

Handling of Waste Materials Within Health Care Facilities - CSA Z317.10-01

1. Scope

Note: In many guidelines, all waste contaminated with blood or body fluids is classified as infectious waste. This enormously increases the volume of waste requiring expensive handling and disposal. Identical items of waste are disposed of from homes with no special handling or decontamination. For these reasons, this issue received detailed consideration during the preparation of this Standard.

The identification of every patient who carries a blood-borne pathogen such as Hepatitis B or Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV, formerly AIDS) is both impractical and inappropriate. The modern trend in hospital infection control is to build safe practices into ALL clinical procedures; the precaution taken is dictated by the risk accompanying the procedure, not by the diagnosis.

Two premises have been incorporated throughout this Standard:

(a) The simple presence of viable organisms does not constitute a hazard; a mechanism by which these organisms can infect a host must coexist. Since Hepatitis B and HIV are usually transmitted by inoculation, the concern with blood, for example, is misplaced. The emphasis should more appropriately be applied to the category of clinical sharps. Infections acquired by waste handlers are rare and almost always associated with trauma. Vigorous efforts directed toward the prevention of these injuries deserve high priority; the incidence of both the wounds and accompanying infections can be reduced dramatically by adherence to safe procedures.

(b) Absolute elimination of all risk is impossible. A realistic goal is the attainment of a reasonable degree of safety at all times without needlessly compromising efficiency.

1.1 This Standard develops criteria for the segregation, collection, movement, storage, and on-site disposal of waste materials within health care facilities.

1.2 This Standard does not deal with the disposal of wastes once they have been removed from the site of the health care facility. Such matters are the subject of federal, provincial, and municipal regulations and legislation.

1.3 This Standard does not address the special precautions associated with infectious substances requiring a containment Level D or higher as specified by the Medical Research Council (MRC) of Canada. The user should refer to MRC guidelines and transportation requirements specified under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act and Regulations, Schedule 7.

1.4 This Standard does not address the disposal of wastes from veterinary facilities and animal care centres. Measures for handling waste materials from research animals in

health care facilities holding such animals for experimental purposes are given under Clauses 6.3 and 7.

1.5 This Standard does not apply to certain hazardous substances that pose a disease-related risk or threat to people or the environment, eg, lead, arsenic, and asbestos. The handling and disposal of these substances is regulated by federal, provincial, or municipal authorities. Consult the applicable regulations for the handling and disposal of these substances.

1.6 In this Standard, "shall" indicates a mandatory requirement; "should" indicates a recommendation, or that which is advised but not mandatory.

Notes accompanying clauses do not include mandatory or alternative requirements. The purpose of a note accompanying a clause is to separate from the text explanatory or informative material that is not properly a part of the Standard. Notes to figures and tables are considered to be part of the figure or table and are written as mandatory requirements.

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