

*Srishti Medical Waste Update*  
**CAMPAIGN FOR PROPER MEDICAL WASTE DISPOSAL**  
**December' 97**

Since the last update a lot has occurred on the topic of medical waste. The MOEF released the Draft notification for Bio- Medical Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules, 1997 on 27<sup>th</sup> October 1997. These notifications will become a rule after of 60 days of their notification. During this period the Ministry invited suggestions and recommendation on these rules. To address this issue on a common platform Srishti organised a round table discussion on this Draft. Key persons from the government and IMA were invited. The objections and recommendations which evolved during the course of the discussions have been handed over to the ministry of Environment and forest. We do hope you have been able to react to the Draft Notifications.

In early November Srishti participated in a initiative by the Multinational Resource Centre, USA, who hosted a visit of Mr. Glenn McRae a medical waste management expert from the US. He works with hospitals to device ways to segregate waste so that the level and amount of technology needed to manage the waste is reduced. In India he visited hospitals in Delhi, Mumbai and Calcutta where he conducted 'walk-throughs' to determine the kind of approach required for waste management. The idea of choosing a hospital in each city was to make the chosen hospital a fixture so that other hospitals could learn from its experience. Seminars on this subject were held so that people involved in this issue could benefit from his experience. Mr. McRae also met policy makers at these cities to discuss the issues of medical waste management. In Delhi the nodal hospital chosen was G.B. Pant hospital where a three day walk through was carried out. During which the team interacted with all levels of the hospital staff and examined the practices of waste collection, transport and treatment within the hospital. The idea being to suggest the point and type of intervention required within the existing waste management practises which would reduce danger to the community and the worker. Srishti will be working closely with G.B Pant to implement the scheme.

Srishti has released a manual on Hospital waste management. "Implementing Hospital Waste Management : A guide to healthcare facilities " is based on hands on experience.

Many new technologies dealing with medical equipment and medical waste management has come into the market. They not only attempt to provide worker safety but also treat waste in a manner which is environmentally benign. In the area of medical equipment there is a device known as 'Vacu Tainer'. This is an alternative to the conventional syringe and needle. It works on the principle of a vacuum. This device consists of a needle surrounded by a plastic protection for the user. This needle also has a point at the other end one end is pierced into the patient and the other end is put into a special test tube which has a vacuum. Through vacuum displacement the blood enters the test tube. The Tata Memorial Hospital is using these devices. Another appliance which would be of interest to a medical facility is a waste disinfection unit which uses the principle of frequency waves - not unlike a Microwave.

The incinerator industry has come up with some novel ideas and marketing strategies. One such idea is the portable incinerator. This incinerator is touted to take care of all the waste in a hospital and can be moved from ward to ward. This incinerator is touted to follow all the pollution norms. However no mention is made about Dioxin or smoke emissions. There was a meeting on medical waste where one such representative from an incinerator company stated that Indians should not bother so much about Dioxin and other problems caused by incinerators as Indians are already exposed to large doses of pollutants!

We would like to know if there are any seminars on the topic of waste and technology in your region, or if new technology proposals are coming up in your region. If you send us information in advance we could inform readers through this newsletter.

***Towards Safer Medical Waste Disposal in 1998!***