# MANAGEMENT and Use of Corrugated Cardboard CONTAINERS

**1. PURPOSE:** The purpose of this document is to define local Medical Center policies and

procedures for the management, use and storage of corrugated cardboard boxes throughout

the system buildings including the FACILITY NAME, ASSOCIATED FACILITY NAMES (such as long term care facilities), Telemobile Clinics, and Multi-Specialty Outpatient Clinics (MSOCs).

**2. POLICY:** It is the policy that the prohibitions are observed and risk evaluations described

below (Attachment A) be performed so that insect and pest propagation may be controlled

within the system. Corrugated cardboard boxes may pose a habitable substrate for insect and

pest propagation as well as safety and fire hazards if not properly stored and removed from

egress corridors.

It is the Medical Center’s policy to prohibit the use of corrugated boxes for storage:

a. In all areas where sterile processing is performed, including Logistics and Pharmacy.

b. In areas where sterile procedures are performed including Operating Room Suite, PACU

(Post Anesthesia Care Unit), Interventional Radiology, and Emergency Room.

c. In areas where healthcare providers are offering direct patient care or aseptic procedures

are performed (inpatient and outpatient).

d. In food service and storage areas within CORPORATE NAME (if applicable) system or where potentials for outbreaks are observed.

(1) Canteen service is governed by \_\_\_SYSTEM NAME\_\_\_ and has regulations which follow FDA (Food and Drug Administration) recommendations for cardboard containers. Authority of FACILITY NAME Environment of Care (EOC) rounds includes recommendations for improvement of conditions.

e. In any service or area where potentials for damage to the integrity of the container exist,

either through moisture, deterioration or disruption.

**3. PROCEDURES:**  Only deliveries without evidence of insect infestation or water damage will be accepted by the warehouse/loading dock for delivery to receiving services.

a. In general, if materials have not been wet and are stored in a clean, cool and dry

environment the risk of insect damage can be greatly reduced. Because insects eat the starch

and protein components in paper products, evidence of insect damage can appear as insect

feces (granular powder called “frass”), holes or other damage in the paper/box, or the actual

insect or larvae itself.

b. In the event of insect infestation or water damage in storage areas, service chiefs are to

promptly address the issues with EMS (Environmental Management Services) or Engineering

for remediation.

c. All clean or sterile supplies or other patient occupational or care items must be removed

from the corrugated cardboard boxes prior to storage, administration or distribution.

d. Shipping cartons or corrugated boxes will not be reused. The recycling process involved

in the GEMS (Green Environmental Management System) program does not apply to this

prohibition.

e. Large volumes of supplies in cardboard boxes or skids must be delivered, removed from

boxes and cardboard boxes broken down and removed from the recovery area within a

timeframe that minimizes likelihood of pest propagation.

f. Some items described in 3c and 3d above are exceptions as they need the box to support

products (some supplies, reagents, durable medical supplies, etc).

(1) In the event that corrugated boxes are needed to support products, the Service Chief

of the area is responsible for educating the staff in the area about the risk of insect

infestation.

g. In the event that the receiving service is unable to process the large volume order, the skid

will remain in the warehouse & loading dock area until the receiving area can promptly

process the delivery.

(2) Skids should not be stored in areas where insect infestation or water damage may

occur while awaiting delivery to the receiving service.

**4. RESPONSIBILITY:**  The Medical Center Director shall ensure that Service Chiefs and supervisors are competent with this policy throughout the Medical Center.

a. Service Chiefs are responsible for:

(1) Ensuring that their employees are aware of the restriction and use of corrugated

cardboard containers in their areas.

(2) Inspecting their areas of responsibility for compliance with this Policy Memorandum.

(3) Assuring that there is coordination with the Acquisition and Materials Managements

Service (A&MMS) warehouse/loading dock when a large shipment is to be delivered and

EMS for prompt pickup of spent containers.

(4) Assessing that their areas are compliant with fire and safety issues with shipments

during receiving and storage;

(5) Assessing that their receiving/storage area(s) are free of potential insect, rodent or

water damage issues. If such issues are discovered, prompt action is to be taken.

(6) Cardboard is to be recycled in accordance with the GEMS program.

b. The Chief, EMS, is responsible for assuring that cardboard containers are disposed of

and/or recycled promptly as part of participation in the GEMS Program and for Pest

Management at the \_\_FACILITY NAME\_\_.

c. The GEMS Coordinator is responsible in conjunction with the Chief of EMS for tracking

and documentation of the recycling of cardboard as part of EMS’s participation in the GEMS

Program.

d. Chief, Engineering Service shall be responsible for issues relating to water and structural

damage which could allow insects to enter and propagate at \_\_FACILITY NAME\_\_ associated facilities.

(1) During remodeling/construction activities, spent corrugated containers from

equipment/supplies received to the site shall be promptly removed from the area and the

mass of cardboard removed documented to the GEMS coordinator when it sent to the baler

on the loading dock.

(2) This activity and its documentation to GEMS must be specified within the contract for

the project at the time of the project’s approval.

e. Multi-Specialty Outpatient Clinic’s (MSOC’s) having their own environmental

management and pest management services contracts shall have provisions for timely

cardboard removal.

f. The Chief, Acquisition and Material Management Service shall be responsible for assuring

that all Warehouse employees are aware of the restrictions and use of corrugated cardboard

boxes throughout the \_\_FACILITY NAME\_\_ associated facilities. Loading dock/warehouse personnel are responsible for the communication with the receiving service when large shipments (skids) of supplies are to be delivered to an area.

g. \_\_FACILITY NAME\_\_ Nutrition & Food Service and VCS, while not direct patient care areas, are considered high risk services for infestation because of the nature of the products that are stored and supplied to veteran patients, visitors and employees. These areas must be carefully monitored for insect infestation and water damage. Disposal of corrugated boxes supports the maintenance of a clean, dry environment.

h. The Infection Preventionist shall be responsible for conducting a corrugated cardboard risk

assessment (refer to Attachment A).

**5. REFERENCES:**

\_\_LIST THOSE DOCUMENTS OR ARTICLES THAT MAY APPLY TO YOUR FACILITY\_\_

6. **RECISSION**: Infection Control Policy 11-10-03 Management and Use of Corrugated Cardboard Containers.

7. **ATTACHMENTS**:

Appendix A - Risk Assessment: Corrugated Cardboard

8. **EXPIRATION DATE**: April 2016

***//ES// Original Signature on File***

**­\_\_APPROPRIATE PERSON’S NAME\_\_**

**Quality Manager**

**Appendix A**

**\_\_FACILITY NAME\_\_**

**Risk Assessment: Corrugated Cardboard**

**Unit/Area Assessed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title** | **Name** |
| **Infection Control Coordinator** |  |
| **Patient Safety Manager** |  |
| **Safety Officer** |  |
| **Other** |  |
| **Other** |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Risk Criteria** | **No Risk =0** | **Low Risk =1** | **Moderate Risk =2** | **High Risk =3** |
| **Potential for deterioration or damage** |  |  |  |  |
| **Potential for leakage of contents** |  |  |  |  |
| **Adequate monitoring of condition: traffic flow** |  |  |  |  |
| **Reasonable turnover timeframe** |  |  |  |  |
| **Prior incidents of leakage or damage in area** |  |  |  |  |
| **Improper storage (No skids or pallets-Fire Code)** |  |  |  |  |
| **Comestibles (edible products) stored in area** |  |  |  |  |
| **Medications stored in area** |  |  |  |  |
| **Aseptic or sterile procedures in area** |  |  |  |  |
| **Sterilization or High Level Disinfection performed** |  |  |  |  |

**Any cumulative score of 2 or higher will require review for remediation or removal.**

Comments or exceptions:

1. **Area does not require risk survey. Less than 2 on risk criteria tool\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
2. **Assigned Risk Category: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Completion Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
3. **Reassessment required: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Date, if required \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Submitted by: Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**