

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3572  
ANSWERED ON:11.12.2009  
WHO REPORT ON BIO-MEDICAL WASTE  
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**Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether bio-medical wastes are more hazardous for human life than radio-active materials as per the report of World Health Organisation;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (d) whether there has been any increase in the quantum of generation of bio-medical hazardous wastes during the last two years and the current year;
- (e) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and year-wise; and
- (f) the details of steps taken by the Government for the safe disposal of the bio-medical wastes?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE(SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

(a) to (c): As per the WHO Report "Safe Management of waste from Health Care Activities, 1999" and WHO Policy Paper on Bio-medical Waste Management (2004), Bio-medical wastes contain radionuclide of both short half lives and longer half lives. Radionuclide with short half-lives lose their activity relatively quickly. This usually will not cause immediate effects unless an individual receives a very high dose. Certain therapeutic procedures, however, require if affected with radionuclide with longer half-lives.

The type and form of radioactive material used in health-care establishments usually results in low-level radioactive waste. The quantity of Radioactive waste in health care settings is very small (usually less than 1%) as compared to other hazardous Bio-medical wastes (15-25%).

Generally a limited number of persons are affected by exposure to usage of radioactive materials in health care settings, while a large number of persons can get affected by Bio-medical waste from the point of collection to disposal.

Infectious Bio-medical waste is suspected to contain pathogens (bacteria, viruses, parasites, or fungi) in sufficient concentration or quantity to cause disease in susceptible hosts.

(d) to (f): Health being a State subject, the information is not maintained centrally. However, quantum of generation of bio-medical hazardous wastes is increasing because of following reasons:-

- # Number of health facilities in the country is increasing.
- # Number of population is increasing
- # Greater use of disposable in health facilities.

Under the Environment Protection Act, 1986, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India has notified Bio-medical waste (Management & Handling) Rules 1998.

Based upon the Bio-Medical (Management & Handling) Rules, 1998 National Guidelines on Hospital Waste Management were prepared and circulated to States and Union Territories by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare in March 2002. These guidelines have been prepared to enable hospitals to implement the Bio-Medical (Management & Handling) Rules, 1998 notified under the Environment Protection Act 1986, by developing comprehensive plans for segregation, collection, treatment, transportation and disposal of the hospital waste.