



SRISHTI

H-2, Jangpura Extension, ND-110014 Ph 4328006, 4321747, 4320711 Fax 4321747
email: ravig1@vsnl.com

Srishti Medical Waste Update
CAMPAIGN FOR PROPER MEDICAL WASTE DISPOSAL
March 98

Since the last update much has happened in the field of medical waste. Srishti along with other NGO's and concerned citizens have been actively involved with the MOEF for the finalization of the Bio-Medical Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 1997.

We carried out a survey to analyze the waste management practices being followed in nine major medical facilities, which included the largest blood bank in Delhi- post May 1996 Supreme Court ruling. The hospitals included Government and private hospitals.

The results were shocking. In all areas of waste management - right from the point of generation of the waste, to the functioning of treatment technologies, worker safety, and the recycling market in areas near the hospital, there were gross violations. Even those hospitals with waste segregation were found to be mixing waste in different colored bins or plastic bags. Only one incinerator was working as per CPCB prescribed temperatures, while the rest functioned at temperatures from 100 °C onwards in the primary chamber to 200°C in the secondary chamber. The ash from these incinerators contained sharps, glass and unburnt plastics. There were no worker safety procedures nor any provision for protective gear. Only one hospital gave Hepatitis B vaccine to all its workers handling waste. Private hospitals had contractors assigned for waste disposal. These contractors would hire someone to, or themselves, sort plastics and glass for recycling. Municipal bins used by hospitals were frequented by ragpickers. They collect recyclable waste like syringes, I.V sets and other plastic and rubber based medical equipment. Used syringes and IV sets were found with *Kabadi Walas* in slums adjoining hospitals. Needle stick injuries were a common occurrence amongst nurses and personnel directly involved in patient treatment and waste disposal. Ragpickers, too, complained of frequent needle stick injuries.

After having successfully implemented a waste management system in Orthonova hospital, Srishti has started to work with Dr. Shroff's Eye Hospital, a 50- bedded eye and ENT hospital, to implement a waste management scheme. The setting-up mechanism shall be on similar lines, with emphasis on training of the staff and proper segregation of the waste.

In Bhopal, Srishti, in association with the 'Bhopal Gas Peedit Sanstahan' made a presentation to the State Pollution Control Board on Medical Waste. The Bhopal municipality had tendered for six incinerators, which they have at the moment put on hold to examine other alternatives.

To address the gravity of the problem of Medical waste Srishti along with Indian Institute for Rural Development (IIRD) are conducting a National Workshop on Hospital Waste.



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The workshop shall try and cover all the issues related to the medical waste. It shall focus on the present situation, prevailing policies, available treatment technologies.

Venue- Chokhi Dhani- Jaipur; Rajasthan

Date- 16-18th April 1998

Jaipur Contact- IIRD, C-80, Ramdas Marg, Tilak Nagar, Jaipur ; # 0141-623080, 623379
fax 0141- 654553

In our financial capital Mumbai, the Medwaste Action Group, consisting on the dynamic trio - Deepika, Kajal and Mamta, are doing outstanding work. They have had a series of meetings with various stakeholders of medical waste management, including the Mumbai Municipal Corporation. In all these meetings it was repeatedly emphasised that solutions to medical waste lie not in technology but in proper management systems. In one such meeting attended by senior municipal representatives, NGO's it was agreed that after proper segregation only body tissues should be send for incineration while rest of the infected waste be treated by autoclaves. General waste will be treated as household waste.

What we need to do:

Till now It has been a one sided dialogue, with Srishti sending in regular updates and information. We would like to know more about happenings in the field of medical waste at your end. Do tell us of the latest happenings. The information can then be disseminated in our coming updates. It is necessary that information and issues be shared.

We would also be glad to work more proactively with all of you. Either attempt to visit your places, if budgets permit, but definitely work together to device a proper waste management system.

Initiate/advice segregation of waste at the source. This will reduce the amount of waste needing special treatment. As not all waste generated in the hospital is infectious only 10-20% of it is infectious while rest 80-90% is non -infectious.

Apply the rule of 3R's - Reduce, Recycle and Reuse judiciously in the hospital. Like AIIMS and Safdarjang hospitals in Delhi, where they have started to use glass syringes for the collection of blood samples. Immediately after use they are autoclaved and are then ready to be used again.

Please let us know of the medical waste activity in your area.