

Australian/New Zealand Standard™

**Management of clinical
and related wastes**

This Joint Australian/New Zealand Standard was prepared by Joint Technical Committee HE/1, Medical, Diagnostic and Surgical Products. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 17 April 1998 and on behalf of the Council of Standards New Zealand on 7 May 1998. It was published on 5 June 1998.

The following interests are represented on Committee HE/1:

Australian Confederation of Operating Room Nurses
Australian Dental Association
Australian Dental Industry Association
Australian Infection Control Association
Australian Medical Association
Australian Nursing Federation
Australian Society for Microbiology
Department of Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs, S.A.
Department of Human Services, Vic.
Environment Management Industry Association of Australia
Federation of Sterilizing Research and Advisory Councils of Australia
Health Department, W.A.
Hospital Supplies of Australia
Medical Industry Association of Australia
New Zealand Chemical Industry Council
New Zealand Commercial Waste Disposal Companies
New Zealand Nurses Organization
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and related wastes**

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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Subcommittee HE/1/3, Safe Disposal of Sharps and Clinical Wastes, under the responsibility of Committee HE/1, Medical, Diagnostic and Surgical Products, to supersede NZS 4304:1990, *Health care waste management*. The Standard was prepared in response to a request from New Zealand commercial waste disposal companies which were concerned about deficiencies in the New Zealand Standard. The opportunity has also been taken to incorporate issues relevant to Australia.

The objective of this Standard is to establish principles for clinical and related wastes to be safely and economically disposed of in an environmentally responsible manner, subsequent to appropriate waste minimization practices.

It is recognized that, in terms of transmission of disease, the majority of wastes emanating from health care and related facilities carry no greater risk than domestic waste and that there is significant potential for waste minimization. However, there are some wastes which may be, or are, of a hazardous or of an aesthetically unacceptable nature, and it is these categories of wastes which this Standard addresses. General domestic waste is not dealt with in this Standard.

In the preparation of this Standard, cognizance was taken of NZS 4304, the *National Guidelines for the Management of Clinical and Related Wastes*, published by the National Health and Medical Research Council, Australia, and the *National Industry Code of Practice for the Management of Clinical and Related Wastes*, published by the National Medical Waste Management Industry Group, within the Environment Management Industry Association of Australia. For New Zealand purposes, this Standard should also be read in conjunction with NZS 5433, *Code of practice for the transportation of hazardous substances on land*, the New Zealand Land Transport Act 1962 and the Treaty of Waitangi, New Zealand.

The determination of appropriate treatment and disposal practices for waste is dependent on an accurate categorization and segregation of the waste. The categorization and segregation of clinical and related waste should typically be done according to—

- (a) hazard, e.g. toxicity, corrosivity, flammability, radioactivity, pathogenicity, sharps;
- (b) source, i.e. oncology, pathology, microbiology; or
- (c) offence, i.e. a subjective aesthetic trait that is abhorrent to an individual or the general public, e.g. human tissue, body parts.

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STANDARDS AUSTRALIA/STANDARDS NEW ZEALAND

Australian/New Zealand Standard**Management of clinical and related wastes**

1 SCOPE This Standard sets out requirements for the identification, segregation, handling, storage, transport, treatment and ultimate safe disposal of clinical and related wastes which may be hazardous, in an environmentally responsible manner in order to reduce the impact to human health and safety. Such wastes include, but are not restricted to, wastes arising from medical, nursing, dental, veterinary, laboratories, pharmaceutical, podiatry, tattooing, body piercing, brothels, emergency services, blood banks, mortuary practices and other similar practices, and wastes generated in health care facilities or other facilities during the investigation or treatment of patients or in research projects.

2 REFERENCED DOCUMENTS The following documents are referred to in this Standard:

AS

- 1216 Class labels for dangerous goods
 1319 Safety signs for the occupational environment
 2243 Safety in laboratories
 2243.4(Int) Part 4: Ionizing radiations
 4031 Non-reusable containers for the collection of sharp medical items used in health care areas

AS/NZS

- 2243 Safety in laboratories
 2243.1 Part 1: General
 2243.2 Part 2: Chemical aspects
 2243.3 Part 3: Microbiology
 4261 Reusable containers for the collection of sharp items used in human and animal medical applications
 4478 Guide to the reprocessing of reusable containers for the collection of sharp items used in human and animal clinical/medical applications

SAA/SNZ

- HB76 Dangerous goods—Initial emergency response guide

NZS

- 5433 Code of practice for the transportation of hazardous substances on land

Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail (ADG Code)

International Air Transportation Association (IATA) Dangerous Goods Regulations

International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code, International Maritime Organization (IMO)

New Zealand Land Transport Act 1962

United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (UNRTDG)



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