

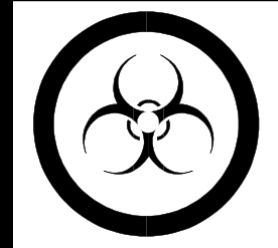
# MEDICAL WASTE FACT SHEET

## MEDICAL WASTE MANAGEMENT IN MISSISSIPPI AS REGULATED BY THE



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF  
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This fact sheet contains information on the transportation, management and disposal of infectious medical waste as regulated by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). The MDEQ has not, at this time, developed comprehensive regulations regarding the transportation and management of infectious medical waste. However, as discussed in this fact sheet, the proper transportation, management and disposal of infectious medical waste in Mississippi is regulated under the general provisions of the Mississippi Solid Waste Law and the Mississippi Nonhazardous Solid Waste Management Regulations.

### WHAT IS MEDICAL WASTE?

Infectious medical wastes and medical wastes have been defined separately by the Mississippi State Department of Health as follows:

“Infectious Medical Waste” includes solid or liquid wastes, which may contain pathogens with sufficient virulence and quantity such that exposure to the waste by a susceptible host has been proven to result in an infectious disease. The following wastes shall be considered to be infectious medical waste:

- Wastes resulting from the care of patients and animals who have Class I and (or) Class II diseases that are transmitted by blood and body fluid as defined in the rules and regulations governing reportable diseases as defined by the Mississippi State Department of Health;
- Cultures and stocks of agents; including specimen cultures collected from medical and pathological laboratories, cultures and stocks of infectious agents from research and industrial laboratories, wastes from the production of biologicals, discarded live

and attenuated vaccines, culture dishes and devices used to transfer, inoculate, and mix cultures;

- Blood and blood products such as serum, plasma, and other blood components;
- Pathological wastes, such as tissues, organs, body parts, and body fluids that are removed during surgery and autopsy;
- Contaminated carcasses, body parts, and bedding of animals that were exposed to pathogens in medical research;
- All discarded sharps (e.g. hypodermic needles, syringes, Pasteur pipettes, broken glass, scalpel blades) which have come into contact with infectious agents;
- Other wastes determined infectious by the generator or so classified by the Mississippi Department of Health.

“Medical Waste” is defined as all waste generated in direct patient care or in diagnostic or research areas that is non-infectious but aesthetically repugnant if found in the environment.

The Mississippi State Department of Health regulates the on-site storage and management of medical waste and infectious medical waste through the “Adopted Standards for the Regulation of Medical Waste in Health Care Facilities Licensed by the Mississippi State Department of Health”. For more specific information on these standards, contact the Health Facilities Licensure and Certification Division of that agency at (601) 576-7300. For information on the regulation of commercial management of medical wastes, contact the Waste Division at the MDEQ at (601) 961-5171.

## TRANSPORTATION, MANAGEMENT AND DISPOSAL ISSUES

The off-site management and disposal of infectious medical waste is regulated by the MDEQ under the provisions of the Mississippi Nonhazardous Solid Waste Management Regulations and the Mississippi Solid Waste Law. Disposal of such waste at a landfill or other solid waste facility is addressed through specific conditions in that facility's solid waste management permit. These permit conditions generally prohibit municipal solid waste disposal facilities from accepting infectious medical waste that has not been rendered non-infectious. State regulations also require that, prior to the establishment of any commercial facility in the State specifically for the storage, transfer, treatment, or processing of infectious medical wastes, the owner or operator of the facility must obtain environmental operating permits from the MDEQ for a solid waste management facility.

Medical waste transporters are not currently required by the MDEQ to obtain any special licensing or permits. However, state solid waste laws stipulate that, upon collection of the wastes, the person or company collecting and transporting the wastes assumes ownership once transfer of the waste material has occurred. The transporter is then required by State regulations to manage the wastes in a manner that is protective of public health and the environment. The transporter must also deliver the wastes to a facility that is properly permitted to accept and manage such wastes. This does not, however, alleviate the generator's responsibility to acquire the services of a legitimate medical waste collection company and to confirm that the company is handling and disposing of the generator's wastes properly. Current regulations do not require that the removal and transportation of medical wastes be manifested by the collector. However, the MDEQ recommends that generators of medical wastes require that persons or companies collecting such wastes from the generator supply the generator with certified manifest forms documenting proper management and disposal of the waste. Copies of these documents should be kept on file by the generator, the collector, and the receiving facility.

Be advised that other State and/or Federal agencies including, but not limited to, the Mississippi Public Service Commission and the U. S. Department of Transportation (Office of Motor Carriers) may have specific requirements regarding the collection and transportation of infectious medical waste and/or medical waste.

## COMMERCIAL MEDICAL WASTE FACILITIES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

Listed below are the facilities that are permitted to accept and manage infectious medical waste and other associated medical wastes in the state of Mississippi:

<https://www.mdeq.ms.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Listing-of-Medical-Waste-Processors-and-Transporters-2022.pdf>