Section 1 - What you need to know:

Definition: "Regulated Medical Waste (RMW) shall mean any of the following waste which is generated in the diagnosis, treatment or immunization of human beings or animals, in research pertaining thereto, or in production and testing of biologicals, provided however, that regulated medical waste shall not include hazardous waste identified or listed pursuant to Section 27-0903 of the Environmental Conservation Law, or any household waste promulgated under this section"1 (e.g., biological waste generated at Biosafety Level 2, or material that has come into contact with is regarded as regulated medical waste).

Laboratories operating at Biosafety Level 1 produce wastes that can be decontaminated chemically or by autoclaving, then disposed of in a black garbage bag, and into the regular trash, or in the case of liquid waste, down the drain. Refer to Section 2 – What You Need to Do

Regulated medical waste cannot contain any hazardous chemical or radioactive waste components. If it does, the biological component must first be decontaminated and then the waste is treated as chemical or radioactive waste.

RMW includes, but may not be limited to:

**Sharps –**

- Discarded used or unused needles (even if not exposed to any infectious agents), hypodermic needles, complete syringes (needle & syringe body.)

- Pasteur pipettes That have come in contact with materials considered RMW

- All scalpel blades and razor blades.

- Broken glass, broken plastic Petri dishes, rigid plastic culture tubes, flasks, beakers and other lab ware in contact with infectious agents.

- Blood vials used in animal or human patient care, medical research, and clinical laboratories.

- Broken or unbroken glass slides and their covers that have been in contact with infectious agents.

**Cultures and Stocks - Agents** infectious to humans (those that require biosafety level 2 containment), including cultures and stocks from medical, pathological, or research laboratories, and their associated biologicals.

- Wastes from the production of biologicals (defined as serums, vaccines, antigens, antitoxins, cell lines, and cultures), as well as materials used for cleanup of spills.

- Discarded live or attenuated vaccines, biological toxins.

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- Systems used to grow and maintain infectious agents in vitro, including, but not limited to nutrient agars, gels, and broths.

- Culture dishes and devices used to transfer, inoculate or mix cultures, including, but not limited to: plastic or glass plates, paper, gloves, growth media, gels, filters, stoppers, plugs, flasks, inoculation loops and wires, contaminated pipette tips, tubes, stirring devices, jars, etc.

- Cell lines- human, primate, and any other animal (mammalian) cell lines, even in the absence of overt contamination, may contain latent viruses and/or other opportunistic pathogens or zoonotic agents (capable of transmitting disease from animals to man). Therefore, all mammalian cell lines must be disposed of as RMW in New York State.

Human Blood, Blood Products, and Human Pathological Wastes –

- Discarded waste blood and/or blood components (e.g., serum, plasma).

- Containers and/or materials containing free-flowing blood or blood components, and materials saturated with blood or blood products.

- Tissue, organs, body parts, body fluids removed during autopsy, or other medical procedures.

- Specimens of body fluids and their containers and discarded material saturated with such body fluids (other than urine). Human body fluids include: blood, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, peritoneal fluid, pericardial fluid, amniotic fluid, and any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood.

- Feminine hygiene products used to absorb menstrual flow, along with bandages and gauze, for example, are not RMW. However, organs and tissues fixed for histological or cytological examinations must be processed as hazardous waste since the fixatives used are considered to be hazardous chemicals.

Animal Wastes – carcasses, body parts, body fluids, blood, or bedding from animals known to be contaminated with infectious agents (e.g., zoonotic organisms) or from animals inoculated during research, production of biologicals, or pharmaceutical testing with infectious agents. Exposure to a known infectious agent is necessary before the waste is considered RMW.
Section 2 - What you need to do:

Containers - Containers for collection of regulated medical waste should be red in color, or if using framed containers the bag should be red in color. The containers shall have the biohazard symbol prominently visible to anyone approaching the container.

All bags, containers, including sharps containers that are no longer in active use shall be sealed and have a tag affixed that indicates the contents, the generator identification (usually the name of the PI) and any special instructions (e.g. incinerate only). All containers and bags shall have a Biohazard symbol and the word Biohazard readily visible.

All RMW bags leaving the laboratory shall be double bagged and/or placed in a secondary container appropriately designed for the prevention of leaks during the transport of the materials to the Bio-Hazard Waste Room

RMW Sharps:
Sharps must be collected in approved, rigid, leak proof, puncture-resistant containers that can be secured to prevent loss of contents. Each container must be red in color and prominently labeled with a universal biohazard sign or the word "Biohazard". Food containers, such as coffee cans or soda bottles, are not permissible as sharps containers. Appropriate containers are available through CAS Stores.

Needles and syringe units should be discarded as a unit without clipping, bending, breaking, shearing, or recapping (sharps boxes that clip off the needle are prohibited). Sharps containers should be discarded when they are three quarters (3/4) full.

Non-RMW Sharps:
Non-RMW sharps should not be disposed of individually in the regular trash because they can puncture bags and injure custodians or other personnel. Non-RMW sharps should be collected in approved, rigid, puncture resistant containers that are not red and not marked with the biohazard symbol. Prior to final disposal in the trash, these containers should be securely taped closed and then disposed in the trash. If sharps contain residues of hazardous or radioactive materials, additional rules will apply (Contact EH&S for guidance – ph. 2-3495)

Cultures:
Culture wastes (from BL2 labs) and other materials that may have come in contact with the culture, may be placed in red biohazard bags or, alternatively, if they are liquid cultures they can be autoclaved or chemically decontaminated, then disposed of as RMW.
Culture wastes from (BL1 labs) may be autoclaved or chemically decontaminated, then placed in a black trash bag for disposal as regular lab trash.

Liquid Waste:
Liquid wastes from BL1 and BL2 labs that contain infectious or non-infectious agents (e.g., culture media, blood, body fluids), should be decontaminated. (Refer to the agent protocols to determine the proper disinfection method). For example, many biological liquid wastes can be treated with a 10-fold dilution of household bleach (i.e., 9 parts liquid waste plus 1 part household bleach) for 10-15 min before discharging down the laboratory sink drain.

Contaminated Articles:
Items such as cloth, gloves, plastic, and paper items that have been exposed to infectious agents that are hazardous to humans shall be placed in red biohazard bags.

**Other related waste streams:**

- Regular (non-contaminated) trash destined for a sanitary landfill shall be placed in a black bag.
- Plastic Poly bags designed to be autoclaved, shall be placed in black garbage bags after autoclaving, prior to disposal, by lab personnel. Clear or black bags autoclave bags should be used for autoclaving in this instance. The bags should NOT be RED, have the word Biohazard or have a Biohazard symbol.

**Animal Waste:** The guidance of the Director for Laboratory Animal Resources, shall be sought for handling and disposal of all animal waste and carcasses. Experiments using animals exposed to infectious agents, RG2, or requiring BL2 containment, shall be treated as RMW.

**Where the waste needs to go:**

**Red bags:** (BL 2 waste only)
- LSRB- call Dane Cellupica (1-8866) or Jessica Domery (7-4414) to arrange disposal.
- Biology - call Caren Stark (2-3441) to arrange disposal.

**Non-contaminated trash:** (Clear or black bags only/ BL 1 waste)
- LSRB – Regular trash is picked up by the custodians, in the lab.
- Biology – Regular trash is picked up by the custodians, in the lab.

**Autoclave Rooms:**
- LSRB – BL 1 material can be left in the bins in the Autoclave rooms, post autoclaving. BL 2 materials still need to go out as RMW. Refer to Red bags above.
- Biology – Each lab is responsible for correctly disposing of their own autoclaved waste, whether BL 1 or BL 2. Please refer above for the correct procedure.

**Sharps containers:**
- LSRB – Return to CAS Stores, if purchased there, or call Dane Cellupica (1-8866)
- Biology- Return to CAS Stores, if purchased there, or call Dane Cellupica (1-8866)

**Additional Information:**

**NOTE:** DO NOT PLACE ANY TRASH or RED BAGS IN THE HALL.