

Healthcare Environmental Awareness and Resource Reduction Team (HEARRT)
Ridgeview Medical Center
500 South Maple Street
Waconia, MN 55387
Thursday, October 8, 2009, 9:00 a.m. – noon
Meeting Agenda

Announcements

- MN Dept of Energy Security and Xcel Energy have numerous energy efficiency programs and funding for healthcare facilities. Talk to your Xcel or other utility reps about securing funding and rebates.

Bedbugs

Jay Bruesch, Plunkett's Pest Control, (763) 502-1705, Jay@Plunketts.net

What is the size of an apple seed, is flat, and needs warm blood to survive? That's right, a bed bug. Between the early 1960s and 1995, we didn't see many (or any) bed bugs; they started to re-appear in Minnesota around 1995. Bed bugs do not spread disease, but their bite can create itchy welts in some people, and may cause more serious allergic reactions in others. They can fit in very small cracks and lay eggs, and will move beyond the bedroom they start out in.

When inspecting, look for blood spots, exoskeletons, and dead bed bugs. Bugs can be expected to increasingly show up in hospitals (1) when brought in on patients' bags and belongings; (2) on items brought into the hospital by patients' family members; and (3) when family members "move in" to family lounges to stay close to a loved one in critical care. It's important to have a plan in place so that, when bed bugs show up in a lounge area or the room of a patient who has been admitted, staff know what steps to follow in order to safely and quickly eradicate the problem. It's important to extend the inspection for bed bugs to rooms above, below, on either side, and even outside of and across the hall from affected units.

The use of pesticides to treat bedbugs is difficult and toxic. Heat has been found to be the most efficacious treatment.

Blue Wrap Reduction and Cost Savings: St. Luke's Case Study

Catherine Zimmer, MnTAP, (612) 624-4635, zimme053@umn.edu

A fact sheet is being compiled that will summarize this case study.

It's in the Bag Plastics Recycling Program

Kate Worley, Minnesota Waste Wise, (651) 292-4662, kworley@mnchamber.com

It's in the Bag, a program of Minnesota Waste Wise, is piloting a new recycling opportunity for hospital blue wrap. The opportunity to recycle blue wrap in mass quantity has not historically been available in Minnesota. The success of this program is dependent on the quantity of material collected. Therefore, a crucial component moving forward with the pilot will include the number of interested facilities generating the material who want to participate in the program. Through working with Fairview Hospitals on waste prevention issues, Minnesota Waste Wise has realized the quantities of blue wrap material generated by the healthcare sector in MN, and the positive impact that can occur from recycling this material.

It's in the Bag is a community partnership that provides meaningful employment for adults with disabilities while providing opportunities to recycle a variety of materials. The organizations that provide services for *It's in the Bag* benefit from the sale of the material(s) recycled through the program.

It's in the Bag was originally founded in the Twin Cities Metro area and is now expanding throughout Minnesota. As more communities join *It's in the Bag*, more opportunities will be added to recycle the blue wrap material.

Healthcare Hazardous Waste Update and Discussion

Brandon Finke, MPCA St. Paul, (651)757-2358, Brandon.finke@state.mn.us

- 1) The MPCA Health Care webpage has been rearranged to focus attention on the Nonhospital Health Care Initiative and greater Minnesota surgery center inspections

www.pca.state.mn.us/industry/healthcare.html

- 2) The Nonhospital Health Care Initiative webpage will be located on the MnTAP website, but will be accessible from the MPCA Health Care webpage too. Look for it to be available in about a month.

www.pca.state.mn.us/industry/healthcare.html

www.mntap.umn.edu/health/index.htm

- 3) For those generators applying the Alternate Method to Evaluate Pharmaceutical Waste for the Lethality Characteristic, the MPCA does consider epinephrine in general to be an Endocrine Disruptor and therefore a Lethal hazardous waste. Based on calculations of median lethal dose under the Lethality Rule using data provided by regulated parties, however, the MPCA will allow generators of waste epinephrine less than 0.24% to assume that epinephrine is non-Lethal. The MPCA and metro counties strongly encourage disposal of even nonhazardous epinephrine waste through incineration as a best management practice.
- Waste that includes unused epinephrine base, CAS #51-43-4, as its sole active ingredient is acute P042-Listed hazardous waste
 - Waste used epinephrine base and all waste epinephrine salts at or above 0.24% concentration are assumed to be Lethal Characteristic hazardous wastes
 - Waste epinephrine salts below .024% concentration are assumed to be non-Lethal, but must be evaluated for all other hazardous waste characteristics

Keep Going

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Key strategies for hospitals “going green” include planning your approach in balance with environmental and business needs. Adopt sustainable practices as a key business initiative that on a corporate level, all must embrace. Formulate a well balanced and represented committee that has diverse view points. When a committee is established, define your goals early on. They need to be driven from the top down, but also built from the bottom up. This can be overwhelming, but start with items that are simple to gain early success. Here are some guidelines on where to begin. Your team can brainstorm with responses to each of these categories and then you can decide on which ones to start with.

- Where it's easy, with the fewest barriers
- Where you'll save money
- Where alternatives exist
- Where it's the greatest risk to health to patients, employees and the community
- Where the law requires
- Where you can take small steps toward long term goals

The primary focus areas for sustainability are energy, waste, resources, finances, and humans. When focusing on an area, start with a benchmark. Benchmarking is beneficial to demonstrate the cost of doing nothing. Variances are opportunities. Do not be afraid to express them and it is never a waste of time. Even if no opportunities exist, validation was reinforced and points you to other things. Measurement should be done to establish your credibility, and it helps to do this against accepted sources. Measurement also demonstrates how you compare, especially against competition in your service area. This adds to political pressure to those whom are concerned about competition. You can have fun measuring against self internally. People can relate to what the experience and live each day. This is who you are. It is good to understand the importance of good data. Challenge it and understand ALL variances. On top of all that, you must understand the value of money, life cycle cost, depreciated value, history of the building and equipment, code compliance, and environmental implications. Remember to balance the needs of the business with environmental needs. If the business succeeds, undoubtedly the environment can win.

Sustainable practices will reduce expenses, improve the operation, improve the building, improve profitability, and improve the environment and patient care. First costs are important, but looked at over time prove a much different return on investment. Find the opportunities, trial them and if successful, sustain them. Feel free to adjust for continual improvement. Facility Services, while small can have a large impact of other expenses in the organization. Think about your audience and holding their attention. We are all born with self preservation as a basic instinct. You have yours, others have theirs, all must be thought about. Understand the value of all your customers and in your audience. They will differ. You must address them as they mean importance to each one of us. To capture the ear

of your C-Suite, remember the business must win. After all, we are all in this together. Expense = take away, Value = contribution. We all enjoy value. Revenue is value.

Ridgeview Medical Center has taken these ideas and achieved some great accomplishments. This includes a 32% reduction in overall waste (excluding paper), a 17.6% reduction in paper, and electronic medical records are nearly 100% paperless. Ridgeview has also reduced operational costs, donated meals, and has done employee and public financial donations. For energy, there has been a 17% reduction in electrical usage, a 19.6% reduction in natural gas costs, and 28.1% reduction in water and sewer. They are one of the top ten American hospitals to adopt sustainability as one of its missions. Among many awards, they received the 2003 Mn Governor's Award for Excellence in Pollution/Waste Reduction.

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