

### **Managing clinical or related waste in scheduled areas**

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*This guideline explains how to manage clinical or related wastes in those local government areas that are designated "Scheduled Areas" in Schedule 8B of the Environmental Protection Regulation 1998.*

#### **Background**

The Environmental Protection Regulation 1998 uses the term "Scheduled Area" to identify local government areas that may not have easy access to clinical waste transport or treatment options and where clinical waste is not required to be treated before disposal to landfill.

Scheduled areas have been determined on the basis that their population is less than 5000 and they are categorised as remote or rural. However, there are exceptions where an area of larger population is surrounded by scheduled areas.

Premises in scheduled areas, although not required to treat clinical waste before landfill disposal, must still meet all other legislated requirements for managing clinical wastes.

Clinical waste generated within local government areas which are not listed as scheduled areas must be treated before it can be disposed to landfill.

#### **Definitions**

**Clinical waste** is waste that has the potential to cause disease, including for example the following:

- animal waste;
- discarded sharps;
- human tissue waste; and
- laboratory waste.

**Related waste** is waste that constitutes, or is contaminated with, chemicals, cytotoxic drugs, human body parts, pharmaceutical products or radioactive substances.

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**Scheduled area** means a local government area mentioned in the Environmental Protection Regulation 1998, schedule 8B.

Areas of local government forming scheduled areas are:

Aramac, Aurukun,

Badu Island, Balonne, Bamaga Island, Barcaldine, Barcoo, Bauhinia, Bendemere Biggenden, Blackall, Boigu Island, Booringa, Boulia, Bulloo, Bungil, Burke,

Cambooya, Carpentaria, Cherbourg, Chinchilla, Clifton, Cloncurry, Coconut Island, Cook, Croydon, Dalrymple, Darnley Island, Dauan Island, Diamantina, Doomadgee,

Eidsvold, Etheridge,

Flinders,

Gayndah, Goondiwindi,

Hammond Island, Hope Vale,

Ilfracombe, Inglewood, Injinoo, Isisford,

Jericho, Kilcoy, Kilkivan, Kolan, Kowanyama, Kubin Island,

Lockhart River, Longreach,

Mabuiag Island, Mapoon, McKinlay, Millmerran, Monto, Mornington, Mount Isa, Mount Morgan, Munduberra, Murgon, Murilla, Murray Island, Murweh,

Napranum, Nebo, New Mapoon,

Paroo, Peak Downs, Perry, Pittsworth, Pormpuraaw,

Quilpie

Richmond, Roma,

Saibai Island, Seisia Island, St Pauls Island, Stephen Island, Sue Island,

Tambo, Tara, Taroom, Tiaro, Torres,

Umagico,

Waggamba, Wambo, Warroo, Winton, Wondai, Woocoo, Woorabinda, Wujal, Wujal,

Yam Island, Yarrabah, Yorke Island.

### **Clinical waste management**

Clinical waste generated in a scheduled area can be disposed to landfill without treatment. However, the following criteria must be met:

- the waste must have been generated in a scheduled area in order to qualify for disposal in a scheduled area landfill. Clinical waste generated outside a scheduled area must not be transported into a scheduled area or disposed of in a landfill; and
- the waste must be disposed of under supervised burial conditions.

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Supervised burial means that:

- a local government representative should supervise the immediate burial of the waste;
- clinical waste should be deposited at the lowest edge of the landfill working face or excavation;
- the waste should be covered immediately with at least one metre of solid general waste or clean fill;
- any compaction must only be on the cover material — not on the clinical waste directly;
- the clinical waste disposal area should be at least two metres from the proposed or design edge of the landfill;
- the location of the deposited waste should be marked on the landfill site map;
- clinical waste should be at least two metres below the final surface of the landfill ;
- the name and address of the generating premise(s), and the amount and type of waste deposited should be recorded; and
- a copy of this information should be given to the person depositing the waste for their records.

A general waste disposal facility located within a scheduled area is able to accept up to five tonnes of untreated clinical waste per year without being required to be licensed as a regulated waste disposal facility.

### **Related waste management**

#### **Chemical waste**

Chemical waste such as formaldehyde and gluteraldehyde must be treated appropriately before being disposed of in landfill. Some chemicals may be able to be incinerated, while others will need to be neutralised or fixed so that they cannot leach into the environment. An approved regulated waste treatment company will need to be engaged to perform these services.

#### **Cytotoxic waste**

Cytotoxic waste must be treated before it can be disposed of in landfill. Because of the potential risk associated with exposure to cytotoxic waste, the only appropriate treatment method that can currently be used is incineration. The incinerator used must reach a temperature of at least 1100°C with a residence time of at least one second to achieve effective treatment of the waste, and must be approved to accept this waste.

#### **Human body parts**

Identifiable human body parts must be treated either by incineration or through a chemical disinfection process using lime and hydrogen peroxide. Hypochlorite, lime and bentonite is used to render the waste non-infectious, followed by a shredding process which makes the waste unrecognisable. Other treatment technologies such as autoclaving and chemical disinfection alone are not currently acceptable methods for treating human body parts.

#### **Pharmaceutical waste**

Pharmaceutical waste means waste arising from:

- pharmaceutical products that have passed their recommended shelf life;
- pharmaceutical products discarded due to off-specification batches or contaminated packaging; • pharmaceutical products returned by patients or discarded by the public;
- pharmaceutical products no longer required by the public; and
- waste generated during the manufacture of pharmaceutical products.

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Pharmaceutical product means a restricted drug under the Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996.

A restricted drug means:

- an S4 substance other than solasodine; and
- alkaloids and alkaloidal glycosides of plants of the genus solanum for human therapeutic use.

Pharmaceutical waste must be treated by incineration before it can be disposed of in landfill.

### **Radioactive waste**

Radioactive waste is waste that is contaminated with a radioactive substance. Legislation controlling the management of radioactive substances is administered by the Radiation Safety Unit of QHealth

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### **Approved By**

Signed

Signature

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