



# Department of Pharmacy POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY NUMBER: 912  
VERSION: 2

## SUBJECT: Hazardous Material and Pharmaceutical Waste Management Program

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### PURPOSE:

To provide clear guidelines for the proper disposal of any hazardous and pharmaceutical waste in the outpatient and main pharmacy.

### POLICY:

High Desert Regional Health Center pharmacy will comply with federal and state regulations when disposing pharmaceuticals and associated waste. Specific procedures must be followed to ensure maximum system efficiency and safety. Appropriate waste containers are located in both pharmacies.

### Background:

**RCRA-** Refers to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, regulations, and Environmental Protection Agency's policy and guidance, which provides legally enforceable requirements for waste management. RCRA establishes the framework for non-hazardous vs hazardous waste management.

**RCRA Hazardous Waste include:**

- **P-listed chemical and empty containers which are known to be acutely hazardous**
  - P-listed chemical empty containers are not considered to be "empty RCRA" containers
  - Include arsenic trioxide, epinephrine, nicotine, phentermine, physostigmine, and warfarin
- **U-listed chemicals which are considered to be toxic**
  - Include some chemotherapy, phenol, selenium sulfide, lindane, and warfarin
- **Chemicals with any of the following characteristics**
  - **Ignitability:** Isopropyl alcohol, topical clindamycin, Erythromycin gel, silver nitrate, hurricane topical spray, Paclitaxel, etoposide, dexamethasone
  - **Corrosive:** Glacial acetic acid
  - **Reactive**
  - **Toxic:** Barium, selenium, silver sulfadiazine cream, lindane, thimerosal, tetanus toxoid, meningococcus vaccine, influenza vaccines m-cresol (i.e. insulin preservatives)
- **Non Compatibles (shall be segregated from other hazardous waste)**
  - Aerosols (i.e. pressurized inhalers)
  - Corrosive acids/bases

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- **Oxidizers, reactives**
  - **An “empty RCRA” container is a container that did not previously hold a P-listed chemical or a container that held a RCRA hazardous drug that has no more than 3% by weight of the drug remaining.**

**In addition, HDRHC maintains a list of all NIOSH hazardous drugs in the pharmacy. All hazardous antineoplastic medication shall be disposed of in the appropriate chemotherapy waste bins.**

**PROCEDURE:**

The pharmacy shall have four different disposal bins.

**The white and blue container** is the “Non RCRA Hazardous Pharmaceutical Waste”, which contains all non RCRA waste. Do not discard chemotherapy waste in these containers.

**The red sharps container** is only used for syringes/needles for non RCRA hazardous waste or “empty RCRA” syringes including empty P-listed syringes

**The yellow container** labeled “trace chemotherapy waste” is used for any type of empty chemotherapy related container, syringe, or cotton from the medication vial, or PPE used while handling antineoplastic medication, these can also be used for “empty RCRA” containers (empty P-listed containers are considered hazardous will go in the black container)

**The black container** is used for RCRA hazardous waste, bulk chemo waste (including bulk medication in syringe), and empty containers of P-listed chemicals (empty syringes are an exception)

**I- Staff Responsibilities/ Duties:**

- **Outpatient Pharmacy:**
  - *White and blue bins, Non RCRA Hazardous Pharmaceutical Waste*
    - Any non-RCRA hazardous pharmaceutical waste or non-antineoplastic agent medication that is dropped on the floor and needs to be discarded. This includes liquids.
    - No bio-hazardous drugs
    - Any medication brought back by a patient that needs to be discarded. The vial of medication needs to be opened and emptied into the waste bin. (Exception: HDRHC Pharmacy shall not accept controlled medication returned by the patient)
    - All liquids that need to be discarded must be opened and emptied into the waste bin.

**Items (including the containers) that cannot be discarded in this bin are :**

- RCRA Hazardous Waste Chemicals and empty containers
  - Chemotherapy agents/empty containers
  - Sharps (needles and ampules)
  - Inhalers (pressurized aerosols)
  - Bio-hazardous drugs
- *Red Sharps container:*
    - All empty syringes, needles, and ampules need to be discarded in this bin (except if contained chemotherapy please waste these items in the yellow chemo trace bin)
    - Any lancets for glucometers that need to be disposed of need to go in this bin.
    - Empty P-listed syringes/needles
    - Bio-hazardous drugs
- Items that cannot be discarded in this bin are :**
- Unempty syringes (contents shall be emptied in appropriate bin first)
  - Empty syringes, needles, ampules which contained chemotherapy
- *Yellow bag, Trace Chemotherapy waste:*
    - All empty chemotherapy drug containers including syringes, needle, tubing, empty IV's.
    - Items used when handling chemotherapy such as gloves, gowns, wipes, and packaging.
    - Empty RCRA containers
    - Empty P-listed syringes
- *Black Bin, RCRA Hazardous Pharmaceutical Waste and Bulk Chemotherapy waste (serves as dual sharps waste for unempty sharps/syringes)*
    - All RCRA Hazardous chemicals
    - Bulk Chemotherapy waste (including chemo spill waste)
    - Empty P listed containers
    - Non-compatibles which shall be have a separate black bin (i.e. pressurized inhalers)
- Municipal Solid Waste Bins
    - Most packaging and empty bottles, vials, and IV's that did not contain an antineoplastic medication or RCRA hazardous chemical

**Items that cannot be discarded in this bin are :**

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- Medication
- P-listed Containers
- Chemotherapy
- Sewer System
  - IV's (Dextrose, Saline, LR)

**Items that cannot be discarded in this bin are :**

Any drug product

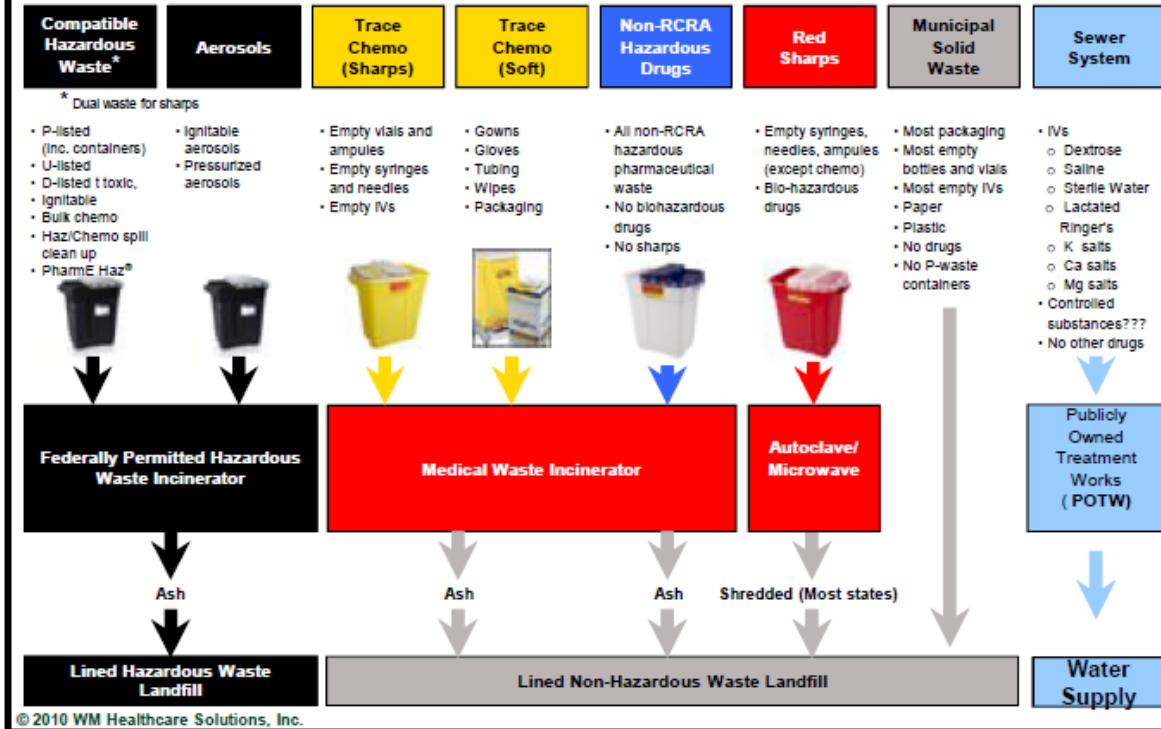
- *Expired Medication Box:*
  - All expired medications that need to be sent back to EXP need to be placed in this box.

II- Proper Disposal of full waste bins:

- When Black, Yellow, White and Sharps bins are full, an employee must contact extension 8238 to arrange for pickup and replacement of bin.
- When the box of expired medications is full, they will be sent back to EXP

IV-Summary of Pharmaceutical Waste Streams

## Summary of Pharmaceutical Waste Streams



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**REFERENCES:**

Managing Pharmaceutical Waste in California: Challenges and Opportunities.  
<http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/deh/hazmat/pdf/hmd-managing-rx-waste.pdf>

Department of Ecology, State of Washington  
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/hwtr/pharmaceuticals/pages/definitions.html>

HDHS Hazardous Materials, Medical Wastes and Pharmaceutical Waste Management Program Policy, #EC3.10

Approved By: Romina Panoussi (PHARMACY SERVICES CHIEF II)	
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