Annex G. Medical Waste Management

Purpose
To describe the regulations, roles and processes for medical waste management of a known or suspected case of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD).

Situation
Medical waste generated by a known or suspected EVD-infected person is infectious and requires special handling and disposal in accordance with basic local, state, and federal laws.

Partners
This annex was written in consultation with:

- The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)

Assumptions
ADEC is the lead agency for medical waste management questions and concerns.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a support agency for medical waste management questions and concerns (contact the CDC at EOCWSH@cdc.gov)

Procedures
Handling of medical waste

- Waste generated in the care of patients with known or suspected EVD is subject to procedures set forth by local, state, and federal regulations. Basic principles for spills of blood and other potentially infectious materials are outlined in the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Bloodborne Pathogen standard, 29 CFR 1910.1030 (available at: https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/bloodbornepathogens/index.html).

- Waste contaminated (or suspected to be contaminated) with Ebola virus is a Category A infectious substance regulated as a hazardous material under the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR; 49 C.F.R., Parts 171-180). Requirements in the HMR apply to any material DOT determines is capable of posing an unreasonable risk to health, safety, and property when transported in commerce. For off-site commercial transport of Ebola-associated waste, strict compliance with the HMR is required. For more information on the HMR requirements see http://phmsa.dot.gov/hazmat/transporting-infectious-substances.

- If a person requires a variance to the HMR, that person must apply for a Special Permit under 49 CFR § 107.105. DOT may grant a special permit if the applicant can demonstrate that an alternative packaging will achieve a safety level that is: (1) at least equal to the safety level required under the HMR, or (2) consistent with the public interest if a required safety level does not exist. See http://www.phmsa.dot.gov/hazmat/permits-approvals/special-permits. DOT granted multiple

**Inactivation of medical waste**

- The inactivation or incineration of Ebola-associated waste within a hospital system may be subject to state, local and OSHA regulations. Ebola-associated waste may be inactivated through the use of appropriate autoclaves (see: http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/medical-waste-management.html). Other methods of inactivation (e.g., chemical inactivation) have not been standardized, according to the CDC, and facilities would need to consider worker safety issues, as well as the potential for triggering other Federal safety regulations, in using these methods.

- Ebola-associated waste that has been appropriately incinerated, autoclaved, or chemically inactivated is not infectious, does not pose a health risk, and is not considered to be regulated medical waste or a hazardous material under Federal law. Therefore, such waste is no longer considered a Category A infectious substance and can be transported with normal medical waste.

**Disposal of Medical Waste**

- Ebola-associated medical waste disposal is subject to state and local regulations. See http://www.epa.gov/waste/nonhaz/industrial/medical/programs.htm. Ebola-associated waste that has been appropriately inactivated or incinerated is not infectious and is not considered to be regulated medical waste or a hazardous material under Federal law.

- In Alaska, the following Class I landfills are permitted to accept inactivated EVD-associated medical waste, based on their medical waste disposal policies:
  - Anchorage Regional Landfill, (907) 343-6262
  - Fairbanks North Star Borough Landfill, (907) 459-1482
  - Juneau Capitol Disposal Landfill, (907) 780-7801
  - Palmer Central Landfill, (907) 746-2826
  - Unalaska Landfill, (907) 581-5757