

Chapter 8

EVALUATION OF LEGISLATION REGARDING MEDICAL WASTE IMPLEMENTATIONS IN TURKEY¹

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Introduction

As a natural and inevitable result of life, wastes have been accepted as one of the issues that society has dealt with in the past, with an understanding of keeping out of sight. Today, population growth, technological development, urbanization, rapidly rising wastes with industrialization; their negative impacts on human and environmental health are of the important environmental problems. At this point; the problem of wastes and their management is an issue to be addressed systematically by countries. Waste management should be addressed in an integrated manner with the main themes such as the emergence of wastes, the processing of wastes, the removal of wastes as well as the protection of resources and the environment. Countries should act with an understanding of the protection of human and environmental health, not just the removal of waste from the human environment.

Medical wastes are in direct or indirect interaction with humans and the environment from the point where they are produced and until removal phase in the waste cycle. Because of this interaction, it is important to remember that medical wastes are so effective as to destroy the natural balance. In parallel with the increase in awareness of environmental health in recent years, the importance of human and environmental health has increased and the pressure by the society has increased, necessitating studies in all countries about medical waste management. The necessity of countries' developing their medical waste practices will be better understood, especially in the case of the diversification of diagnosis and treatment services provided by health institutions in line with technological development, the consumption of disposable items in many medical applications and the increasing number of these institutions and the effect of increasing the amount of medical waste production.

Wastes from health institutions are classified as hazardous and harmful wastes as they are persistent in the air, water and soil except for household wastes and they are harmful to the ecological balance and special precautions for the production, transportation, storage and disposal of such wastes are required.

¹This study is derived from the study of Cansaran, Demet in her doctoral thesis on medical waste management on the scope of environment and health.

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