

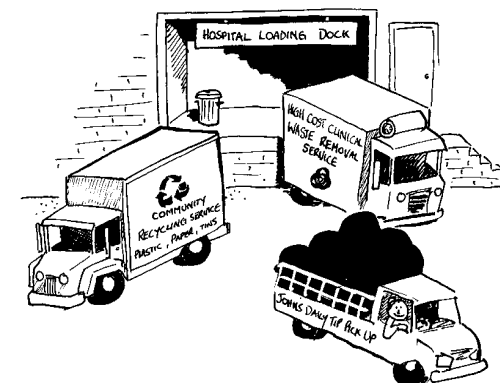


## CLINICAL AND RELATED WASTES

Waste Category	Container	Symbol
<p><b>Clinical Waste</b></p> <p>Must be disposed of by contractors by means of high-temperature incineration, or maceration then disinfection</p>	<p><u>Sharps</u></p> <p>Yellow sharps containers:</p> <p>Impact and puncture-resistant, spill proof, tamper proof when locked</p> <p>Preferably mounted on stable, elevated surface</p> <p>Closed off when filled to marker line —do not overfill</p> <p>Sharps containers specified in:</p> <p>AS 4031 (disposable)</p> <p>AS/NZS 24261 (reusable)</p> <p><u>Non-Sharps</u></p> <p>Thick-walled yellow plastic bag labelled Infectious/Contaminated Waste</p>	 <p>Black Biohazard Symbol on Yellow Container</p>
<p><b>Cytotoxic Waste</b></p> <p>Must be disposed of by contractors using incineration at 1100 °C</p>	<p><u>Sharps</u></p> <p>Purple container meeting all above specifications, eg: Impact and puncture-resistance</p> <p><u>Non-Sharps</u></p> <p>Purple multi-layer walled plastic or wet/dry bag labelled Cytotoxic Waste</p>	 <p>White Telophase Symbol on Purple Container</p>

Grampians Region  
Infection Control Group

# A QUICK GUIDE TO WASTE MANAGEMENT IN HEALTHCARE

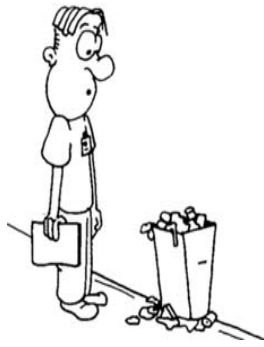


This is pamphlet No. 4 in the *Bug Byte Series* for Staff Education produced by the Grampians Region Infection Control Group

See <http://infectioncontrol.health.vic.gov.au/gramps.htm> for other pamphlets in the Bug Byte Series

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This pamphlet is based on the latest information available as of September 2003



Our society is drowning in a sea of waste caused by our throw away lifestyle

Think about the packaging you throw away every day—paper, cardboard, plastics, polystyrene

Hospitals and healthcare agencies produce large amount of general waste every day—perhaps as much as a small town. Items such as:

- Used paper towel
- Packaging from medical and surgical supplies
- Single use medical items
- Kitchen waste—tins, plastic containers, milk cartons
- Newspapers, facial tissues
- Incontinence pads
- Office paper waste
- Etc, etc, etc .....

How can this huge amount of waste be decreased?

### 1. Recycling

- Recycling of usable waste, eg: cans, bottles, plastics, waste paper from Admin. areas and newspapers
- Purchasing supplies which have a recycled content



### 2. Rationalization of Waste Generated

Many avenues can assist in decreasing the amount of resources used, and thus the amount of waste produced, for example: double sided photocopying, refilling of printer cartridges, choosing products with less packaging

### 3. Product Substitution

Substitution of reusable items in place of disposables:

- Use of re-sterilisable dressing trays in place of disposables (only if it does not create other problems)
- Replacing disposable batteries with rechargables

### Our agency as a "Good Citizen" in Managing Waste

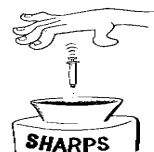
Our agency has a community responsibility to generate as little waste as possible, and to manage the waste it generates well

Apart from the colossal waste of scarce resources involved in making new items all the time, the cost of disposal by land fill is increasing rapidly as we run out of land fill sites

### Clinical Wastes

In addition to household and office wastes generated in caring for clients, some wastes produced have the potential to cause infection/problems if inappropriately managed.

These are called **Clinical and Related Wastes**, and these make up about 12% of health agency wastes. Because they must be managed carefully for public safety they are subject to Government Regulation, and are expensive to containerise, store and transport



### What Comprises Clinical and Related Wastes?

**Clinical Waste** is industrial waste generated in a clinical or similar setting that has the potential to cause disease, injury, or public offence, and includes:

- A sharp discarded object or device capable of cutting or penetrating the skin—a "sharp"
- A clinical specimen other than urine or faeces
- A specimen of urine or faeces taken for laboratory testing
- A laboratory culture
- Human tissue
- Tissue, carcasses or other waste arising from animals used for laboratory investigation or for medical or veterinary research, other than psychology testing
- Human blood or fluids other than urine or faeces
- Materials or equipment containing human blood or body fluids other than urine or faeces
- Waste from patients known to have, or suspected of having a communicable disease

**Related Waste** is industrial waste generated in a clinical or similar setting that constitutes, or is contaminated with chemicals, cytotoxic drugs, or pharmaceutical products

Regulations covering Clinical and Related Wastes are summarised as follows:

- Collected into containers of proper colours marked with the proper symbols
- Stored after collection from clinical areas in a central area which is signposted with appropriate biohazard symbol, is vermin-proof, is adequately cleaned, is kept locked, has an adequate spill kit, a non-absorbent floor, and is refrigerated for Clinical Waste
- Clinical and Related Waste is collected by EPA—accredited contractors in trucks which have appropriate transport Permits and biohazard signage.