

## Veterinary assessment

All general waste must be subject to a veterinary risk assessment which must ask:

- Does the material arise from an animal that has any disease caused by a micro-organism, such that the material is contaminated with that micro-organism?
- Is there any other potential risk of infection?
- If the answer to either is 'yes', the waste is infectious, clinical waste ▼

## Hazardous waste



Register your premises, keep a Waste Register, use Consignment Notes, keep all records for at least three years.

### Cytotoxic and cytostatic pharmaceuticals

Waste contaminated with cytotoxic and cytostatic pharmaceuticals, which are medicinal products that are toxic, carcinogenic, toxic for reproduction or mutagenic.

*This includes:*

- Glass bottles and vials
- Clinical items (for example, swabs, masks and gloves)
- Syringes and sharps
- Animal bedding.

#### DISPOSAL

- Segregate into appropriate purple and yellow containers—sharps, glass bottles and vials into purple-lidded sharps containers—for high-temperature incineration only
- EWC =18 02 07\*.

### Contaminated sharps

Sharps must be subject to a risk assessment. Sharps contaminated with material (other than cytotoxic or cytostatic) that is deemed to present a risk of infection to any animal or person that may come into contact with it may include:

- Partially and fully discharged sharps, hypodermic needles and other sharp instruments and objects.

#### DISPOSAL

- EWC =18 02 02\* and 18 02 08
- Segregate into yellow sharps containers for high-temperature incineration only.

#### FOR BEST PRACTICE

- EWC =18 02 02\*
- Non-pharmaceutically contaminated sharps can be further segregated into orange-lidded bins for suitable alternative treatment (for example, autoclaving).

### Infectious, clinical waste

Infectious, clinical waste is:

Waste containing viable micro-organisms or their toxins which are known or reliably believed to cause disease in humans or other living organisms; or waste which, following a veterinary assessment, is deemed to present a risk of infection to any animal or person that may come into contact with it.

*This may include:*

- Items used in treatment (for example, swabs, masks and gloves, which may include blood-contaminated items)
- Animal bedding
- Blood and body parts.

#### DISPOSAL

- Segregate into appropriate yellow containers for high-temperature incineration only
- EWC =18 02 02\*.

#### FOR BEST PRACTICE

- Infectious waste, other than body parts and cadavers, can be further segregated into orange containers for suitable alternative treatment (for example, autoclaving) as best practice
- EWC =18 02 02\*.

### Photographic chemicals

*This may include:*

- Waste fixer and developer solutions.

#### DISPOSAL

- Segregate into separate fixer and developer leak-proof containers for treatment at an appropriately permitted facility
- There is no standard packaging so specific requirements should be discussed with your waste contractor
- EWC =09 01 01\* (developer) and 09 01 04\* (fixer).

## Non-hazardous waste



Use transfer notes and keep all records for three years.

### Offensive waste

Offensive waste is veterinary waste other than sharps that is not hazardous or clinical but which is unpleasant and may cause offence to the senses.

This waste must have been subjected to a detailed item and patient-specific assessment that clearly demonstrates it does not present a risk of infection or other potential hazard to any animal or person that may come into contact with it, even if mismanaged.

This is particularly important in the case of material contaminated with body fluids (for example, blood), where a veterinary surgeon must be able to demonstrate that they implemented procedures that meet the requirements set out in the accompanying web guidance (see [www.bva.co.uk](http://www.bva.co.uk)).

As a result of this assessment the veterinary surgeon is declaring that the waste is not hazardous, and is not clinical waste that requires incineration or other treatment prior to landfill.

*Offensive waste may include:*

- Items used in treatment (for example swabs, masks and gloves, which may include blood-contaminated items)
- Animal bedding
- Animal faeces

These **must not** contain body parts or body tissues.

#### DISPOSAL

- Landfill or other suitable permitted facility
- EWC =18 02 03.

### Sharps

Sharps must be subject to a risk assessment that demonstrates they do not present a risk of infection to any animal or person that may come into contact with them.

*This may include:*

- An unused sharp that has been dropped on the floor prior to use.

If there is deemed to be a risk, however small, the sharp should be assumed to be hazardous and handled accordingly (see Contaminated sharps).

#### DISPOSAL

- EWC = 18 02 01
- If the sharps are classified as 18 02 01 the vet is indicating that they are not clinical waste and do not need to be rendered safe. In such circumstances disposal outlets may be more limited and less predictable, potentially including landfill without treatment. It is unlikely that a veterinary practice would produce a sharps waste stream which could be coded 18 02 01.

### Pharmaceuticals (not cytotoxic or cytostatic)

Waste contaminated with pharmaceuticals (not cytotoxic or cytostatic).

*This may include:*

- Denatured controlled drugs
- Prescription-only medicines
- Out-of-date drugs
- Contaminated bottles, syringe bodies and packaging.

#### DISPOSAL OF CONTROLLED DRUGS

- All controlled drugs must be denatured or made not readily recoverable and then be disposed of with other pharmaceuticals (not cytotoxic or cytostatic)
- For Schedule 2 controlled drugs this should be done in the presence of an authorised person (for example, a veterinary surgeon from another practice).

#### DISPOSAL OF OTHER PHARMACEUTICALS

- Segregate into blue leak-proof containers
- Avoid mixing
- Incineration at an appropriately permitted facility
- EWC =18 02 08.

### Pet cadavers

Pet cadavers are now transferred and disposed of under animal by-product controls, except where the cadaver is suspected of harbouring a notifiable disease, in which case collection and disposal will be arranged by Defra.

#### DISPOSAL

- Burial at home
- Burial in a pet cemetery
- Cremation.

### Domestic waste

Waste that only contains domestic rubbish. This includes separate recyclable and mixed non-recyclable materials. Batteries and hazardous items should not be placed in the mixed municipal waste.

*Recyclables may include:*

- Paper, card, unsoiled newspapers and magazines
- Plastic food containers
- Drink cans
- Batteries.

#### DISPOSAL

- Recycling or disposal at a suitably permitted or licensed site
- EWC = 20 03 01 (mixed).

### Further information

It is the right and responsibility of the waste producer, that is, the practice, to classify and segregate their waste. Waste should be subjected to a detailed item and patient specific assessment to determine if it presents a risk of infection or other potential hazard to any animal or person that may come into contact with it.

All businesses have a duty of care to ensure that:

- All waste is stored and disposed of responsibly
- Waste is only handled or dealt with by those authorised to do so
- Appropriate records are kept of all waste that is transferred or received

This is a practical good practice guide to assist veterinary surgeons to comply with waste regulations in England and Wales

Supported by the

**ENVIRONMENT  
AGENCY**

The **Environment Agency** supports this *Good practice guide to handling veterinary waste in England and Wales* written and published by the British Veterinary Association

**Further information** on handling veterinary waste is available at [www.bva.co.uk](http://www.bva.co.uk) and [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

## Introduction to handling veterinary waste

This is a practical guide to assist the veterinary profession to comply with waste regulations in England and Wales. The Environment Agency supports this guide.

Further detailed information is available at [www.bva.co.uk](http://www.bva.co.uk) and [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

The BVA also encourages practices to discuss this further with their waste contractor.

## Duty of care

All businesses have to ensure that

- All waste is stored and disposed of responsibly
- Waste is only handled or dealt with by those authorised to do so
- Appropriate records are kept of all waste that is transferred or received.

The BVA recommends that veterinary practices secure an assurance in writing that the person collecting the waste is authorised to do so.

## Hazardous waste

Hazardous wastes are those that are harmful to people, the environment or animals, either immediately or over an extended period of time.

Key veterinary hazardous wastes include:

- Cytotoxic and cytostatic pharmaceuticals
- Infectious waste — any veterinary waste containing viable micro-organisms or their toxins which are known or reliably believed to cause disease in man or other living organisms
- Sharps contaminated with animal blood or pharmaceuticals that are deemed to present a risk of infection
- Photographic chemicals such as fixer or developer solutions.

All veterinary facilities that produce more than 500 kg of hazardous waste per annum need to register their premises because of the Hazardous Waste Regulations. This can be done on the Environment Agency website or by phoning or writing to them.

All people who move or receive hazardous waste need to record this and maintain a register of each waste involved for their records. Before any hazardous waste leaves the premises a consignment note needs to be completed. Sufficient copies of the note must be prepared to allow the producer, the consignor (if different), all carriers and the consignee to each have a copy. Consignment notes may be supplied by your waste contractor. They are also available from the Environment Agency in hardcopy for £1.00 or can be electronically downloaded from its website. These records must be kept for at least three years.

## Non-hazardous waste

Key veterinary non-hazardous wastes include:

- Any pharmaceuticals other than cytotoxic or cytostatic pharmaceuticals.
- Offensive waste — waste that is not hazardous but which is unpleasant and may cause offence to the senses. For all waste placed in this stream the veterinary surgeon must be able to demonstrate that they implemented procedures that meet the requirements set out in the accompanying web guidance (see [www.bva.co.uk](http://www.bva.co.uk)).
- Domestic rubbish.

When non-hazardous waste is transferred from one party to another, the person handing it on must complete a transfer note, which both parties must sign and keep a copy. An annual transfer note may be used to cover all the movements of a regular transfer of the same non-hazardous waste between the same parties. These records must be kept for at least three years.

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