

Waste Reduction 2004

The department participates in and initiates several activities to reduce the volume of all categories of waste materials including chemically hazardous waste and biologically hazardous wastes. This paper documents and summarizes activities since the last statement (January 22, 2002).

The Pathology Department reduces wastes by:

Choosing smaller-draw collection tubes where possible.

Examples:

- The 4.5 ml. blue top tubes are not being replaced with 3 ml draw plastic tubes. However, BD has since pulled the 3 ml tube of the market. We explored other manufacturers but could not find an appropriate replacement. For that reason we are now using the 4.5 ml tube until BD releases the smaller tube again.
- We redesigned and consolidated requisitions for out patient collection to allow for improved sample sharing in order to reduce the number of tubes drawn and the subsequent waste.
- Some therapeutic drugs were moved from Toxicology to the Core Chemistry platform and this allows for tube sharing.
- Tube sharing strategies were further developed in the receiving area so that aliquots instead of full tubes are sent to the workstations.

Selecting methods and instrumentation to reduce the volume of waste to be disposed by hazardous waste vendor or released to the environment:

Examples:

- In RIA, we no longer use radioisotopes for any test, which eliminates radioactive waste.

Recycling:

The Department continues to facilitate recycling by allowing, giving space for and encouraging the voluntary recycling of waste paper and cans.

examples:

- Voluntary- newspaper, clean plastic & computer paper in many labs.
- The facility continues to recycle all corrugated cardboard, which results in a 20% reduction in the solid waste stream.
- Toner cartridges are routinely recycled, by mailing back to the manufacturer.

On the down side:

Rulings and threats of fines by OSHA required us to adopt a disposable barrel for needle collection sets. This increases the volume of sharps waste.

Respectfully Submitted: _____ Date: _____

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Chairman , Pathology Safety Committee