


# National Public Health Laboratory

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## 1. Waste Segregation and Disposal

## 2. Objectives & Scope

This chapter describes the procedures for proper disposal of non-infectious waste and safe disposal of infectious and sharps waste.

This SOP is applicable to all employees of the laboratory.

## 3. Abbreviations and definitions

- BO Bio safety Officer
- QM Quality Manual
- SOP Standard Operating Procedure
  
- *Sharps*: Articles such as needles, pieces of broken glass, small surgical knives that are capable of lacerating the skin.

## 4. Tasks, responsibilities and accountabilities

Task	Authorized	Responsible
Removal of non-infectious waste from the laboratory	Support staff	LM
Autoclaving infectious waste	Laboratory personnel working in sterilization section	LM

## 5. Procedure


### A. Non-infectious waste disposal

1. These include papers, packaging boxes, plastic bags and hand paper towels used outside the laboratory area.
2. These items shall be disposed-off in black or white polythene bags inserted in 10L plastic buckets without a lid.
3. These items shall not require autoclaving before disposal.
4. After the day's work the support staff shall remove filled bags and replace them with new ones ready for the following day work.

### B. Infectious waste disposal

1. Items used inside the laboratory area shall be regarded as being infectious.
2. Infectious waste shall not be stored or stacked in corridors or stairwells.
3. Papers (waste or data files/books used in the laboratory area) shall be incubated in a hot air oven at 65°C for 30 minutes before they are taken out to the clean areas.
4. Used tubes, plastic Pasteur pipettes, pipette tips, gloves, cotton, paper towels, specimen containers and cultures for discard shall be sealed in double biohazard bags.

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5. All infectious waste shall be placed in designated red, rigid bags placed in step-on lidded waste bins that are clearly labeled with the biohazard symbol.
6. When the bags are three-quarter full, they will be sealed off with tape.
7. Sealed bags shall be carefully taken to the autoclave room and autoclaved.
8. All bags labeled "Biohazard" shall be autoclaved even if clean.
9. Autoclaving shall be done as per instrument guidelines
10. After autoclaving, biohazard bags containing reusable laboratory ware shall be safe to open and clean, otherwise those with non-reusable waste shall be taken for incineration.

## C. Disposal of sharps

1. Sharps include used needles, surgical knives or broken bottles.
2. Sharps shall not be mixed with papers or non-sharps infectious waste.
3. A properly labeled sharps container shall be put in place and used exclusively for the disposal of sharps.
4. Used needles shall be discarded immediately into the sharps container.
5. Broken glass scattered on the floor shall be picked with aid of special forceps or swept into a special receptacle and then emptied into the sharps container.
6. A properly labeled sharps container shall be put in place and used exclusively for the disposal of sharps.
7. Sharps containers when  $\frac{3}{4}$ -full shall be autoclaved and then sent for incineration.
8. Any employee who consistently violates or disregards these instructions shall be held responsible.

## 6. Related Documents

- Quality Manual,
- Biosafety Manual Chapter 1: 'Responsibility of the Biosafety Officer and the Biosafety Committee'
- SOP 'Autoclave'

## 7. Related Forms

N/A


## 8. References

NCCLS GP-5 Proposed Standard. Clinical Laboratory Hazardous Waste, 1986.

## 9. Attachments

Annex 1: Waste Segregation Chart

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## Annex 1: Waste Segregation Chart

