 3) **Other sharp Waste:** This category of waste shall also include sharps used on human beings or animals for other than medical procedures, such as sharps used for cosmetic treatment, training purposes, circumcision or embalming procedures.
 - 4) **Body Art Waste:** any waste produced in the course of injecting or physically altering a human being or animal including tattooing, ear piercing or any other process where a foreign object is used to cut or pierce the skin. Waste generated in this manner meeting the definition of sharps must be handled accordingly.
- f) **Isolation Wastes:** Biological waste and discarded materials contaminated with blood, excretion, exudates, or secretions from isolated animals known to be infected with highly communicable diseases. A list of these diseases may be found in Appendix IV. The Director may update this list as new diseases are identified.
- g) **Spill/Cleanup Material:** Any material collected during or resulting from the cleanup of a spill of regulated medical waste.
- h) **Mixtures and Waste in Medical Waste Containers:** Any waste which is a mixture of regulated medical waste and some other type of waste that is neither radioactive nor a hazardous waste of a type other than regulated medical waste shall be considered a regulated medical waste. Also, any waste, when placed in a sharps container, bag with a biohazard symbol, or other container labeled and/or designed for the packaging of regulated medical waste, must be handled and treated as a regulated medical waste, even if the contents may not have previously met the definitions in this section. If the waste is a radioactive and/or a hazardous waste it must also be handled in accordance with Regulations appropriate for radioactive and/or hazardous wastes.
- i) **Crime Scene/Accident Cleanup Waste:** any waste generated by commercial entities hired to clean crime scenes or accidents that are saturated with human blood or are sharps or sharp objects contaminated with human blood.