



# Dental Office Waste Management and Disposal Options

Waste Type	Management Options	Accumulation/Storage Times
<b>Hazardous/Universal</b>		<b>For small quantity generators (less than 270 pounds per month)</b>
<b>Amalgam and Traps and filters that contain amalgam</b>	<p>1. Manage as a universal waste and recycle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) by mailing it to a mercury reprocessor. Directory of Dental Waste Recyclers is available on ada.org.</li> <li>b) by having it picked up from the office by a licensed vendor who transports it to a recycler.</li> <li>c) by transporting it to a local small business/household hazardous waste facility.</li> </ul> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>2. Manage as a hazardous waste:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) by having it picked up from the office by a licensed hazardous waste hauler.</li> <li>b) by transporting it to a local small business/household hazardous waste event.</li> </ul> <p><b>Do not place in trash or with medical waste.</b></p>	One year from accumulation start date.
<b>Fixer</b>	<p>1. Recycle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) by having it picked up from the office by a licensed vendor who transports it to a recycler.</li> <li>b) by using a silver recovery unit (ion exchange or electrowinning) that captures silver and allows for discharge of the treated solution down the drain. In general, such units are okay to use where the local sanitation agency discharge limit is not less than 5 ppm silver. Manufacturer's directions must be followed.</li> </ul>	One year from accumulation start date.

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<b>Fixer</b> <i>(continued)</i>	<p><b>Or</b></p> <p>2. Manage as a hazardous waste:</p> <p>a) by having it picked up from the office by a licensed hazardous waste hauler.</p> <p>b) by transporting to a local small business/household hazardous waste event.</p>	One year from accumulation start date.
<b>Developer</b>	Contact local sanitation agency regarding sewer discharge requirements.	One year from accumulation start date.
<b>X-ray film from patient records to be disposed</b>	<p>1. Send to metal reclaimer.</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>2. Manage as hazardous waste.</p> <p><i>In either situation, sign a HIPAA business associate agreement with the vendor.</i></p>	One year from accumulation start date.
<b>Lead foil from film packets</b>	<p>1. Send to metal reclaimer.</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>2. Manage as hazardous waste.</p>	One year from accumulation start date.
<b>Glutaraldehyde solutions</b>	<p>1. If allowed by local sanitation agency, neutralize solution with glycine before discharging down the drain.</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>2. Manage as hazardous waste.</p>	One year from accumulation start date.
<b>Vapo-Steril solution (hazardous due to flammability)</b>	Manage as hazardous waste or ensure it is nonhazardous before disposal.	One year from accumulation start date.
<b>X-ray system cleaners that contain chromium</b>	Manage as hazardous waste.	One year from accumulation start date.

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<b>Aerosol cans, not empty</b>	Manage as a universal waste: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. by having it picked up from the office by a licensed hazardous waste hauler.</li> </ol> <b>Or</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. by transporting it to a local small business/household hazardous waste event.</li> </ol> See DTSC document for information on containment requirements, <a href="https://dtsc.ca.gov/HazardousWaste/UniversalWaste/upload/HWM_FS_SB1158.pdf">dtsc.ca.gov/HazardousWaste/UniversalWaste/upload/HWM_FS_SB1158.pdf</a> .	No time limit on accumulation and storage
<b>Batteries (all types, except car batteries), cell phones, PDAs, pagers, computers, monitors, electronic devices, fluorescent lamps</b>	Manage as universal waste and recycle: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. by locating an e-waste recycler at <a href="http://erecycle.org">erecycle.org</a>.</li> <li>2. by arranging for pickup of waste or transporting waste to facility.</li> </ol>	No time limit on accumulation and storage.
<b>Medical</b>		
<b>Sharps</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mail off-site via USPS-approved vendor for treatment/disposal.</li> </ol> <b>Or</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Arrange for pickup by medical waste hauler for treatment/disposal.</li> </ol> <b>Or</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Treat by DPH-approved permit exempt alternative treatment technology, followed by disposal in regular trash.</li> </ol> <b>Or</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Self-transport to a treatment or collection facility or to another generator's facility for pickup. *</li> </ol>	No more than 30 days after container is filled.

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<b>Anesthetic carpules</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If completely empty, place in regular trash.</li> <li>2. If anesthetic still present, manage as biohazardous pharmaceutical waste.</li> <li>3. If blood has been aspirated, place in sharps container.</li> </ol>	
<b>Biohazardous – solid “red-bag” waste</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mail off-site via USPS-approved vendor for treatment/disposal.</li> </ol> <p><b>Or</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Arrange for pickup by medical waste hauler for treatment/disposal.</li> </ol> <p><b>Or</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Self-transported to a treatment or collection facility or to another generator’s facility for pickup.*</li> </ol>	<p>If less than 20 lbs of waste is generated per month:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 days if stored above 0°C.</li> <li>• 90 days if stored below 0°C.</li> </ul>
<b>Nonhazardous** – pharmaceutical</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mail off-site via USPS-approved vendor for treatment/disposal.</li> </ol> <p><b>Or</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Arrange for pickup by medical waste hauler for incineration</li> </ol>	Up to one year.
<b>All types combined in one container</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mail off-site via USPS-approved vendor for treatment/disposal.</li> </ol> <p><b>Or</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Arrange for pickup by medical waste hauler for treatment/disposal.</li> </ol>	No more than 30 days.

\*Transportation of medical waste by the waste generator (owner or employee) to a treatment or collection facility or to another generator’s facility for pickup is permissible as long as the waste generator complies with U.S. DOT Materials of Trade regulation. Refer to the sample Medical Waste Management and Disposal Plan for additional information. Transportation of medical waste generated by other waste generators requires a waste transport permit.

\*\* See below for management of controlled substances. Check pharmaceutical SDS to verify pharmaceutical is nonhazardous. Nonhazardous pharmaceutical waste must be managed as medical waste in California. Dispose of hazardous pharmaceutical waste appropriately and do not dispose down the drain.

## How to Dispose of Control Substances

Dispose of out-of-date, damaged or otherwise unusable or unwanted controlled substances, including samples, by transferring them to an entity that is authorized to receive such materials. These entities are referred to as “reverse distributors.” Contact your local DEA field office (<https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/>) for a list of authorized reverse distributors. Schedule II controlled substances should be transferred via the DEA Form 222, while Schedule III–V compounds may be transferred via invoice. Maintain copies of the records documenting the transfer and disposal of controlled substances for a period of two years.

## Disposal Options

### *Waste Transporters*

A list of registered **hazardous waste transporters** can be found on the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) website.

A list of registered **medical waste transporters** can be found on the [Department of Public Health \(DPH\) website](#).

### *Household Hazardous Waste Programs*

A list of local household hazardous waste programs can be found on [cda.org/practicesupport](http://cda.org/practicesupport). Not all HHW programs are alike, so pay attention to the types of waste your local program accepts.

### *Medical Waste Mail-Back Systems*

The small quantities of medical waste generated by dental practices make the use of mail-back systems practical. U.S. Postal Service-approved mail-back systems are available for all types of medical waste — expired/unused pharmaceuticals (noncontrolled substances), biohazardous waste and sharps. Some dental supply companies sell the systems listed below. You can also contact the companies directly. When combining sharps waste and biohazardous waste in one container, a small-quantity generator may store the combined waste at room temperature for no more than 30 days from the accumulation start date. Do not combine pharmaceutical waste with other types of medical waste. This list is not all-inclusive and inclusion on this list does not constitute an endorsement by CDA.

**GRP & Associates** (all types)

800.207.0976

**HealthFirst** (sharps and pharmaceutical)

888.963.6787

**MailYourSharps.com** (sharps and biohazardous)

866.210.2744

**Medasend** (sharps and biohazardous)

800.200.3581

**Medical Waste Pros** (all types)

888.755.6370

**MediWaste Disposal** (all types)

855.449.6334 (MEDI)

**Republic Services** (sharps)  
855.737.7871

**Sharps Compliance Inc.**  
(all types)800.772.5657

**Stericycle Inc.** (sharps and biohazardous)  
800.355.8773

**Waste Management MedWaste Tracker** (sharps and biohazardous)  
800.664.1434

**WCM** (all types)  
866.436.9264

\*Available from dental supply companies

DPH-approved alternative treatment technology may be used to treat certain medical waste before disposal. However, a treatment permit, along with requisite fees and documentation, may be required. The complete list of approved alternative treatment technologies is found on the DPH website. The following product is used by many dental practices, often without being required to have a permit.

### **Isolyser**

**Sharps Management System** (SMS)

866.436.9264

Available from dental supply companies.