



County of San Diego

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & QUALITY, HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DIVISION
 PHONE (858) 505- 6880 | FAX (858) 505-6848 | WEBSITE <http://www.sdcdeh.org>

MANAGEMENT OF REGULATED MEDICAL WASTES



The following requirements, as indicated in the Medical Waste Management Act (MWMA-2017 version), must be adhered to by all generators of medical waste.
 For more information see the [Medical Waste Management Act](#).

CONTAINMENT & LABELING

	BIOHAZARDOUS WASTE	SHARPS WASTE	PHARMACEUTICAL WASTE	PATHOLOGY WASTE	TRACE CHEMOTHERAPY WASTE
CONTAINER TYPES	Red biohazard bag inside a closed, clean, leak resistant, rigid container in good repair. Red bag must meet ASTM D1709 and ASTM D1922 requirements when prepared for offsite shipment.	Rigid, puncture-resistant container that, when sealed, is leak resistant and cannot be opened without great difficulty.	Clean, leak resistant, rigid container in good repair with tight fitting cover.	Red or white biohazard bag inside a closed, clean, leak resistant, rigid container in good repair.	Sharps Trace Chemo: Same as Sharps container. Non-sharps Trace Chemo: Red or yellow biohazard bag inside a closed, clean, leak resistant, rigid container in good repair.
WASTE and CONTAINER MANAGEMENT	Secondary container must be closed when red bag is not in active use. The red bags shall be tied to prevent leakage or expulsion of contents when ready for shipment.	Sharp containers must not have any internal lining. May place sharps containers ready for disposal in red biohazard bags OR in containers with the biohazard bags.	Only non-RCRA pharmaceutical waste can be managed as medical waste. RCRA pharmaceutical waste must be managed as hazardous waste.	Recognizable human or animal anatomical parts & fixed tissues must be managed as pathology waste if suspected to be contaminated with infectious agent.	Only trace chemotherapy (<3% by weight) can be managed as medical waste. Bulk chemo (> or equal to 3%) must be managed as hazardous waste.
CONTAINER LABELING	1. Generator's label** and International Biohazard symbol for the bag and either: 2. "Biohazardous Waste" OR International Biohazard symbol and word "BIOHAZARD" on lid and sides of rigid container.	Generator's label** and on lids & on sides of container, either: "Sharps Waste" or International Biohazard symbol and word "BIOHAZARD."	Generator's label** and the words "HIGH HEAT" or "INCINERATION ONLY" on lid and sides of container.	Generator's label** on bag & either: "Pathology Waste" or "PATH" on lid and sides of secondary container.	Sharps Trace Chemo: Generator's label** and either: "Chemotherapy Waste" or "CHEMO" on lid and sides of container. Non sharps Trace Chemo: Generator's label** on the bag and either: "Chemotherapy Waste" or "CHEMO" on lid and sides of container.
SEGREGATION	Contain each medical waste separately from other waste at the point of origin, unless otherwise allowed as described in this document.				
CONSOLIDATION	Sharps waste & non-RCRA pharmaceutical waste may be consolidated in a common container (container may be reusable if properly treated) and labeled with the biohazardous waste symbol and the words "HIGH HEAT" or "INCINERATION ONLY" on the lid and sides. 118280 (g) The containment and storage time for wastes consolidated in a common container pursuant to paragraph (7) of subdivision (a) of Section 118275 shall not exceed the storage time for any category of waste set forth in this section.				

ADDITIONAL LABELING REQUIREMENTS FOR FACILITIES IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY

As required by San Diego County Code (SDCC) section 68.1205, all primary containers storing regulated medical waste must be labeled with the following, once the container begins accumulating waste in any amount: GENERATOR NAME, ADDRESS, and PHONE NUMBER. See example below:

Generator's Label *(example)*

Name: Medical Waste Generator
 Address: 123 Generator Dr.
 San Diego, CA
 92123
 Phone #: (858) 123-4567



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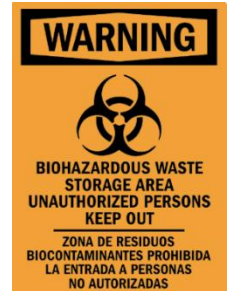
WASTE STORAGE TIME LIMITS

Amount of medical waste stored at room temperature unless otherwise specified	BIOHAZARDOUS WASTE	SHARPS WASTE READY FOR DISPOSAL OR FULL	NON-RCRA PHARMACEUTICAL WASTE READY FOR DISPOSAL OR FULL	PATHOLOGY WASTE	TRACE CHEMOTHERAPY WASTE
<20 lbs./month	30 days	30 days	-	30 days	Manage s sharps or biohazardous waste according to the type of container used for storage and the type of waste.
≥20 lbs./month	7 days	30 days	-	7 days	
≥200 lbs./month	7 days	30 days	-	7 days	
Stored below 0° C (32° F)	90 days	90 days	-	90 days	
Any amount of non-RCRA pharmaceutical waste	-	-	90 days once ready for disposal, or at least once per year	-	-

STORAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR DESIGNATED MEDICAL WASTE ACCUMULATION AREA

- ♦ Shall be secured to prevent unauthorized access.
- ♦ Shall have warning signs in English and Spanish or in another language additional to English and be visible during daylight hours from at least 25 feet.

*“CAUTION-BIOHAZARDOUS WASTE STORAGE AREA-UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS KEEP OUT”
 “CUIDADO-ZONA DE RESIDUOS-BIOLÓGICOS PELIGROSOS-PROHIBIDA LA ENTRADA A PERSONAS NO AUTORIZADAS”*



STORAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERIM STORAGE AREA

- ♦ Applies to the interim storage area prior to transfer to the designated accumulation area
- ♦ Shall be stored in area that is either locked or under direct supervision or surveillance.
- ♦ Shall be marked with international biohazard symbol or the same sign as the designated accumulation area . These warning signs shall be readily legible from a distance of five feet.



RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS FOR MEDICAL WASTE GENERATORS

Large Quantity Generator, total medical waste (all categories) generated is ≥200 lbs in any month of a 12-month period, with or without onsite treatment:	2 years
Medical waste DOT Materials of Trade Exception / pharmaceutical waste hauling exemption w/tracking documents:	2 years /3 years
Small Quantity Generator, total medical waste (all categories) generated is <200 lbs in every month, with or without onsite treatment:	3 years



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TREATMENT OF MEDICAL WASTES:

- ♦ Prior to treating any medical waste, contact the Hazardous Materials Division (858) 505-6880 to confirm that the on-site treatment activities are appropriate and subject to permitting. **A facility may treat medical waste only after obtaining a medical waste treatment permit. See the application here: [Medical Waste Treatment Application](#)**
- ♦ *The following treatment methods require a treatment permit from the Hazardous Materials Division:*

	BIOHAZARDOUS WASTE	SHARPS WASTE	PHARMACEUTICAL WASTE	PATHOLOGY WASTE	TRACE CHEMOTHERAPY WASTE
TREATMENT METHOD	Incineration or Steam Sterilization (autoclave)	Incineration or Steam Sterilization (autoclave)	Incineration	Incineration	Incineration

- ♦ *The following treatment methods do not require a treatment permit from the department:*
 - a. Fluid blood treated via chemical disinfection and discharged to public sewer, if resulting fluid is not considered a hazardous waste.
 - b. Sharps treatment, not commingled with pharmaceutical or chemotherapy wastes, treated via an isolyzer or solidification device approved by CDPH.
 - c. Pharmaceutical waste disposal via Rx Destroyer or Cactus Sink.

SMALL QUANTITY MEDICAL WASTE GENERATOR BIENNIAL REGISTRATION PROGRAM

- ♦ If your facility generates less than 200 pounds of medical waste per month and not subject to any other Unified Program (Hazardous Materials Business Plan, Hazardous Waste, Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act, Underground Storage Tank), the facility is subject to the Registration Program. For more information about the Registration Program, visit the following website: [Small Quantity Medical Waste Generator Registration Program](#)
- ♦ Submit your application for this program to: medicalwaste@sdcounty.ca.gov
- ♦ Registration is valid for 2 years.
- ♦ Registrations are not transferable.
- ♦ For questions contact the Hazardous Materials Duty Desk (858) 505-6880 or hmdutyeh@sdcounty.ca.gov



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COMMON HAZARDOUS WASTES NOT REGULATED AS MEDICAL WASTE:

- ◆ Some wastes generated by dental, veterinary, and medical practices must be managed as **hazardous** due to their ignitability, corrosivity, or toxicity.
- ◆ Wastes that are not medical waste, must be determined as hazardous or non-hazardous prior to disposal, and managed appropriately.
- ◆ For management of the following wastes, please refer to hazardous waste guidance available on our website, contact our Duty Desk (858-505-6880), or reach out to your inspector.
<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/deh/hazmat/hazwaste.html>

HAZARDOUS WASTES	TYPE OF PRACTICE			MANAGEMENT OPTIONS	
	Dental	Veterinary	Medical	RECYCLING	DISPOSAL AS HAZARDOUS WASTE
Photo processing wastes	✓	✓	✓	✓ Preferred treatment	✓
Formalin + Ethanol mix (sterilizers)	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓
Cold sterilants containing Glutaraldehyde (2.7% or greater conc.)*	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓
Cold sterilants containing OPA (Orthophtaldehyde)*	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓
Dental amalgam**	✓			✓ Preferred treatment	✓
Pourable Chemotherapy Waste		✓	✓	N/A	✓
Universal Waste**	✓	✓	✓	✓ Preferred treatment	✓
Lead foil (hazardous if not recycled)	✓			✓ Preferred treatment	✓
Soda-lime / Soda Sorb/ Carbolime	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓
RCRA Pharmaceutical Waste	✓	✓	✓	N/A	✓
Gram Staining Waste		✓	✓	N/A	✓

* These wastes may also be treated onsite without a permit using a glycine-based treatment. Consult your Area Inspector for more information.

**These wastes may include chair trap waste, spent vacuum filters, extracted teeth with amalgam fillings, etc.

ADDITIONAL WASTES NOT REGULATED AS MEDICAL WASTE:

- ◆ Wastes that do not contain an infectious agent.
- ◆ Wastes that do not contain human blood or blood products and no other infectious agent.
- ◆ Wastes that do not contain animal blood or blood products and no other infectious agent.
- ◆ Urine, feces, saliva, sputum, nasal secretions, sweat, tears, vomitus, unless it contains an infectious agent.