



Department of Health

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*****This is a communication from the New York State Department of Health
Regulated Medical Waste Program*****

To: Hospitals and Clinical Laboratories

From: New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH)

This notification serves to provide an update to hospitals and clinical laboratories located in New York State on the handling of regulated medical waste (RMW) generated from the care of suspected or confirmed Ebola virus disease (EVD) patients.

Center for Disease Control (CDC) Information on the Survivability of the Ebola Virus in Medical Waste

On November 21, 2014, the CDC released information on the survivability of the Ebola virus in medical waste (see link below). The CDC information describes physical agents that can eradicate Ebola virus and states that killing can be achieved by submitting materials suspected of being contaminated with Ebola to treatment in an autoclave under a “validated waste cycle” to 121°C (250°F) for at least 30 minutes depending on the load and packaging, which is more than enough heat and time to kill the virus. Please be aware that the CDC-suggested autoclave operating parameter of 121°C (250°F) for at least 30 minutes is less stringent than what is required in New York State.

Requirements for RMW are described in Part 70 of Title 10 (Health) of the Official Compilation of Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York (10 NYCRR Part 70). These regulations apply to hospitals, residential health care facilities, diagnostic and treatment centers and clinical laboratories. Subpart 70-3 of these regulations describes requirements for autoclaves used to treat RMW. Section 70-3.3 describes the generally accepted and alternative operating parameters for autoclaves and state the following:

70-3.3 Generally accepted and alternative operating parameters.

(a) Unless other operating parameters have been approved pursuant to subdivision (c) of this section, operating parameters for treating of regulated medical waste in a gravity-feed autoclave shall be:

(1) at least sixty (60) minutes residence time at a temperature at least one hundred twenty-one (121) degrees Celsius and a pressure of fifteen pounds per square inch (15 psig); or

(2) at least forty-five (45) minutes residence time at a temperature at least one hundred thirty-five (135) degrees Celsius and a pressure of thirty-one pounds per square inch (31 psig).

(b) Unless other operating parameters have been approved pursuant to subdivision (c) of this section, operating parameters for treating regulated medical waste in a vacuum-displacement autoclave shall be:

(1) at least forty-five (45) minutes residence time at a temperature at least one hundred twenty-one (121) degrees Celsius and a pressure of fifteen pounds per square inch (15 psig); or

(2) at least thirty (30) minutes residence time at a temperature at least one hundred thirty-five (135) degrees Celsius and a pressure of thirty-one pounds per square inch (31 psig).

(c) No facility shall treat regulated medical waste using an autoclave at operating parameters other than those prescribed in subdivision (a) or (b) of this section, unless the treatment method has been approved by the Department as an alternative treatment technology pursuant to section 70-5 of this Part.

If you have any questions related to this communication, you may contact the Regulated Medical Waste Program at rmwp@health.ny.gov

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

The New York State Department of Health
Regulated Medical Waste Program

Useful Links

10 NYCRR § 70 Regulated Medical Waste:

<http://w3.health.state.ny.us/dbspace/NYCRR10.nsf/56cf2e25d626f9f785256538006c3e d7/8525652c00680c3e8525652c004a59f3?OpenDocument&Highlight=0,70>

Information on the Survivability of the Ebola Virus in Medical Waste

<http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/survivability-ebola-medical-waste.html>

NYSDOH Autoclave Guidelines

https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/ebola/docs/autoclave_guidelines.pdf