

Medical Waste: Definitions of Terms

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For your convenience, this document compiles the most pertinent definitions used in Wisconsin's medical waste rule, chapter NR 526, Wis. Adm. Code. These definitions are taken verbatim from s. NR 500.03, Wis. Adm. Code, as revised and renumbered in 2006; from state statutes; and from rules promulgated by other state or federal agencies. Wisconsin statutes and administrative codes can be viewed on-line at the Revisor of Statutes Bureau website, <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/>

Bulk blood and body fluids means drippable or pourable quantities or items saturated with whole blood or blood components, blood specimens, semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, amniotic fluid, peritoneal fluid, peritoneal dialysate, pericardial fluid, pleural fluid and other body fluids visibly contaminated with blood. [s. NR 500.03(22)]

CFR means the code of federal regulations. [s. NR 500.03(28)]

Chemotherapy waste See "trace chemotherapy waste," which is the term now used with the definition previously assigned to "chemotherapy waste".

Clinic means a place, other than a residence, that is used primarily for the provision of nursing, medical, podiatric, dental, chiropractic, optometric or veterinary care and treatment. [s. 287.07(7)(c)1.a., Wis. Stats., as cited in s. 299.51(1)(a), Wis. Stats.]

Collection and transportation service is a solid waste facility which utilizes containers, vehicles or other means for the collection and transportation of solid waste. [s. NR 500.03(39)]

Containerized storage facility means a storage facility designed and operated to use containers for the storage and containment of solid waste. [s. NR 500.03(53)]

Decontamination means a process of removing disease-producing microorganisms and rendering an object safe for handling. [s. NR 500.03(56)]

Department means the department of natural resources. [s. NR 500.03(57)]

Director means the person in the highest ranking position in a medical facility, including but not limited to the administrator, chief executive officer or chair of the board of directors. [s. NR 500.03(63)]

Disinfection means a process that kills or destroys most disease-producing microorganisms, except spores. [s. NR 500.03(66)]

DNR means the department of natural resources. [s. NR 500.03(70)]

Facility means a solid waste facility. [s. NR 500.03(78)]

Garbage means discarded materials resulting from the handling, processing, storage and consumption of food. [s. 289.01(9), Wis. Stats.]

Hazardous waste has the meaning given in s. NR 660.10 (52). [s. NR 500.03(100)] “Hazardous waste” means a hazardous waste as defined in s. NR 661.03. [s. NR 660.10(52), Wis. Adm. Code] Note: s. NR 661.03 is several pages long, and can be viewed at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/nr/nr661.pdf>

Home generator of infectious waste means a person who generates infectious waste through self-administration of medication or who receives injected medication at home from other members of the household or from employees of a home care or hospice program. [s. NR 500.03(102)]

Hospital

(a) Hospital means any building, structure, institution or place devoted primarily to the maintenance and operation of facilities for the diagnosis, treatment of and medical or surgical care for 3 or more non-related individuals hereinafter designated patients, suffering from illness, disease, injury or disability, whether physical or mental, and including pregnancy and regularly making available at least clinical laboratory services, and diagnostic X-ray services and treatment facilities for surgery, or obstetrical care, or other definitive medical treatment.

(b) "Hospital" may include, but not in limitation thereof by enumeration, related facilities such as outpatients facilities, nurses', interns' and residents' quarters, training facilities and central service facilities operated in connection with hospitals.

(c) "Hospital" includes "special hospitals" or those hospital facilities providing primarily one type of medical or surgical care such as, but not in limitation thereof, orthopedic hospitals, children's hospitals, psychiatric hospitals or maternity hospitals. [s. 50.33(2)(a), Wis. Stats., as cited in s. 287.07(c)1.b., Wis. Stats.]

Human tissue means tissue removed from human beings. Human tissue does not include hair or nails, but does include teeth. [s. NR 500.03(106)]

Infectious waste means solid waste that contains pathogens with sufficient virulence and in sufficient quantity that exposure of a susceptible human or animal to the solid waste could cause the human or animal to contract an infectious disease. [s. 287.07(7)(c)1.c., as amended in 1989 Act 300]

Infectious waste generator means a person or group of persons under the same corporate ownership and located on the same property who produces infectious waste. [s. NR 500.03(111)]

Infectious waste treatment means rendering an infectious waste non-infectious. For human tissue, this term means rendering the waste both non-infectious and unrecognizable as human tissue. For sharps, this term means rendering the sharp non-infectious and rendering the sharp broken and not able to be reused, such as by a grinding or shredding process. [s. NR 500.03(112)]

Infectious waste treatment facility means a solid waste processing facility where infectious waste treatment is performed. Infectious waste treatment facilities include but are not limited to individual treatment units, such as autoclaves, and groups of treatment units within the same room. Infectious

waste treatment facilities do not include the disinfection of an area after a spill and the disinfection of waste or reusable items in a small disinfectant soak pan. [s. NR 500.03(113)]

Manifest means a form used for identifying the quantity, composition, origin, routing and destination of medical waste during its transport and disposal. [s. 299.51(1)(am)]

Medical facility means a hospital, clinic or nursing home. [s. NR 500.03(142)]

Medical waste means infectious waste, as defined in s. 287.07(7)(c)1.c., and other waste that contains or may be mixed with infectious waste. [s. 299.51(1)(b), as amended in 1991 Wisconsin Act 39] Note: Medical waste does not mean all of the waste produced in a medical setting. Waste materials from a medical setting which do not meet the definition of "infectious waste" in statutes are considered to be "medical waste" only if the generator mixes them with infectious waste or manages them as though they are infectious waste.

Medical waste incinerator means a solid waste treatment facility that primarily burns infectious waste and other waste that contains or may be mixed with infectious waste. [s. 287.07(7)(c)1.cr]

Medical waste reduction policy is a policy developed by a medical facility and designed to reduce the amount of medical waste generated within that medical facility, to prevent the mixing of infectious waste with waste which is not infectious and to promote practical alternatives to disposable items in the medical setting. [s. NR 500.03(145)]

Microbiological laboratory waste means cultures derived from clinical specimens or laboratory equipment which has come in contact with these cultures. [s. NR 500.03(147)]

Nursing home means a place which provides 24-hour services including board and room to 3 or more unrelated residents who because of their mental or physical condition require nursing care or personal care in excess of 7 hours a week. "Nursing home" does not include any of the following:

- (c) A convent or facility owned or operated exclusively by and for members of a religious order that provides reception and care or treatment of an individual.
- (d) A hospice, as defined in s. 50.90(1), that directly provides inpatient care. [sic] [s. 50.01(3), as cited in s. 299.51(1)(bm)]

OSHA means the occupational safety and health administration. [s. NR 500.03(162)]

Patient day means a period of service between the census-taking hours on 2 successive calendar days, including in-patient census and out-patient surgical days. [s. NR 500.03(167)]

Processing facility means a solid waste facility at which solid waste is baled, shredded, pulverized, composted, classified, separated, combusted or otherwise treated or altered by some means to facilitate further transfer, processing, utilization or disposal. Processing facilities do not include operations conducted by scrap metal, paper, fiber or plastic processors which are excluded from the definitions of "solid waste facilities" in this section. [s. NR 500.03(181)]

Putrescible waste means solid waste which contains organic matter capable of being decomposed by microorganisms and of such a character and proportion as to be capable of supporting a vector population or attracting or providing food for birds. [s. NR 500.03(185)]

Radioactive material means any solid, liquid or gaseous substance which emits radiation spontaneously. [s. HSS 157.02(112), Wis. Adm. Code]

Radioactive waste means high-level radioactive waste regulated by the U.S. nuclear regulatory commission under 10 CFR 60.2, means low-level radioactive wastes regulated by the U.S. nuclear regulatory commission under 10 CFR 61.3, and means other sources of radiation not licensed by the U.S. nuclear regulatory commission but regulated by the state of Wisconsin under s. HSS 157.12, [s. NR 500.03(188)]

Recycling means the process by which solid waste is returned to productive use as material or energy, but does not include the collection of solid waste. [s. 289.43(1), Stats.]

Sharps means medical equipment or clinical laboratory articles that may cause punctures or cuts. Sharps include, but are not limited to, contaminated, unused and disinfected items listed in s. NR 526.05(1)(a). [s. NR 500.03(209)]

Solid waste means any garbage, refuse, sludge from a waste treatment plant, water supply treatment plant or air pollution control facility and other discarded or salvageable materials, including solid, liquid, semisolid, or contained gaseous materials resulting from industrial, commercial, mining and agricultural operations, and from community activities, but does not include solids or dissolved material in domestic sewage or solid or dissolved materials in irrigation return flows or industrial discharges which are point sources subject to permits under ch. 283, Wis. Stats. or source material as defined in s. 254.31(10), special nuclear as defined in s. 254.31(11), Wis. Stats. or by-product material as defined in s. 254.31(3). [s. 289.01(33)]

Solid waste disposal means the discharge, deposit, injection, dumping or placing of any solid waste into or on any land or water. This term does not include the transportation, storage or treatment of solid waste. [s. 289.01(34)]

Solid waste facility means a facility for solid waste treatment, solid waste storage or solid waste disposal, and includes commercial, industrial, municipal, state and federal establishments or operations such as, without limitation because of enumeration, sanitary landfills, dumps, land disposal sites, incinerators, transfer stations, storage facilities, collection, and transportation services and processing, treatment and recovery facilities. This term includes the land where the facility is located. This term does not include a facility for the processing of scrap iron, steel, or nonferrous metal using large machines to produce a principal product of scrap metal for sale or use for remelting purposes. This term does not include a facility which uses large machines to sort, grade, compact or bale clean wastepaper, fibers or plastics, not mixed with other solid waste, for sale or use for recycling purposes. This term does not include an auto junk yard or scrap metal salvage yard. [s. 289.01(35)]

Solid waste storage means the holding of solid waste for a temporary period, at the end of which period the solid is to be treated or disposed. [s. 289.01(38)]

Solid waste treatment means any method, technique or process which is designed to change the physical, chemical or biological character or composition of solid waste. Treatment includes incineration. [s. 289.01(7r)]

Sterilization means a process by which all forms of microbial life, including spores, viruses and fungi, are destroyed. [s. NR 500.03(223)]

Storage facility means a solid waste facility for the storage of solid waste, on a temporary basis in such a manner as not to constitute ultimate disposal of solid waste. [s. NR 500.03(224)]

Trace chemotherapy waste means items contaminated with antineoplastic chemotherapy drugs, including drug dispensing devices, gloves and other items that have come into contact with chemotherapy drugs. [s. NR 500.03(237m)]

Transfer facility means a solid waste facility at which transferring of solid waste from one vehicle or container to another, generally of larger capacity, occurs prior to transporting to the point of processing or disposal. [s. NR 500.03(238)]

Treatment area means a room or area in a hospital or clinic the primary use of which is to provide emergency care, diagnosis or radiological treatment; an obstetrics delivery room in a hospital, other than a patient's room; or a room or area in a hospital, clinic or nursing home, identified by the department by rule, in which infectious waste is generated. [s. 287.07(7)(c)1.e., as amended by 1991 Act 300]

USDOT means the United States department of transportation. [s. NR 500.03(248m)]

Zoonotic infectious agent means an infectious agent which can be transmitted from an animal to a human. Zoonotic infectious agents include *Bacillus anthracis* (anthrax), *Brucella abortus* (brucellosis), *Chlamydia psittaci* (psittacosis), *Coxiella burnetii* (Q fever), *Lyssa virus* (rabies), *Mycobacterium bovis* and *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. [s. NR 500.03(264)]

Contact 608/266-2111 or DNRMedicalWaste@Wisconsin.gov for further information.

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