

Waste Disposal (Amendment) Bill 2005
Administration's Response to Members' request made at
the 6th meeting of the Bills Committee held on 8 November 2005

To provide information on whether “used or contaminated sharps”, “dressings” and animal body parts and tissues generated from veterinary clinics were defined as clinical waste in overseas countries and whether their disposal was regulated by law.

Overseas Practice

In many overseas countries, used or contaminated sharps and dressings soaked with blood generated by veterinary clinics are regulated as clinical waste. A summary is at Annex A.

2. Regarding animal body parts and tissues generated by veterinary clinics, many states in the US and Australia do not regulate them as clinical waste. The state laws only control dead animals, animal organs and tissues arising from veterinary research and laboratory investigation, production of biologicals (e.g. vaccines), pharmaceutical testing, or testing with infectious agents purposely inoculated into the animals. For those countries such as UK, Canada and one state in Australia which control the disposal of animal body parts and tissues from veterinary clinics as clinical waste, such control is imposed if the animals are suspected of carrying infectious agents hazardous to humans. A summary is at Annex B.

Local Situation

3. In veterinary clinics in Hong Kong, sterilization of dogs and cats is the most common operation. Some animal tissues, used sharps, dressings and swabs are also produced by the veterinary clinics.

4. The proposed clinical waste control scheme will cover used sharps and dressings soaked with blood generated by veterinary clinics, while animal body parts and tissues will be excluded. We do not propose to control animal body parts and tissues from veterinary clinics as clinical waste because of their low risk of infection. In the case where body parts are removed from animals infected with notifiable disease as defined under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Ordinance (Cap 139), any person, who has in his possession or under his charge any animal or bird affected with or suspected of being infected with disease, is

required under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Regulations (Cap 139A) to notify the fact to a police or a health inspector, and the disposal of the carcass or body parts has to be dealt with according to the kind of disease involved.

Environmental Protection Department
November 2005

Control of sharps and dressings from veterinary clinics in overseas countries

Countries	Sharps	Dressings
Australia	Yes	Dressings slightly contaminated with blood are not considered as clinical waste and can go into the general waste stream. In South Australia, dressings are considered as clinical waste if they pose a significant health risk.
Canada, Quebec		Dressings saturated with blood are controlled as clinical waste.
UK		All dressings being waste which, unless rendered safe, may prove hazardous to any person coming into contact with it, are controlled as clinical waste.
USA		In some states, dressings from veterinary clinics are not considered as clinical waste. In some states, eg. Ohio, dressings are considered as clinical waste if they are soiled to the extent that they should be managed as clinical waste.

**Control of animal body parts and tissues
generated by veterinary practices in overseas countries**

Control of dead animals, organs and tissues from “specific” veterinary sources as clinical waste	
<p>Australia</p> <p>a. South Australia</p> <p>b. Tasmania</p> <p>c. Queensland</p>	<p>a. Animal carcasses discarded in the course of veterinary research are clinical waste.</p> <p>b. Animal carcasses and tissues discarded in the course of veterinary research and laboratory investigation are clinical waste.</p> <p>c. Animal carcasses and tissues discarded in the course of veterinary research and laboratory investigation, and from animals contaminated with an agent infectious to humans, production of biologicals, or pharmaceutical testing with infectious agents are controlled as clinical waste.</p>
<p>US</p> <p>a. California, Delaware, Washington</p> <p>b. Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Ohio, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Virginia,</p> <p>c. Maine, Michigan</p>	<p>a. Animal parts, tissues or carcasses known or suspected by the attending veterinarian of being contaminated with infectious agents known to be contagious to humans are considered as clinical waste.</p> <p>b. Carcasses, body parts or blood originating from animals inoculated during research, production of biologicals, or pharmaceutical testing with agents infectious to humans are controlled as clinical waste.</p> <p>c. Contaminated wastes, carcasses and body parts from animals that have been exposed to agents infectious to humans, or research animals, are controlled as clinical waste.</p>
Control of all dead animals, organs and tissues as clinical waste	
<p>Australian Capital Territory</p>	<p>Animal tissue or body fluids, removed during surgery or an autopsy, is regarded as clinical waste.</p>
<p>Canada, Quebec</p>	<p>Animal anatomical waste consisting of carcasses, body parts or organs (but excluding teeth, hair, claws, feathers, blood and biological liquids) is regarded as clinical waste.</p>
<p>UK</p>	<p>Any waste which consists wholly or partly of animal tissue, blood or other body fluids, being waste, which unless rendered safe, may prove hazardous to any person coming into contact with it, is regarded as clinical waste.</p>