

MSAD #70

Biomedical Waste Plan

This appendix addresses minimum safety practices relating to biomedical waste management, including segregation, handling, labeling, storage, and transport. This applies to all facilities in the district that generate, transport, or store biomedical waste to ensure that the waste is properly handled to protect public health.

Description of Waste:

Biomedical waste, also known as biohazardous or infectious waste, refers to any waste containing infectious materials or potentially infectious substances such as blood. It is generated primarily by healthcare facilities, including hospitals, clinics, laboratories, and medical research facilities. A school health office is considered a generator of biomedical waste, though typically on a much smaller scale than hospitals or clinics; however, they must adhere to the same rules and parameters.

Types of Biomedical Waste:

- Sharps: Needles or lancets from administering medications or conducting blood sugar tests
- Infectious Waste: Bandages, gauze, or tissues soaked (saturated) with blood or other bodily fluids.
- Pharmaceutical Waste: Unused or expired unclaimed medications

Sharps Procedures:

The safe use of needles and lancets in a school health office is essential to prevent accidental injuries and the transmission of infectious diseases. Here are the key steps to ensure safety:

1. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Wear gloves whenever handling needles or lancets to provide a barrier against potential exposure to bloodborne pathogens.
2. Proper Use- Use a new, sterile needle or lancet for each procedure. Do not recap needles after use, as this increases the risk of needle-stick injuries.
3. Discarding: Dispose of needles and lancets immediately after use in an appropriate sharps container. Sharps shall be discarded at the point of origin in single-use or reusable sharps containers. Portable pen-needle disposal containers shall be used as an alternative to recapping insulin pen needles if used.
4. Disposal: A sharps container is considered full when materials placed into it reach the designated fill line, or if a fill line is not indicated, when additional materials cannot be placed into the container without cramming, or when no additional materials are to be placed in the container.

Containers shall be collected when full and disposed of at a biomedical waste treatment facility or another medical facility that has volunteered to serve as a collection point.

**** It is prohibited to throw sharps containers away in the regular trash.****

5. Transporting: The designated employee may transport a sharps package to a licensed biomedical waste treatment facility or another medical facility that has volunteered to serve as a collection point for sharps if no more than 50 pounds of sharps are transported in one trip. If these parameters are met, there is an exemption that allows the safe transportation of Biomedical waste without the need for a transportation permit.

If the district chooses to use a remote disposal company that allows waste to be sent through the US postal service, it must comply with all USPS rules and limits. USPS guidelines limit the amount of sharps to 35 lbs.

Training Schedule:

Training on this plan will be conducted congruent with and or part of the bloodborne pathogens training.

1. Initial training for new employees upon hire.
2. Annual refresher training for all staff.

Training Topics:

- Identification and segregation of biomedical waste.
- Proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Safe handling and storage of biomedical waste.

Licensing:

Schools that have staff who generate sharps via administration of medications, vaccines, etc. (or similarly generate sharps or other biomedical waste), then each location is required to be registered as a biomedical waste generator. Each physical location must have its own registration number. The smallest quantity generator category is for locations generating less than 10 lbs./month. Initial registration is \$50 regardless of size, but the annual fees (billed in January) are \$25 for small, \$50 for medium, and \$500 for large (over 50 lbs./month) quantity generators.

The biomedical waste generator registration form can be found here:

<https://www.maine.gov/dep/waste/biomedical/documents/2018-bio-waste-form.pdf>

If the district has a mobile vaccination service such as those providing flu, COVID, or other vaccines, and do not generate any other sharps, the district will not need to have a registration number as the mobile services should have their own disposal policy/procedure.