

- ! **Used X-ray film** should be placed in a labeled container; silver reclamation companies often take film.
- ! **X-ray developer** can be poured down a drain (sewered) that is connected to a POTW, but not into a septic system.
- ! Contact local or state government agencies with solid and hazardous waste departments for **information on recycling services** and medical/infectious waste transporters/disposers.

Sources:

Fact Sheet: *Managing Waste Generated by Dental Clinics*, Minnesota Technical Assistance Program, Minneapolis, MN, Publ. 2/95-81, 1995.

Newsletter: *Reducing Hospital Waste*, Waste Reduction Assistance Program, University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services, Vol. 1/No. 4, Winter 1991.

Hospital Waste Reduction Checklist, Solid and Hazardous Waste Education Center, University of Wisconsin-Extension, 1996.

Guide to Pollution Prevention: *Selected Hospital Waste Streams*, U.S. EPA, Center For Environmental Research Information, June 1990, EPA/625/7-90/009.

3.5.2 Health Care: Dental Offices/Clinics

Tip Sheet #1

WASTE ORIGIN: **Diagnostic Materials and Cleaning Equipment**

WASTE TYPES: Amalgam Developer, Developer Systems Cleaner (Chromium), Lead Foil and Silver/Mercury, Silver (X-ray Fixer, X-ray Film), and Vapor Sterilizer Chemicals (Formaldehyde)

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING METHODS:

- ! **Do not mix used X-ray fixer and developer:** Dedicate separate containers and treatment methods.
- ! **Used X-ray fixer** can be handled in a couple ways:
 - ! Collect and store in a **closed plastic container** labeled “Hazardous Waste - Used Fixer” with the date fixer was first added;
 - ! Contact a **recycling service** when enough fixer has accumulated (usually 5-10 gallons);
 - ! Install a **silver recovery unit** at the end of the X-ray processing unit.
- ! **Used X-ray film** should be placed in labeled container; silver reclamation companies will often also take film.
- ! **Used lead foil** may be accepted by reclamation companies or recycled through dental supply companies. Label the container as hazardous waste.
- ! **Waste amalgam** should be captured in sink drain screens and recycled:
 - ! Store waste amalgam in a **closed container** labeled as hazardous waste with content and date information;
 - ! Used, **empty amalgam capsules** are non-hazardous and may be disposed of as solid waste.
 - ! **Disposable filters** should be disinfected and may be recycled with the amalgam. Check with your recycler.
 - ! Consider using **non-mercury** containing materials for fillings such as composite.
- ! **Cleaners for developer systems** that contain chromium can be handled in a few ways:
 - ! Install cleaners that **do not contain chromium**;
 - ! Find a **cleaning service** that will clean the developing unit at the clinic and properly dispose of the chromium-containing cleaner;
 - ! Collect and store in a **closed plastic container** labeled as hazardous waste, and contact a recycling service when enough tainted cleaner has accumulated.
- ! **Vapor sterilizer chemicals** may be poured down the drain (sewered) if the local publicly-owned treatment works (POTW) has a sewage treatment system to handle the clinic’s quantity. If not, these chemicals must be disposed of as hazardous waste.
- ! **X-ray developer** can be poured down a drain connected to a POTW, but not into a septic system.
- ! Contact local or state government agencies with hazardous waste departments for **information on silver or amalgam recycling services**, scrap metal reclaimers, and medical/infectious waste transporters/disposers.

Sources:

Fact Sheet: *Managing Waste Generated by Clinics*, Minnesota Technical Assistance Program, Minneapolis, MN, Publ. 2/95-81, 1995.

Newsletter: *Reducing Hospital Waste*, Waste Reduction Assistance Program, University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services, Vol. 1/No. 4, Winter 1991.

Hospital Waste Reduction Checklist, A Guide to Dentists, Solid and Hazardous Waste Education Center, University of Wisconsin-Extension, 1996.

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