



OCCUPATIONAL FIRST AID ATTENDANTS ASSOCIATION NEWS

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“The hydroclaving technology can process any and all hospital originating materials...”

Biomedical Waste Disposal

Five Vancouver area Health Boards announced recently that they would join together with a private contractor to dispose of hospital biomedical waste in a new way.

The Health Boards are responsible for producing almost all the hospital biomedical waste in BC. At present this material is shipped to Alberta or Washington. In 1998 the five Health Regions considered dealing with the waste locally, with a view to reducing the risks associated with the transportation of this material and the liability involved. The result is a plan to eliminate 85% of the hospital biomedical waste locally.

Biomedical waste is only a small part of hospital waste.

The traditional method of incineration has been replaced with a sterilizing technology known as “autoclaving” in other parts of North America. A new method called “hydroclaving” was developed in Canada using high pressure steam to decontaminate biomedical waste. This is similar to the technology of autoclaving, except that it uses steam and pressure to accelerate the decomposition of organic matter. Hydroclaving, although new to BC, has been used successfully in Ontario and other parts of the world for a few years.

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“This little building on the right may soon play a big role in the treatment of biomedical waste in the Vancouver area”

