### BIOMEDICAL WASTE DISPOSAL & MANAGEMENT FOR VETERINARY CLINICS

#### WHAT IS BIOMEDICAL WASTE?

- Animal waste animal carcasses, body parts, and bedding of animals that are known to be infected with or that have been inoculated with pathogenic microorganisms infectious to humans.
- Human blood and blood products human blood and blood components in *free flowing form* including materials such as bandages that are *saturated and dripping* with blood or bodily fluids.
- **Sharps waste** hypodermic needles, syringes with attached needles, IV tubing with attached needles, scalpel blades, and lancets that have been removed from the original packaging.
- Cultures and stocks wastes infectious to humans, including, but not limited to: specimen cultures; cultures and stocks of etiologic agents; culture dishes; blood specimen tubes; devices used to transfer, mix and inoculate cultures; wastes from production of biologicals and serums; discarded live and attenuated vaccines; and laboratory waste that has been in contact with cultures, stocks of etiologic agents or blood specimens.
- Human pathological waste biopsy materials, tissues, and body parts coming from surgery, obstetrical procedures and autopsy.
- Biosafety Level 4 disease waste - waste contaminated with blood, excretions, exudates, or secretions from humans or animals that are isolated to protect others from highly communicable infectious diseases that are identified as pathogenic organisms assigned to Biosafety Level 4 by the Centers for Disease Control.



## WHAT IS NOT BIOMEDICAL WASTE?

The following items are *not* considered biomedical waste: used paper towels; used facial tissue; non-dripping gauze and bandages; batteries; pharmaceuticals; teeth; and chemical wastes. (*Note that some of these may be hazardous waste – see Hazardous Waste Disposal & Management Fact Sheet for more information.*) If the item doesn't fit into one of the biomedical waste categories listed in the first column, it probably is not biomedical waste.

# WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH MY CLINIC'S BIOMEDICAL WASTE?

Public Health regulations require businesses to identify biomedical wastes that are generated, to write a biomedical waste management plan, and to review the plan annually. <u>See plan requirements</u> in Chapter 10.07 of the King County Board of Health Code.

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## HOW MUST I DISPOSE OF BIO-MEDICAL WASTE INCLUDING SHARPS?

- Untreated Public Health regulations require businesses to use a permitted treatment and disposal company to transport untreated biomedical waste (both sharps waste and non-sharps waste). There is one company currently permitted in King County: Stericycle of Washington at (425) 291-9322 or 1-800-633-9287 or www.stericycle.com.
- Treated Biomedical waste other than sharps that has been autoclaved or disinfected through a method approved by Public Health may be placed in the garbage or taken to a solid waste facility with a waste clearance (see below).

City of Seattle - Contact the Public Health Waste Characterization Program at (206) 296-4633 for waste clearance approval. The waste clearance is good for three years.

King County outside Seattle -Call King County Solid Waste at (206) 296-4466 for waste clearance approval. The waste clearance is good for one year.



**Do not** place sharps in the garbage or take them to a transfer station. Sharps may be properly disposed of by these three options:

- Pick-up program Stericycle of Washington, Inc., (425) 291-9322, 1-800-633-9287 or www.stericycle.com
- Mail-away service The U.S.

  Postal Service requires an authorization number for sharps containers to legally be sent through the mail. Please contact the companies listed below for more information about mail away services:
- Healthcare Compliance Service 1-888-726-8505
- Safety Kleen
   North King County (425) 775-7030
   South King County 1-800-669-5948
- **Sharps Compliance** 1-800-772-5657
- WCM, Inc. 1-866-436-9264
- Self haul Businesses may take their properly contained sharps to the Cedar Hills Landfill with prior approval and 24 hour advance notice from King County Solid Waste Division. Call (206) 296-4466 for more information.

## WHAT IF I HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT BIOMEDICAL WASTE?

- For more information on biomedical waste, contact the Public Health Solid Waste Program at (206) 263-9566.
- King County Board of Health Solid Waste Regulations including biomedical waste requirements are <u>available online</u>.

