Environmental Health Code, Chapter 6 Infectious Waste

Board of Health Resolution #2019–4600
Adopted July 3, 2019

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
Healthy People in Healthy Communities

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Section 1: Authority and Purpose

This chapter is under the authority of Chapter 70.05 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) to protect public health, the environment, prevent the spread of any dangerous, contagious or infectious diseases and:

A. Provide broad powers of regulation to Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department and its appointed health officer, relating to infectious waste management.

B. Designate infectious wastes that are dangerous or potentially dangerous to public health and the environment.

C. Provide the rules to establish an infectious waste management plan.

D. Establish the operation and monitoring requirements for infectious waste generators, transporters, storage and treatment facilities.

E. Establish and administer a permit program for infectious waste generators, transporters, storage and treatment facilities.

F. Provide surveillance and monitoring of infectious wastes until they are rendered non-infectious and properly disposed.

Section 2: Administration and Applicability

A. The health officer shall administer and enforce these regulations under the authority of Chapter 70.05 RCW.

B. Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health (BOH) may adopt fees for the administration of these regulations under the authority of RCW 70.05.060(7).

C. This chapter applies to all facilities and operations that generate, transport, store or treat infectious waste as defined in Section 3 of this chapter. This chapter does not apply to infectious waste generated and lawfully disposed with residential solid wastes from a single-family residence, except as described in Section 12 of this chapter.

Section 3: Definitions

The definitions in this chapter shall be the primary definition used, followed by the common definition. The definitions used in this chapter are specific to this chapter and should not be used to define words, terms, or phrases in any other chapter or section of the Environmental Health Code, unless indicated. Find general application definitions in Chapter 1 of the Environmental Health Code.

Board of Health: Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health, formed pursuant to Chapter 70.05 RCW.

Chemical Disinfection: An infectious waste treatment and decontamination method that utilizes appropriately formulated chemical solutions to disinfect infectious waste and contaminated areas.

Container: Any portable device, in which materials are stored, transported, treated, disposed or otherwise handled.

Collection: The removal and transportation of infectious waste from the generator, transfer station or pickup station.

Contamination: The transfer of disease-causing organisms from one material or object to another.

Contingency Plan: The document that describes the organized, planned, and coordinated course of action to follow in the event of a fire, explosion, equipment malfunction or breakdown, or release of infectious waste that could threaten human health or the environment.

Decontamination: The elimination of contamination through cleansing and disinfection of an area, object or person soiled by contact with infectious waste.

Director: Director of Health or an authorized representative.

Facility: Any place where infectious waste activity occurs as defined by this chapter.

Gas Vapor Sterilization: An infectious waste treatment technique, only for use under very controlled circumstances, which uses gases or vaporized chemicals as sterilizing agents.

Generator: Any person, by site, whose act or process produces infectious waste as defined in this chapter or whose act first caused an infectious waste to become subject to regulation. In the case where more than one person, e.g., doctors with separate medical practices, are in the same building, each individual business entity is a separate generator for the purposes of these rules.

- **Class I-A Generator:** A facility generating less than 40 gallons or 50 pounds of infectious waste per month.
- **Class I-B Generator:** A facility generating between 40 and 100 gallons or 50 and 110 pounds of infectious waste per month.
- **Class I-C Generator:** A facility generating more than 100 gallons or 110 pounds of infectious waste per month.

Handling: Direct physical management of infectious waste.

Health Department or Department: Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department.

Health Officer: Tacoma-Pierce County health officer, or an authorized representative of the health officer.

Incineration: A process method that uses an engineered apparatus capable of withstanding heat and for the purpose of efficient thermal oxidation and/or conversion of combustible material into noncombustible residues (ash) and product gases.

Infectious Agent: Type of microorganism, helminth, or virus that causes, or significantly contributes to the cause of, increased morbidity or mortality of human beings or animals.

Infectious Waste, Biomedical Waste, or Biohazardous Waste: Synonymous terms for untreated solid waste capable of causing an infectious disease via exposure to a pathogenic organism of sufficient virulence and dosage, through an entry portal in a susceptible host. For the purposes of this chapter, the following types of wastes will be referred to as infectious waste:

A. **Animal Waste:** Waste contaminated with animal carcasses, body parts, body substances, and animal bedding known to be infected or inoculated with pathogenic microorganisms infectious to humans.

B. **Biosafety Level 4 Disease Waste:** Waste contaminated with blood, excretions, exudates, or secretions from humans or animals which are isolated to protect others from highly communicable infectious diseases that are identified as pathogenic organisms assigned to Biosafety Level 4 by the Centers for Disease Control, National Institute of Health, *Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories* (current edition).

C. **Cultures and Stocks of Infectious Agents:** Waste infectious to humans and includes specimen cultures, cultures and stocks of etiologic agents, wastes from the production of biologicals and serums, discarded live and attenuated vaccines, and laboratory waste that have come in contact with cultures and stocks of etiologic agents or blood specimens. Examples include, but are not limited to:
    - Culture dishes.
    - Blood specimen tubes.
    - Specimen containers
    - Slides and cover slips.
    - Devices used to transfer, inoculate, and mix cultures.

D. **Human Blood and Blood Products:** Waste with human blood, blood products, blood components, and materials containing free-flowing or caked dry blood in amounts capable of release if compressed or from routine handling. Examples include, but are not limited to:
    - Whole blood.
    - Serum.
    - Plasma.
    - Blood derived products.
    - Saturated gauze pads.

E. Pathological **Waste:** Human source biopsy materials, tissues, and anatomical parts from surgery, obstetrical procedures and autopsy. Pathological waste does not include teeth, human corpses or remains, and anatomical parts intended for burial or cremation.

F. **Sharps Waste:** All hypodermic needles, syringes and IV tubing with attached needles, solid needles, scalpel blades and lancets removed from their original sterile package.

Infectious Waste Permit: Permit issued by the Health Department for the generation, transportation, storage or treatment of infectious waste under the conditions specified in Section 5 of this chapter.

A. Class **I-A, I-B, and I-C permit:** Permit required for an infectious waste generator, unless determined to be exempt in accordance with Section 5.

B. **Class II permit:** Permit required for infectious waste transporters unless determined to be exempt in accordance with Section 5.

C. Class **III permit:** Permit required for any facility that stores or treats infectious waste generated on or off-site from the premises owned or operated by the generator, unless determined to be exempt in accordance with Section 5.

Infectious Waste Management Plan (IWMP): A written and implemented system for safe infectious waste handling throughout the entire process of generation, segregation, packaging, storage, collection, transportation, treatment and disposal.

Irradiation: Use of ionizing radiation to treat infectious waste.

Off-site: A facility or area used for the receipt, storage, treatment or disposal of infectious wastes which is not on the generator's site.

Operation and Maintenance Plan (O&M): A written and implemented plan to accept, handle and process infectious waste through an approved onsite treatment method (e.g. autoclave); may be added as an addendum to an approved Infectious Waste Management Plan for infectious waste generators.

Operator: A person who operates a facility or part of a facility.

Owner: A person who owns a facility or part of a facility.

Pathogen: A biological agent that causes disease.

Person: An individual, trust, firm, joint stock company, corporation, partnership, association, state, county, commission, political subdivision of a state, an interstate body, or the federal government or an agency of the federal government.

Personnel: All persons who work at or oversee the operations of a facility involved in infectious waste activity.

Residential Sharps: Sharps generated and prepared for disposal at a residence, apartment, dwelling, or other noncommercial habitat.

Sharps Waste Container: A leak-proof, rigid, puncture-resistant, red container taped closed or tightly lidded to prevent the loss of contents.

Steam Sterilization: An infectious waste treatment method, using saturated steam within a pressure vessel (known as a steam sterilizer, autoclave, or retort), at time lengths and temperatures that kill infectious agents within the waste.

Storage: The containment of infectious waste prior to treatment, in accordance with the standards outlined in this chapter, in such a manner as not to constitute disposal of infectious waste.

Storage Facility: A facility authorized and permitted to store infectious waste.

Transporter: A person engaged in the off-site transportation of infectious waste by air, rail, highway or water.

Treatment: Any method, technique or process designed to change the biological character or composition of infectious waste to render it non-infectious.

Treatment Facility: Any facility approved and permitted by the Health Department for the treatment of infectious waste.

Utilities and Transportation Commission: A three-member commission appointed by the Washington State governor charged to protect consumers by ensuring that utility and transportation services are fairly priced, available, reliable and safe.

Vehicle: Any motor vehicle, rail car, watercraft, trailer, or motorized or non-motorized cargo-carrying body used for the movement of infectious waste.

Section 4: Types of Infectious Waste Generators

Generators of infectious waste include, but are not limited to:

A. Acupuncture establishments.
B. Acute psychiatric facilities.
C. Blood banks.
D. Cleaning services used for infectious/biohazard waste cleanup.
E. Commercial diagnostic laboratories.
F. Community clinics.
G. Dental offices.
H. Dialysis clinics.
I. Employee clinics.
J. Funeral homes and mortuaries.
K. General acute care hospitals.
L. Health maintenance organizations.
M. Home health agencies.
N. Hospice agencies.
O. Intermediate care facilities.
P. In-patient medical, surgical or treatment facilities.
Q. In-patient care facilities for the developmentally disabled.
R. Medical building.
S. Medical, research, industrial and educational laboratories.
T. Out-patient medical, surgical or treatment care facilities.
U. Plasma centers.
V. Physicians' offices.
W. Residential care facilities.
X. Skilled nursing care facilities or convalescent hospitals.
Y. Tattoo/piercing establishments.
Z. Veterinary clinics.

Section 5: Infectious Waste Permit Requirements and Standards

A. A current infectious waste permit is required for any person who owns or operates a facility that generates, transports, stores or treats infectious waste as defined in Section 3, unless otherwise excluded or exempted by this chapter. Persons required to have an infectious waste permit shall maintain permits during the active life of the facility. A permit may be issued or denied for one or more activities without simultaneously issuing or denying a permit for all activities.

B. Any person intending to own or operate a facility subject to permit requirements of this chapter, must apply for an infectious waste permit from the Health Department. An application is not complete until signed by the owner/operator and all requested information is received by the Health Department. We will evaluate complete applications within 90 days and inform applicant of the permit status.

C. The permit application shall include the following information submitted on a form available from the Health Department:

1. A general facility or operation description, including name, mailing address, and location of the facility or area served, if a transporter.

2. Address and phone number of the person(s) responsible for implementing infectious waste management policies and procedures.

3. Name, address, and phone number of the owner/operator or administrator of the facility or operation.

4. Whether the facility is new or existing.

5. List of other relevant state and local environmental permits.

6. Types and maximum amount of infectious waste generated, transported, stored or treated monthly.

7. An applicable infectious waste management plan as described in Section 8 of this chapter.

8. A statement certifying the applicant understands and will comply with the applicable requirements of this chapter.

9. All new, expanded or altered Class III treatment facilities must comply with the State Environmental Policy Act rules, Chapter 197-11 WAC.

D. Infectious Waste Permit Classifications

1. Class I-Generators

(i) Class I-A: All generators of less than 40 gallons or 50 pounds of infectious waste per month.
(ii) Class I-B: All generators between 40 and 100 gallons or 50 and 110 pounds of infectious waste per month.
(iii) Class I-C: All generators of more than 100 gallons or 110 pounds of infectious waste per month.

2. Class II-Transporters: All infectious waste transporters (e.g. infectious waste disposal companies).

3. Class III-Storage or Treatment Facility: Operation of any facility that stores infectious waste for more than seven days or treats infectious waste generated on-site (waste generated on the premises owned or operated by the generator), or off-site (waste generated off the premises owned or operated by the generator).

E. Infectious Waste Permit Exemptions

1. Upon request, the Health Officer may determine exemption from permitting for facilities that generate incidental infectious waste quantities. Exempt facilities are subject to general handling, storage and disposal provisions of this chapter.

2. Class I-A or I-B generators who hold a current permit and transport only infectious wastes generated at premises owned or operated by the generator are exempt from the additional Class II permit fee and regulatory requirements.

3. Class I-A or I-B generators who hold a current permit and treat infectious waste generated at premises owned or operated by the generator are exempt from the additional Class III permit fee but shall be responsible for compliance with those infectious waste treatment requirements provided for in Section 9 of this chapter.

4. Class III infectious waste storage and treatment facilities with a current permit and generate or transport infectious waste are exempt from additional permit fees. Class III permitted facilities that generate or transport infectious waste must still comply with requirements applicable to generators and transporters of infectious waste.

F. Applicants shall keep records of all data used to complete a permit application and any supplemental information for a period of at least three years from the date the application is submitted to the Health Department.

Section 6: Infectious Waste Generator Requirements and Standards

These requirements apply to all infectious waste generators, regardless of infectious waste quantity produced. Any person who owns or operates a facility that generates infectious waste shall have a current Class I infectious waste permit issued by the Health Department, unless exempt under Section 5 (E).

A. Infectious waste generators shall comply with the following requirements:

1. Employee or Contracted Staff Training

(i) Facilities involved in infectious waste activity shall provide all employees, staff, housekeeping and janitorial personnel involved in the generation or handling of infectious waste with infectious waste management training. Such training shall include, but not be limited to the following:

a. A definition and identification of infectious waste generated at the facility.

b. An explanation of the facility's infectious waste management plan that includes the requirements of this chapter in relation to the handling, storage, transportation, treatment and disposal of infectious waste.

c. Assignment of roles and responsibilities for plan implementation.

d. Training occurs when the infectious waste management plan is first developed and instituted, when new employees are hired, and when management procedures are changed.

e. Annual or more frequent training shall be provided to refresh and maintain personnel awareness of potential hazards and reinforce policy and procedures in the infectious waste management plan.

2. Infectious Waste Segregation and Containment

(i) Infectious waste shall be segregated from other waste at the point of origin in the generating facility and managed by only people trained in the safe handling of infectious waste.

(ii) Infectious waste with multiple hazards (i.e., toxic, radioactive, or other hazardous chemicals) shall be segregated from the general infectious waste stream when additional or alternative treatment is required or in cases where the wastes are regulated under state or federal authority.

(iii) Infectious waste shall be contained in a manner and at a location which affords protection from unauthorized persons, animals, rain, and wind, and does not provide a breeding place or a food source for insects or rodents.

(iv) Waste sharps shall be contained for storage, transportation, treatment and disposal in sharps waste containers.

(v) Infectious waste, except sharps which are capable of puncturing or lacerating, shall be contained in red or orange colored disposable plastic bags. Plastic bags shall be impervious to moisture and strong enough to prevent ripping, tearing or bursting under normal usage and handling. The bags shall be securely tied or taped to prevent leakage or expulsion of solid or liquid wastes during storage, handling, or transport.

(vi) All bagged infectious waste and sharps waste containers shall be placed for storage or handling in disposable or reusable pails, cartons, drums, dumpsters or portable bins. The container should be leak-proof and kept clean and in good repair. Containers may be any color and shall be clearly labeled with the words Infectious Waste, Biomedical Waste, or Biohazardous Waste or the international biohazard symbol on the lid and sides visible from any lateral direction when the container is upright.

(vii) Infectious waste contained according to requirements of this section, may share a common in-house transfer cart or portable bin with bagged non-infectious wastes during transportation within a facility to a storage or treatment area. Label common transfer carts used to transport contained infectious and non-infectious waste with the words “Infectious Waste”, “Biomedical Waste”, or "Biohazardous Waste" or the international biohazard symbol, visible from any direction. In the event of an infectious waste spill within a transfer cart or portable bin containing non-infectious waste, all items shall be considered infectious waste and subject to spill management requirements in Section 10 of this chapter.

(viii) Reusable pails, drums, dumpsters or bins used for the containment of infectious waste shall not be used for the containment of non-infectious waste, or for other purposes, without first being decontaminated. Approved methods of decontamination include, but are not limited to, agitation to remove visible soil combined with one of the following procedures:

a. Exposure to hot water of at least 82°C (180°F) for a minimum of 15 seconds.

b. Exposure to an EPA registered hospital-grade disinfectant that is effective against non-enveloped viruses (e.g. norovirus, rotavirus, adenovirus or poliovirus) by rinsing or immersion as directed by manufacturer.

(ix) Compactors, grinders or pulverizers shall not be used to process infectious waste until after the waste is rendered non-infectious. Infectious waste shall not be stored or transported in a portable mobile compactor.

(x) Trash chutes shall not be used for transfer of infectious waste.

3. Infectious Waste Storage Areas

(i) Infectious waste storage time shall be kept to a minimum if not treated the same day as generation.

(ii) Designated infectious waste storage areas shall be segregated from other wastes.

(iii) Enclosures or containers shall be secured as to deny access to unauthorized persons and shall be marked with warning signs, on or adjacent to, the exterior of entry doors or gates. Warning signs shall state “CAUTION-INFECTIOUS (or BIOMEDICAL or BIO-HAZARDOUS) WASTE STORAGE AREA” and be accompanied by the international biohazard symbol. All warning signs must be visible from 25 feet.

(iv) Infectious waste storage area floors shall be made of impervious material to prevent saturation of liquid and semi-liquid substances. A perimeter curb is recommended to contain spills. Infectious waste storage areas shall be well-lit and ventilated.

(v) Filled infectious waste containers, excluding sharps containers, shall not be stored at the generating facility longer than seven days before treatment or collection for treatment. Infectious waste stored at the generating site longer than the seven day storage period must be removed by a certified transporter or rendered non-infectious through an approved onsite treatment method. Generators may keep infectious waste at temperatures between 1°C to 7°C (34°F to 45°F) for up to seven days or at or below 0°C (32°F) for up to a maximum of 90 days. Facilities storing infectious waste after the initial seven days storage and transportation period are required to get a Class III storage facility permit from the Health Department.

(vi) Filled sharps containers must be treated per Section 9 of this chapter or transported to a treatment facility within 90 days starting from the time the sharps container is sealed.

4. Contingency Plan

(i) All infectious waste generators shall develop a contingency plan for emergency situations. Provisions shall be made for an alternate treatment in the event of a loss of infectious waste disposal service, equipment malfunction or breakdown with an incinerator, autoclave or other approved method of treatment that renders infectious waste non-infectious before disposal.

5. Infectious Waste Spill Management

(i) See Section 10 of this chapter.

6. Record Keeping

(i) See Section 11 of this chapter.

7. Infectious Waste Disposal

(i) Infectious waste shall not be disposed before treatment, as described in Section 9 of this chapter. Once infectious waste is rendered non-infectious through an approved treatment method, it may be disposed at a permitted solid waste disposal facility.

B. Infectious waste generators shall prepare a written infectious waste management plan that describe policies and procedures that meet requirements listed of Section 6 (A) 1 through 7 of this Chapter.

Section 7: Infectious Waste Transporter Requirements and Standards

These requirements apply to any person who transports infectious waste over roads, highways, by rail or water conveyance. No person shall transport or receive for transport any infectious wastes within Pierce County unless the transporter has a Class II infectious waste permit issued by the Health Department and a permit from the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission where required by Washington Administrative Code, Title 480.

A. Package, label and placard requirements for infectious waste transport vehicles.

1. Transporters shall comply with the United States Department of Transportation's Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR Parts 171-180) when transporting infectious waste in commerce.

2. The access doors to any area holding infectious waste in transport shall have a warning sign legible at 25 feet that indicates cargo is infectious waste.

3. Vehicles transporting infectious waste shall be identified on each side with the name or trademark of the transporter, vehicle identification number, placards, signs or decals. Vehicle signs or decals shall have the following words: Infectious, Biomedical or biohazardous waste or contain the international biohazard symbol and the word Biohazard.

B. Receipt and transfer of infectious waste to off-site facilities.

1. An infectious waste transporter shall not receive custody of infectious wastes from a facility unless the facility has a current and appropriate infectious waste permit.

2. Infectious waste shall be transported to an off-site facility in a leak-proof, fully enclosed container or vehicle compartment.

3. Infectious waste, other than that generated in and disposed with solid wastes from single-family dwelling units, where allowable, shall not be transported in the same container or vehicle compartment as non-infectious wastes.

4. Infectious waste shall not be stored for more than 48 hours at any off-site location or facility, except at a waste storage or treatment facility. At such a facility, the infectious waste shall be kept in a secured area separate from other wastes.

5. Infectious waste shall be delivered for treatment or disposal only to a facility with current permit to handle such wastes.

6. Persons manually loading or unloading containers of infectious waste to or from a transport vehicle shall be required to wear, at a minimum, gloves impermeable to liquids, clean protective clothing and eye protection provided by their employer. Additional personal protective equipment may be required where appropriate.

7. Equipment surface areas used to transport infectious waste must be clean and impermeable to liquids. Porous floor coverings shall not be used. Vermin and insects shall be controlled. Transport vehicles surfaces in contact with spilled or leaked infectious waste shall be decontaminated using procedures described in Section 6 (A)(2)(viii) of this chapter. All wastewater shall be discharged under a permit directly, or through a holding tank to a sanitary sewer system.

8. Under no circumstances shall infectious wastes be compacted before or during transport unless wastes have been rendered non-infectious by methods described in Section 9 of this chapter.

9. Any infectious waste transported or stored after a seven-day storage period at the generating facility shall have 48 hours to be treated and rendered non-infectious or shall be subject to the following storage temperature requirements.

   (i) Refrigeration at a temperature between 1°C to 7°C (34°F-45°F) for up to seven days.

   (ii) Refrigeration at a temperature at or below 0°C (32°F) for a period up to 90 days.

   (iii) Daily temperature logs shall be maintained.

C. Record Keeping.

10. Infectious waste transporters shall comply with record-keeping requirements described in Section 11 of this chapter, and must make the following available upon request:

   (i) List of all vehicles and transport containers. The vehicles listed must be registered to the permit holder pursuant to a lease or contract and included in the permit holder's required insurance coverage.

   (ii) Proof, via inspection, that all trucks, trailers, semi-trailers, vacuum tanks, cargo tanks and containers used by the permit holder for transportation of infectious waste on highways comply with the provisions of this chapter.

   (iii) Possession of an infectious waste permit and registration certificate from the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission to transport infectious waste on highways within Washington State, where required by Washington Administrative Code Title 480-14, or 480-70.

Section 8: Requirements and Standards for Treatment Methods of Infectious Waste

All infectious waste shall be treated in accordance with the methods described in this section unless otherwise approved by the Health Department. Treatment methods used for infectious waste shall comply with the following:

B. Steam sterilization/autoclave operating procedures shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Adoption of written standard operating procedures for each steam sterilizer including time, temperature, pressure, type of waste, type of container(s), closure on container(s), pattern of loading, water content and maximum load quantity.

2. Review of recording or indicating thermometer during each complete cycle to ensure the temperature and time duration achieves sterilization of the entire load. Perform temperature and pressure accuracy confirmation or calibration test at least annually.

3. Use of heat sensitive tape, strips or other sterilization indicator on each bag or container to demonstrate it is sterilized.

4. Use of biological indicator placed at the center of a representative load processed under standard operating conditions, to confirm sterilization.
   (i) At least monthly for Class I-A and I-B generators.
   (ii) At least weekly for Class I-C generators and Class III treatment facilities.

5. Use of a third-party certified laboratory to verify biological indicator tests at least quarterly.

6. Maintenance of records and procedures specified in items 1, 2, 4 and 5 above for no less than three years.

C. Incineration operating standards shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Infectious waste incinerators shall maintain all necessary permits and comply with the standards of the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency.

2. Infectious waste incinerators should be multi-chambered and designed to provide complete combustion for the type of waste introduced into the incinerator.

3. All non-metal and glass waste shall be converted by the incineration process into ash or into a form not recognizable as its former character. Any partially combusted material shall be removed and re-burned.

4. Persons required to handle packages of infectious waste shall be provided with clean protective clothing and equipment including overalls, gloves and eye protection.

D. Infectious wastes identified below shall be treated or disposed using the methods described, unless the Health Department approves an alternative treatment method.

1. Sharps waste shall be contained in sharps waste containers and treated by steam sterilization or incineration.

2. Human blood and blood products shall be treated by steam sterilization or incineration. Blood and blood products may also be discharged directly to a sanitary sewer system.

3. Cultures and stocks of infectious agents shall be treated by steam sterilization or incineration.

4. Human pathological waste shall be treated by incineration or may be transferred to a mortician for burial or cremation.

5. Contaminated animal carcasses and parts shall be treated by incineration.

6. Bedding of animals known to be infected or inoculated with pathogenic microorganisms infectious to humans may be chemically decontaminated. Chemical decontamination of contaminated animal bedding may be accomplished by saturating the waste with a hospital grade disinfectant or a 1:10 solution of 3-5% sodium hypochlorite to water.

7. Substances in liquid or semi-liquid form may be discharged to a sanitary sewer system.

8. Bio-safety level 4 disease wastes shall be treated by steam sterilization or incineration.

E. Any person seeking approval of an alternative treatment method for infectious waste must demonstrate to the Health Department that the proposed method renders infectious waste non-infectious before disposal. Alternative treatment methods include, but are not limited to, chemical disinfection, thermal inactivation, gas/vapor sterilization and irradiation.

Section 9: Infectious Waste Storage and Treatment Facility Requirements and Standards

These requirements apply to all infectious waste storage and treatment facilities.

A. Any person who owns or operates a facility used for the storage or treatment of infectious waste shall have a current and appropriate Class III Infectious Waste Permit issued by the Health Department.

B. Each infectious waste storage or treatment facility shall prepare and follow an infectious waste Operation and Maintenance plan. This plan shall include but not be limited to the following:

1. A procedure for receiving wastes that ensures infectious waste is handled separately from other waste until treatment is accomplished. The procedure shall include the prevention of unauthorized persons having access or contact with infectious wastes.

2. A procedure for the unloading and processing infectious wastes that limits the number of people handling the wastes and minimizes the potential for exposure to employees and the public.

3. Instructions specific to the treatment unit used to render infectious waste non-infectious, as described in Section 9 of this chapter.

4. Instructions specific to the temperature-controlled storage units and temperature recording equipment that ensure storage temperature requirements as described in Section 7(B)(9) are met.

5. A procedure for the decontamination of emptied reusable infectious waste containers, transport vehicles, or facility equipment contaminated with infectious waste (see Section 6(A)(2)(viii).

6. A provision requiring the use of clean gloves and uniforms, and other personal protective equipment as appropriate, to protect from exposure to infectious waste.

7. A procedure for the decontamination of any person having bodily contact with infectious waste. Decontamination or proper disposal of soiled protective gear shall be done at the facility.

8. A spill management plan as described in Section 10.

9. A provision quantifying the maximum amount of infectious waste to be stored, treated, or disposed per month.

10. A contingency plan to provide service in the event of equipment breakdown or other interruption service as described in Section 6(A)(4)(i).

Section 10: Requirements and Standards for Infectious Waste Spill Management

These requirements apply to all facilities that generate, transport, store or treat infectious waste. Each facility and transporter shall develop written policy and procedures for infectious waste spill management. Infectious waste spill management policies and procedures shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

A. Spill containment and cleanup equipment shall be kept in areas, or immediately available to areas, utilized for collection, storage, transportation and treatment of infectious waste. Containment and cleanup equipment shall include, at a minimum, the following items:

1. Disposable absorbent materials for spilled liquids.

2. Registered chemical or hospital grade disinfectant intended for use in health care settings. Disinfectants shall be effective against non-enveloped viruses (e.g., norovirus, rotavirus, adenovirus, poliovirus) and be used to clean hard surfaces and to decontaminate spill area.

3. Red or orange plastic infectious waste bags.

4. Personal protective equipment including gloves, coveralls, face shield or eye protection and other protective gear meeting Center for Disease Control guidelines for protecting health care personnel.

5. Equipment for physical clean-up of infectious waste (e.g. scoops, dust pans, mops, brooms, etc.). This equipment must be capable of decontamination or shall be disposed as infectious waste in accordance with this chapter.

B. Spill containment and cleanup procedures. Following an infectious waste spill, or its discovery, the following minimum procedures shall be implemented:

1. Cleanup personnel will wear appropriate protective clothing and gear and secure the spill area.

2. Apply absorbent material to the spill and apply disinfectant to contaminated items and the area.

3. Place spilled items inside infectious waste bags and secure.

4. Clean and disinfect non-disposable items.

5. Slowly and deliberately remove any personal protective equipment, following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance, to reduce possibility of self-contamination. Place disposable clothing and gear inside infectious waste bags and secure.

6. Replenish used cleanup items.

7. Practice good personal hygiene by washing hands or showering after spill cleanup.

C. Infectious waste spills with volume more than 1 liter of fluid or 32 gallons of solids must be reported to the Health Department within 48 hours. A spill report must describe the nature of the spill and cleanup action taken. Report infectious waste spills within Pierce County to the Health Department at (253) 798-6047.

Section 11: Record Keeping Requirements and Standards

Infectious waste facilities shall maintain the following records for a minimum of three years:

A. A current list of the infection control committee and personnel responsible for compliance with this chapter.

B. Adopted infectious waste management plan and related policies and procedures as described in this chapter.

C. Documentation of infectious waste management training, including date, name and position of participants.

D. Description of each infectious waste treatment method used at the facility, including any authorized alternative treatment methods.

E. Steam sterilization/autoclave records as defined in Section 9(A)(6).

F. Manifests, receipts or logs of off-site disposal of infectious waste.

G. Infectious waste spill reports as defined in Section 10(C).

H. Daily temperature logs for refrigerated, stored infectious waste.

I. Permits, inspection reports and other related records pertaining to the handling, storage, treatment and disposal of infectious wastes.

Section 12: Residential Sharps Waste

These requirements apply to residential sharps as defined in Section 3.

A. Residential sharps waste shall not be disposed in refuse collection containers (i.e., trash cans or dumpsters) if a source-separated collection service is provided for residential sharps by a public or private solid waste collection provider. Providers of source-separated residential sharps collection service shall comply with the standards of Chapter 70.95K RCW and the Class II transporter requirements of this chapter.

B. Residential sharps waste shall meet the following standards before disposal in refuse collection containers:

1. Sharps waste shall be placed in an approved sharps container or in rigid, puncture-resistant containers (plastic detergent, cooking oil or household bleach container).

2. Label sharps waste containers with the international biohazard symbol or with the words Infectious Waste, Biomedical Waste, or Biohazardous Waste and Do Not Recycle.

3. Residential sharps containers shall have taped and tightly sealed lids.

Section 13: Inspections

A. The health officer shall perform regular inspections of all permitted infectious waste facilities. A copy of the inspection report shall be furnished to the operator, owner or a designated representative of the facility or transporter and shall be kept on file for a minimum of three years in accordance with Section 11.

B. Any authorized representative of the Health Department may enter and inspect any property, premise or place that is subject to an infectious waste permit during the facility's regular business hours or at any reasonable time to determine compliance with this chapter.

Section 14: Enforcement

A. A notice of violation and order to correct shall be issued, as provided in Environmental Health Code Chapter 1, to any person who violates or fails to comply with the requirements of this chapter.

B. After a notice of violation and order to correct is duly issued, if the person to whom such notice is directed fails, neglects or refuses to obey such order, the health officer may pursue any of the remedies and penalties in Chapter 1.

Section 15: Appeals

Any person aggrieved by a decision or final order of the health officer has the right to appeal such decision or order in accordance with the appeal procedures in Chapter 1.

Section 16: Waiver and Variance

All waivers and variances of these infectious waste regulations shall meet the requirements of Chapter 1 of the Environmental Health Code.

Section 17: Severability

If any section, sentence, clause or phrase of this chapter should be held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the validity of constitutionality of any other section, sentence, clause or phrase of this chapter.