

Arizona's Biohazardous Medical Waste Rules

Definitions (R18-13-1401)

"Biohazardous medical waste" is composed of, but not limited to, one or more of the following:

A. Cultures and stocks: Discarded cultures and stocks generated in the diagnosis, treatment or immunization of a human being or animal or in any research relating to that diagnosis, treatment or immunization, or in the production or testing of biologicals.

B. Human blood and blood products: Discarded products and materials containing free-flowing blood or free-flowing blood components.

C. Human pathologic wastes: Discarded organs and body parts removed during surgery. Human pathologic wastes do not include the head or spinal column.

D. Medical sharps: Discarded sharps used in animal or human patient care, medical research, or clinical laboratories. This includes hypodermic needles; syringes; pipettes; scalpel blades; blood vials; needles attached to tubing; broken and unbroken glassware; and slides and coverslips.

E. Research animal wastes: Animal carcasses, body parts, and bedding of animals that have been infected with agents that produce, or may produce, human infection.

Packaging (R18-13-1407)

A. A generator who sets biohazardous medical waste out for collection for off-site treatment or disposal shall package the biohazardous medical waste in either of the following:

1. A red disposable plastic bag that is:
 - a. Leak resistant,
 - b. Impervious to moisture,
 - c. Of sufficient strength to prevent tearing or bursting under normal conditions of use and handling,
 - d. Sealed to prevent leakage during transport,
 - e. Puncture resistant for sharps, and
 - f. Placed in a secondary container. This container shall be constructed of materials that will prevent breakage of the bag in storage and handling during collection and transportation and bear the universal biohazard symbol. The secondary container may be either disposable or reusable.
2. A reusable container that bears the universal biohazard symbol and that is:
 - a. Leak-proof on all sides and bottom, closed with a fitted lid, and constructed of smooth, easily cleanable materials that are impervious to liquids and

resistant to corrosion by disinfection agents and hot water, and

b. Used for the storage or transport of biohazardous medical waste and cleaned after each use unless the inner surfaces of the container have been protected by disposable liners, bags, or other devices removed with the waste.

"Cleaning" means agitation to remove visible particles combined with one of the following:

- i. Exposure to hot water at a temperature of at least 180 degrees Fahrenheit for a minimum of 15 seconds.
- ii. Exposure to an EPA-approved chemical disinfectant used under established protocols and regulations.
- iii. Any other method that ADEQ determines is acceptable, if the determination of acceptability is made in advance of the cleaning.

B. A generator shall handle any container used for the storage or transport of biohazardous medical waste that is not capable of being cleaned as described in subsection (A)(2)(b), or that is disposable packaging, as biohazardous medical waste.

C. A generator shall not use reusable containers described in subsection (A)(2) for any purpose other than the storage of biohazardous medical waste.

D. A generator shall not reuse disposable packaging and liners and shall manage such items as biohazardous medical waste.

Storage (R18-13-1408)

A. A generator may place a container of biohazardous medical waste alongside a container of solid waste if the biohazardous medical waste is identified and not allowed to co-mingle with the solid waste. The storage area shall not be used to store substances for human consumption or for medical supplies.

B. Once biohazardous medical waste has been packaged for shipment off site, a generator shall provide a storage area for biohazardous medical waste until the waste is collected and shall comply with both of the following requirements:

1. Secure the storage area in a manner that restricts access to, or contact with the biohazardous medical waste to authorized persons.
2. Display the universal biohazard symbol and post warning signs worded as follows for medical waste storage areas:

(in English) "CAUTION -- BIOHAZARDOUS MEDICAL WASTE STORAGE AREA -- UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS KEEP OUT" and

(in Spanish) "PRECAUCION -- ZONA DE ALMACENAMIENTO DE DESPERDICIOS BIOLÓGICOS PELIGROSOS -- PROHIBIDA LA ENTRADA A PERSONAS NO AUTORIZADAS."

C. Beginning at the time the waste is set out for collection, a generator who stores biohazardous medical waste shall comply with all of the following requirements:

1. Keep putrescible biohazardous medical waste unrefrigerated if it does not create a nuisance. However, refrigerate at 40 degrees F. or less putrescible biohazardous medical waste kept more than seven days.
2. Store biohazardous medical waste for 90 days or less unless the generator has obtained facility plan approval under A.R.S. § 49-762.04 and is in compliance with the design and operational requirements prescribed in R18-13-1412.
3. Keep the storage area free of visible contamination.
4. Protect biohazardous medical waste from contact with water, precipitation, wind, or animals. A generator shall ensure that the waste does not provide a breeding place or a food source for insects or rodents.
5. Handle spills by re-packaging the biohazardous medical waste, re-labeling the containers and cleaning any soiled surface as prescribed in R18-13-1407(A)(2)(b).
6. Notwithstanding subsection (C)(1), if odors become a problem, a generator shall minimize objectionable odors and the off-site migration of odors. If ADEQ determines that a generator has not acted or adequately addressed the problem, ADEQ shall require the waste to be removed or refrigerated at 40 degrees F or less.

Transportation (R18-13-1409)

A. A transporter shall register with ADEQ in addition to possessing a permit, license, or approval if required by a local health department, environmental agency, or other governmental agency with jurisdiction.

B. Upon receiving all of the following information from a transporter, ADEQ shall issue the registration after assigning a registration number to the transporter:

1. The name, address, and telephone number of the transportation company or entity.
2. All owners' names, addresses, and telephone numbers.
3. All names, addresses, and telephone numbers of any agents authorized to act on behalf of the owner.

4. A copy of either the certificate of disclosure required by A.R.S. § 49-109 or a written acknowledgment that this disclosure is not required.

5. Photocopies or other evidence of the issuance of a permit, license, or approval if required by a local health department, environmental agency, or other governmental agency with jurisdiction.

6. A copy of the transportation management plan required in subsection (C).

C. A person who transports biohazardous medical waste shall maintain in each transporting vehicle at all times a transportation management plan approved by ADEQ.

E. A transporter who transports biohazardous medical waste in a vehicle dedicated to the transportation of biohazardous medical waste shall ensure that the cargo compartment can be secured to limit access to authorized persons at all times except during loading and unloading. In addition, the cargo compartment shall be constructed in compliance with one of the following:

1. Have a fully enclosed, leak-proof cargo compartment consisting of a floor, sides, and a roof that are made of a non-porous material impervious to biohazardous medical waste and physically separated from the driver's compartment.
2. Haul a fully enclosed, leak-proof cargo box made of a non-porous material impervious to biohazardous medical waste.
3. Tow a fully enclosed leak-proof trailer made of a non-porous material impervious to biohazardous medical waste.

F. A person who transports biohazardous medical waste in a vehicle not dedicated to the transportation of biohazardous medical waste, but that is used longer than 30 consecutive days shall comply with R18-13-1407(F).

G. A person who transports biohazardous medical waste shall comply with all of the following:

1. Accept only biohazardous medical waste packaged as prescribed in R18-13-1407.
2. Accept biohazardous medical waste only after providing the generator with a signed tracking form as prescribed in R18-13-1406(B), and keep a copy of the tracking document for one year.
3. Deliver biohazardous medical waste to a Department-approved biohazardous medical waste storage, transfer, treatment, or disposal facility within 24 hours of collection or refrigerate the waste for not more than 90 days at 40 degrees F or less until delivery.

4. Not hold biohazardous medical waste longer than 96 hours in a refrigerated vehicle unless the vehicle is parked at a Department-approved facility.

5. Not unload, reload, or transfer the biohazardous medical waste to another vehicle in any location other than a Department-approved facility, except in emergency situations. Combination vehicles or trailers may be uncoupled and coupled to another cargo vehicle or truck trailer as long as the biohazardous medical waste is not removed from the cargo compartment.

Discarded Drugs (R18-13-1418)

A. A generator of discarded drugs not returned to the manufacturer shall destroy the drugs on site prior to placing the waste out for collection. A generator shall destroy the discarded drugs by any method that prevents the drug's use. If federal or state law prescribes a specific method for destruction of discarded drugs, the generator shall comply with that law.

Medical Sharps (R18-13-1419)

Medical sharps shall be handled as follows: A generator who ships biohazardous medical waste off site for treatment shall either:

1. Place medical sharps in a medical sharps container and follow the requirements of R18-13-1406, or
2. Package and send medical sharps to a treatment facility via a mail-back system as prescribed by the instructions provided by the mail-back system operator. An Arizona treatment facility shall render medical sharps incapable of creating a stick hazard by using an encapsulation agent or any other process that prevents a stick hazard.

For More Information

If you have questions about the above rules please contact:
Arizona Department of Environmental Quality:
www.azdeq.gov/environ/waste/solid/index.html
Arizona Administrative Code:
www.azsos.gov/public_services/table_of_contents.htm
Arizona Revised Statutes:
www.azleg.gov/ArizonaRevisedStatutes.asp

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