

**Effective Date** Thursday, June 30, 2005

**Status** Final

**Last Revised** Friday, February 18, 2022

**Policy Type** [University](#)

**Contact Office**

[Environmental Health and Safety](#)

**Oversight Executive**

[Vice President for Research](#)

**Applies To**

Academic Division The Medical Center The College at Wise

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**Reason for Policy**

To protect University faculty, staff, students, visitors, and the public from exposure to potentially disease-causing waste materials and to ensure compliance with all local, state, and federal regulations.

**Definition of Terms**

### **Regulated Medical Waste**

Any waste materials capable of producing a disease by an organism likely to be pathogenic to healthy humans, such as the following:

1. Discarded cultures and stocks of microorganisms, specimens, vaccines and associated items containing organisms likely to be pathogenic to healthy humans.
2. Human blood and certain body fluids as defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.
3. Items saturated or caked with human blood or body fluids that would release blood/body fluid in a liquid or semi liquid state if compressed or would flake if handled.
4. Human tissue or anatomical wastes.
5. Sharps (needles, syringes with attached needles, and scalpel blades: Needles, syringes with attached needles, scalpels, scissors lancets, guide wires and glass pasture pipettes, etc.).
6. Animal carcasses, body parts, bedding and related wastes when intentionally infected with organisms likely to be pathogenic to healthy humans.
7. Any residue or contaminated soil, water, or other debris resulting from the clean-up of a spill of infectious waste.
8. Any solid waste contaminated by or mixed with infectious waste.
9. Products of recombinant DNA or synthetic nucleic acid experiments as defined by the [National Institutes of Health Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant or Synthetic Nucleic Acid Molecules](#).

## Policy Statement

Any waste that meets the above definition must be considered regulated medical waste (RMW) and must be disposed in accordance with Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) regulations. University of Virginia faculty, staff, and students must identify and segregate all waste materials properly. Waste that does not meet the definition of RMW (e.g., [Radioactive](#), [Hazardous Waste](#), regular trash, or [recyclable materials](#), etc.) must not be placed within the RMW stream.

Personnel handling RMW must be appropriately trained regarding Virginia DEQ and Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations to properly identify and dispose of materials that qualify as RMW.

### Compliance with Policy:

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion in accordance with relevant University policies.

In addition, Virginia DEQ can enforce civil charges and penalties. Violations of federal or state law may result in significant financial penalties for the University. Such penalties will not be paid from central University resources but must be borne by the laboratory, department, College, or School responsible for the facility in violation.

Questions about this policy should be directed to [Environmental Health and Safety](#).

## Procedures

[Waste on the EHS Website.](#)

[UVA Medical Center Infection Control Website.](#)

## Related Information

Training and additional RMW Guidance can be found on the [EHS Website](#) and the [UVA Medical Center Infection Control Website](#).

For Radioactive and Hazardous waste, see [SEC-004: Collection and Disposal of Regulated Hazardous Materials & Hazardous \(Chemical\) Waste](#)

**Major Category** [Safety, Security and Environmental Quality](#)

**Next Scheduled Review** Tuesday, February 18, 2025

### Revision History

Revised 2/18/22; Added Compliance section 7/21/21; Updated 7/21/11.

### Applies To Text

Academic Division, the Medical Center, and the College at Wise.

## Policy Summary

All regulated medical waste must be properly identified, segregated, and stored in proper containers.

### Supersedes Policy Text

Regulated Medical Waste Management XIV.I.1

**Last modified** February 27, 2024 - 10:21am

**Approved By** Policy Review Committee

**Approved Date** June 30, 2005 - 12:00pm