

# DENR sets healthcare waste management amid COVID-19

posted September 07, 2021 at 06:33 pm  
by [Manila Standard](#)

A Philippine Healthcare Waste Management Project (PHCWMP) will be implemented by the government to address the huge waste problem brought about by the pandemic Covid 19 that consequently has adverse health impact on the population.



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is concerned about the increasing generation of healthcare wastes particularly due to the Covid 19 pandemic that just came about in late 2019.

As such, the healthcare waste management project was approved for funding by DENR's partner Global Environment Facility (GEF) for \$4.65 million.

The healthcare waste management work will involve four components. The first is the reduction of unintentionally-produced POPs' (persistent organic pollutants) release to the environment. Management of mercury-added products and mercury wastes from the healthcare sector will also be addressed as these can have important adverse effect on human health once released to the environment.

"We need to strengthen the management of non-pathological infectious healthcare wastes generated from the healthcare system brought about by Covid 19. These wastes should be

properly treated and disposed of to prevent further spread of the virus,” said DENR’s Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) Director William P. Cuñado.

“The project will also demonstrate a low cost and non-combustion treatment of wastes suitable for small scale and remote hospitals. This will be implemented in a cluster of healthcare facilities. The project upgrade the capacity of waste service providers with best available technologies, techniques, and practices.

It will also link local governments to public and private investments.

DENR is mandated to reduce the use and release to the environment of mercury under its obligation as a party to the Minamata Convention.

Human exposure to mercury has been linked to disorder of the central nervous system resulting in incognitive motor skill, kidney failure, and anomalies or birth defects.

The Philippines is also committed to the elimination of POPs under the Stockholm Convention. The project will be implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and EMB as the lead executing agency.

The DOH's Healthcare Waste Management Manual (4th Edition) indicated that Infectious waste is most likely to contain pathogens (bacteria, viruses, parasites, or fungi) in sufficient concentration or quantity to cause diseases in susceptible hosts.

Aside from infectious wastes, there are other types of hazardous healthcare wastes health authorities are concerned of which are the following:

1. Pharmaceutical wastes includes expired, split, and contaminated pharmaceutical products, drugs, vaccines and sera that are no longer usable and needs to be disposed of

appropriately. This also includes discarded items used in handling of pharmaceuticals, such as bottles, vials and ampoules, or boxes with residues, gloves, masks and connective tubing.

2. Sharp wastes must be managed with utmost care because of the double danger it poses such as accidental pricks, cuts, or punctures that can potentially spread infection through these injuries.
3. 3. Chemical wastes consists of discarded solid, liquid, and gaseous chemicals used in diagnostic and experimental work and in cleaning, housekeeping, and disinfecting procedures.

<https://manilastandard.net/index.php/mobile/article/364333?fbclid=IwAR1NMQJigODh7DucUEQA09QDV1D0Urn1yiu9YJQ5CDWckzRf87EJWZPBjx8#.YTg2MDuhegl.facebook>