

Handling Medical Waste To Prevent Bloodborne Pathogen Diseases

Blood Pathogens are transmitted via:

- Blood.
- Anybody fluid visibly contaminated with blood. These include tears, feces, urine, nasal secretions, sputum, saliva, sweat and vomit.
- Other Potentially Infectious Materials (OPIM) - The following human body fluids: semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, peritoneal fluid, amniotic fluid, saliva in dental procedures.

DOE facilities do not routinely generate regulated waste. Exceptions include Special Education Nurses performing invasive procedures or custodial staff cleaning up spills involving blood and/or body fluids contaminated with blood. According to OSHA's regulations, all DOE facilities must be prepared to handle and dispose of medical waste properly. Regulated medical waste must be placed in closable and biohazard labeled or color-coded containers and disposed according to federal, state, and local regulations.

Regulated Medical Waste means:

1. Liquid or semi-liquid blood or other potentially infectious materials.
2. Contaminated items that would release blood or other potentially infectious materials in a liquid or semi-liquid state if compressed.
3. Items that are caked with dried blood or other potentially infectious materials and are capable of releasing these materials during handling.
4. Contaminated sharps and pathological and microbiological wastes containing blood or other potentially infectious materials.

Categories of Medical Waste

1. **Contaminated sharps** are any devices having acute rigid corners and are capable of cutting or piercing skin. Examples include hypodermic needles, suture needles, scalpel blades, dental wire, lancets, IV catheters and broken glass with blood.

These items must be discarded immediately in containers that are puncture resistant. The sides and bottom must be leak proof and they must have a lid. Use the DOE issued Sharp containers.

Examples of contaminated sharps include:

- Hypodermic needles
- Suture Needles
- Dental Wires
- Syringes
- Lancets
- Scalpel blades
- Scissors
- IV Catheters
- Broken glass with blood



SHARPS CONTAINER

2. **Infectious Waste** include:
 - Items soaked with blood.
 - Items which would release blood or OPIM if compressed.
 - Items which are caked with dried blood or OPIM and can release these materials during handling, and Suction Catheters.



RED BAG

These materials should be placed in DOE issued red bags.

Labeling

All regulated medical waste containers and red bags must be clearly labeled with a fluorescent orange or orange red with the biohazard symbol or “BIOHAZARDOUS WASTE” lettering in a contrasting color.

Non-Regulated Waste

Dispose of non-regulated waste in conventional garbage. These include:

Body waste products such as vomitus, urine, and feces without blood are not regulated waste. However, materials used to clean-up should be placed in a plastic bag before disposal in conventional garbage.

- **Soiled diapers** without blood need not be individually wrapped prior to disposal; however, they must be disposed of responsibly in a plastic lined container with a fitted lid.
- Waste disposables containing non-fluid blood i.e., unsaturated blood-stained Band-Aids, bandages, soiled sanitary napkins, gauze, cotton and cotton swabs.
- Disposable towels, gowns, paper sheeting and tongue depressors from a patient not in isolation from a highly communicable disease.

Medical Waste Kits

Each Custodian's and Nurse's offices should have a regulated waste kit with these contents:

- a. 2 one-gallon labelled red sharps containers.
- b. 2 labelled red bags.
- c. 1 corrugated cardboard box with a medical waste label.
- d. 1 roll of tape for sealing the box.

Schools should notify the Office of Occupational Safety and Health (OOSH) if partial kits are delivered. Medical waste kits - used or unused must be kept locked and always secured to prevent unauthorized access.

Removal of Medical Waste Kits

The DOE has contracted medical waste removal and disposal to a licensed regulated waste hauler.

Custodian Engineers and DOE Nurses with a *schools.nyc.gov* email account can now use the automated system to request [Medical Waste Removal Service](#) . **Contracted or agency nurses must contact the school custodian to arrange for service.**

Your request is sent directly to the waste hauler contractor and removal/supply occurs within 4 business days.

A sharps container may be removed when it is 3/4 full. Sharps containers and red bags are placed inside a red bag lined corrugated cardboard box. The box is then sealed with tape. Replacement medical waste kits will be provided if one was requested in the initial order. Please advise OOSH if the waste is not removed within one week or if incomplete waste kits were delivered.

The Custodian/Nurse or designee will be asked to sign a medical waste tracking manifest confirming that the contractor has removed the waste from the school. By law, regulated waste must be properly accounted for and disposed of at an approved and licensed disposal facility. The facility must certify that the waste has been received and properly treated and a notice is returned to (OOSH).

Request [Medical Waste Removal Service](#)

Regulated Medical Waste Safety Guidelines

Protect the health and safety of employees and students by observing the following guidelines:

- a. Never empty or reach into contaminated sharps disposal containers.
- b. When handling sharp materials, use correct work procedures to prevent puncture wounds. Never pick up broken glass with bare hands. Use a brush and scoop instead. Bloody broken glass is classified as regulated waste and should be placed into a red sharps container.
- c. Keep regulated medical waste away from student and public access.
- d. Discard all regulated medical waste according to federal, state, and local regulations. Regulated medical waste may not be placed in regular garbage or leave the building without being sealed in a labeled medical waste box and a waste manifest has been generated.
- e. Employees are prohibited from eating, drinking, smoking, applying cosmetics or lip balm and handling contact lenses in areas of potential exposure.

Report any needle sticks, or exposure to blood and body fluids.

Universal Standard Precautions

Employees involved in handling body fluids or regulated waste must practice Universal Standard Precautions. This is an infection control method which requires employees to assume that all human blood and specified human body fluids are infectious for bloodborne pathogens and must be treated accordingly.

Cleaning & Disinfecting against Bloodborne Pathogens

Use the following safety procedures:

1. Put on disposable gloves.
2. Remove and replace protective coverings such as plastic wrap and aluminum foil when contaminated.
3. Use mechanical means such as tongs, forceps, or a brush and a dustpan to pick up contaminated broken glassware; never pick-up with hands even if disposable gloves are worn.
4. Immediately place glassware into a regulated sharps container.
5. Wipe up the blood/OPIM spill as much as possible with paper towels or other absorbent to avoid spreading and splashing.
6. Immediately place waste into a regulated waste red bag or temporarily into a plastic bag. Body fluids not contaminated with blood, can be placed in regular garbage.
7. Use an EPA approved disinfectant and follow the manufacturer's instructions on the label.
8. Alternatively, make a bleach solution of 1 part bleach and 9 parts water. Gently pour the solution on the contaminated area. Work from the edge towards the center to avoid the contamination from spreading out. Wipe up the remaining solution. The contact time should be between 10 - 15 minutes.
9. The bleach solution should be made fresh daily or as needed. Do not place the solution directly on large amounts of protein such as blood, vomit, or feces, as noxious fumes may be produced.
10. All equipment, including mops and cleaning tools used in the clean-up that may be contaminated with blood or OPIM must be decontaminated prior to storing, servicing, or shipping.
11. Dispose of all contaminated materials appropriately.

12. Regulated medical waste containers are in the Nurse's or Custodian's offices.
13. Remove gloves before leaving the work area.
14. Wash your hands immediately with soap and water.

Have you been exposed to Blood or Blood fluids?

If you have been exposed to blood, you may have been exposed to HIV, HVB or HCV.

An exposure incident means a specific eye, mouth or mucous membrane exposure, non-intact skin or piercing the skin through needle sticks, bites, cuts, or abrasions through the performance of an employee's duties which allows the employee to come into contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials.

You will need to wash the area immediately and complete the **Exposure Incident Report** "link."
See your SESA or supervisor immediately.

Contact

If you need assistance, contacted the Office of Occupational Safety and Health at BBPQuestions@schools.nyc.gov