
ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet



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Infectious Waste

Infectious waste is a subcategory of the broader medical waste stream. In New Hampshire, it is defined as any waste that, because of its infectious nature, may cause or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious irreversible or incapacitating reversible illness, or pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed of or otherwise managed. It is regulated as a solid waste under New Hampshire RSA Chapter 149-M and the New Hampshire *Solid Waste Rules* (ref. Part Env-Sw 904), with special treatment and disposal standards.

Infectious wastes are generated at many different facilities, including doctors' and dentists' offices, hospitals, clinics, schools, nursing homes, mortuaries and veterinary facilities. Infectious waste includes, but is not limited to, cultures and stocks of infectious agents, pathological wastes, waste human blood and blood products, sharps used in patient and animal care, laboratory wastes and dialysis waste.

Infectious waste may be disposed in a permitted landfill if the waste has been previously treated to meet the disinfection standards of Env-Sw 904.03 and notification is given by the transporter to the receiving facility prior to disposal. Shredding or otherwise rendering the waste unrecognizable is not required. Liquid infectious waste may be disposed via a sanitary sewer, subject to local approval, only if the receiving wastewater treatment facility includes secondary treatment.

Transportation of infectious waste does not require manifests or licensing of transporters by DES. Untreated waste transported off-site for treatment and disposal must be double-bagged in non-permeable, 3 mil polyethylene (or equivalent) and labeled as infectious waste with the generator's and transporter's names and addresses. Sharps must be encased in rigid, puncture-resistant containers within the double bags. Additional transportation and packaging requirements have been adopted by the US Department of Transportation under its hazardous materials regulations as provided in 49 CFR 171-180.

Please contact the Solid Waste Permitting and Design Review Section at (603) 271-2925, if you have any questions or need additional information.