



# EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF BIO-MEDICAL WASTES - NEED OF THE HOUR

"**A** r o g y a m Mahabhagyam" goes the old saying and it fits well in any generation. Yet health is a neglected entity not only at the national level, where only small percentage of national financial outlay is allotted to it, but also at the personal level. Most of us are not careful about observing the rules of health. Wealth of the health is tottering in the present fast paced competitive life. Diseases, like other facets of life such as trade, finances, technology, etc. in this liberalized economy have also globalized. To address the numerous challenges in the field, a myriad of health care facilities have or are being established in the country. Of course such facilities are essential to meet the demands of the billion plus population and the medical tourists from world over. Although health-care facilities are meant to ameliorate the sufferings of sick but improper handling and disposal of wastes generated from such health care facilities are adversely affecting many.

Realizing the gravity of the problem, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India have notified

the Bio-medical wastes(Managing and Handling) Rules in 1998 under the provision of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. These are being implemented throughout the country, State Pollution Control Boards and Pollution Control Committees are regulatory agencies in the States



and Union Territories respectively.

The Bio-Medical wastes, based on characteristics and compatibility have been classified into 10 categories. Treatment methods of Bio-medical wastes include deep burial, incineration, autoclaving, mutilation, shredding and disinfections, depending upon the types of

wastes.

Care should be taken to appropriately design equipment treatment systems following the guidelines of the Central Pollution Control Board in 2003. Use and operation of inappropriate equipment of Bio-medical waste may cause adverse effects to the environment.

The Bio-Medical shall not be mixed with any other wastage. The wastage should be treated as early as possible and avoid storage of untreated waste beyond 48 hours of its generation. The containers shall be labeled with Biohazard/cytotoxic hazard symbol. It should be prominently visible and non washable.

Waste minimization is another aspect in the bio-medical waste management. Significant reduction in wastes generation in health care facilities may be encouraged by the implementation of good management and control practices. Periodical trainings to the medical and paramedical staff is another step in proper management of wastes.

In order to encourage to establish and operate common bio-medical waste treatment facilities, Ministry of Environment and Forest, Govt. of India, proposes to