

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

November 15, 1994

Dear Mr. Sigman:

Thank you for your letter dated September 28, 1994 to our Administrator, Carol Browner. Your letter expresses your concern that the proposal for New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) and Emission Guidelines (EG) for Medical Waste Incinerators will indirectly increase the risk of the spread of communicable diseases. The primary concern you express is that the proposed NSPS and EG will close down the operation of small on-site incinerators and therefore force this waste to be transported long distances for treatment, thus increasing the risk of infection from contact with medical waste.

An opportunity for the public to officially comment on the Agency's NSPS and EG will be provided. Details of the comment period and submission of comments will be outlined in the upcoming proposal which is expected to be published in the Federal Register in February, 1995. If you have questions regarding this proposal, please contact Richard Copland, EPA Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-5265.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) is also aware of the public's concern with the transportation of medical waste. On December 20, 1991, DOT published a final rule in the Federal Register addressing the transportation of infectious substances, including regulated medical waste. DOT received a few petitions for reconsideration and several comments related to this rule. DOT is currently working with other Federal Agencies and the public to develop an effective regulation. Regulatory requirements for regulated medical waste and materials infectious to animals only are expected to become effective on October 1, 1995. Questions regarding this regulation may be addressed to DOT's Research and Special Programs Administration at (202) 366-4488.

If you have questions related to other medical waste issues, please contact Kristina Meson, of my staff, at (202) 260-5736.

Again, thank you for your letter and concern regarding the safe management of medical waste.

Sincerely,

Michael Petruska, Chief
Regulatory Development
Branch

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